



UNIVERSITATEA
BABEȘ-BOLYAI

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ASISTENȚĂ SOCIALĂ
Universitatea Babeș Bolyai



INSTITUTUL PENTRU
SOLIDARITATE SOCIALĂ

THIRTY YEARS OF CAPITALIST TRANSFORMATIONS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE:

INEQUALITIES AND SOCIAL RESISTANCE

20 - 22 May, 2021
Cluj-Napoca, Romania
online conference

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Dorothee Bohle (European University Institute, Florence)

Jonathan Hopkin (London School of Economics)

Costas Lapavitsas (SOAS University of London)

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Thirty Years of Capitalist Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe: **INEQUALITIES AND SOCIAL RESISTANCE**

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Dorothee Bohle

(European University Institute, Florence, Italy)

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(SOAS University of London, UK)

In 1909 Karl Polanyi defended his PhD in Cluj/Kolozsvár and went on to become one of the century's canonical thinkers in political economy. The intellectual milieu of the Austro-Hungarian Empire produced the century's seminal debates in social science in general and political economy in particular, and Polanyi, raised in this milieu, became an iconic figure in the interdisciplinary study of market-society relations. Meanwhile, some of the societies of Polanyi's formative years experienced the century's most dramatic upheavals, from revolution to reaction, from capitalism to socialism and back to capitalism. Today, some of these lands are at the heart of emerging nationalist, neoliberal and illiberal hybrid that sprung from the crisis of global capitalism, even as these countries have recorded very high growth rates and increasing global competitiveness.

Thirty years after the end of real existing socialism, we get together in one of the cities of Polanyi's studies to reflect on two themes inspired by his work: (1) the promises, structural limits and crisis mechanisms of the capitalist mosaic that emerged in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans and (2) the alternative political projects that could address market-society relations given the growing global inequalities and the harrowingly extensive environmental degradation that puts at risk the well-being of present and future generations.

Our approach can be termed as a form of engaged scholarship. It departs from the observation that in no other part of Europe have there been more radical and entrenched offensives to attain what Polanyi termed "the market society" as in CEE and the Western Balkans and the political, demographic and environmental limits of this transformation have nearly been reached. Our aim is to confront this situation by building a network of engaged and critically minded scholars, policy makers, artists, activists whose work can illuminate the mechanisms, discourses, subjectivities and resources of the political and economic status quo in order to supply the informed imagination of how to overcome contemporary problems in inclusive, emancipating and green directions.

Conveners: The conference is organized by the *Institute for Social Solidarity (ISS)* and the *Faculty of Sociology and Social Work at Babeş-Bolyai University*. The *Institute for Social Solidarity* is a non-profit organization of networking scholars motivated by the desire to produce scientific expertise in order to promote public policies addressing the severe social inequalities, material deprivation, poverty and environmental degradation generated by the neoliberal transformations of the last 30 years. The *Faculty of Sociology and Social Work of the Babeş-Bolyai University* builds on the heritage of multiculturalism and reflexive academic research in order to nurture the development of social sciences in Romania and in the region. It provides quality education and expertise for the analysis of current social processes in Central and Eastern Europe seen from broader historical, geopolitical, economic, and cultural perspectives.

Venue: The conference will take place entirely online and it will be organized from Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Cluj is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural city from Transylvania. It is one of the most developed economic and commercial centers in Romania with booming IT, financial and communication industries. It is also a strongly gentrified city with deep social inequalities and racialized peripheries.

Scientific Committee: Daniela Gabor (UWE Bristol, UK), Cornel Ban (Copenhagen Business School, Denmark), Manuela Boatcă (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany), Veronica Lazăr (Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania), Enikő Vincze (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Valer Cosma (The County Museum of History and Art Zalău, Romania), Gabriel Bădescu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Cristina Raţ (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Dragoş Adăscăliţei (Sheffield University Management School, UK), Gabriel Troc (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Camil Ungureanu (Pompeu Fabra University, Spain)

Organizing Committee: Sorin Gog (Institute for Social Solidarity), Ciprian Bogdan (Institute for Social Solidarity), Camil Pâravu (Institute for Social Solidarity), Maria Cernat (Institute for Social Solidarity), Mihai Vasile (Institute for Social Solidarity), Valentina Dimulescu (Institute for Social Solidarity), Andrei Herţa (Institute for Social Solidarity), Andreea Țoiu (FSAS), Diana-Paula Tămaş (FSAS), Delia Cosma (FSAS), Sara Budrala (FSAS), Alina Ghihaniş (FSAS), Ştefan Alexandru Gib (FSAS), Nadejda Galamaga (FSAS), Gheorghe Nagy (FSAS).

SCHEDULE OF PANELS AND PRESENTATIONS

Day 1 – Thursday, 20 May, 2021

<p>12:00 – 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>KEYNOTE LECTURE: Dorothee Bohle (European University Institute, Italy) Capitalist Transformations in East Central Europe since the Great Recession: What Do We Know? What Have We Missed? Discussants: Daniela Gabor (UWE Bristol, UK) & Enikő Vincze (UBB, Romania)</p>			
<p>14:00 – 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>BREAK</p>			
<p>16:00 – 18:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>Panel A – European Union and the Central and Eastern European Dependent Economies A1. Still waiting for Polanyi in Brussels László Bruszt (Central European University, Austria) A2. Reinventing the local economy in dependent market economies: the role of developmental coalitions Gergő Medve-Bálint (Centre for Social Sciences, Centre of Excellence of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary) A3. In or out? Comparing the old (Southern) with the new (Central and Eastern European) peripheries of the European Union in the context of Eurozone participation: a comparative political economy approach Anastassios Chardas (Democritus University of Thrace, Greece) A4. “Losing the global”? (Re)building Bosnian enterprises across transition Anna Calori (University of Leipzig, Germany) Moderator: Manuela Boatcă (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany)</p>	<p>Panel B – Focus Ukraine: Neo-liberalism and the Collapse of the State B1. Temporalities of (re)production: Ukrainian garment workers in global supply chains Oksana Dutchak (Kyiv Polytechnic Institute, Ukraine) B2. Post-post-Soviet factory regime in Ukraine: decomposing embeddedness Denys Gorbach (Max Planck Sciences Po Center on Coping with Instability in Market Societies – MaxPo, France) B3 “We are cut off from everything”: infrastructural vulnerability in frontline communities in Donetsk region Anastasiya Ryabchuk (National University of ‘Kyiv-Mohyla Academy’, Ukraine) B4. Migrants from Donbass in Belarus and Ukraine: a comparative history of crisis Volodymyr Artiukh (University of Oxford, UK) Moderator: Alona Liasheva (University of Bremen, Germany)</p>	<p>Panel C – Focus Romania: Social Movements and ‘Counter-Movements’ in Times of Crisis C1. Romanian social movement (2012-2019) – between a Polanyian counter movement and the reinforcement of the status quo Victoria Stoiciu (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Romania) C2. Protests targeting the past vs. protests targeting the future: Recreative activism and the Fridays for Future mobilization in Romania Ruxandra Gubernat (Université Paris Nanterre, France), Henry P. Rammelt (National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania) C3. Ways of Seeing/Ways of Protesting: Visuals in Transnational Protest Analysis Dana S. Trif (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania) C4. Anticorruption as social fantasy and political instrument. A comparative approach Diana Mărgărit (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Romania & Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania) Conveners: Sergiu Mişcoiu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Diana Mărgărit (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Romania, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p>	<p>Panel D – Critical Approaches to Educational and Social Services for Dependent Family Members in Transnational Spaces of Care and Labour D1. The effects of transnational mobilities on children and their schooling: teacher narratives on return migrant children Zsuzsanna Árendás (Center for Policy Studies, Central European University Budapest), Vera Messing (Democracy Institute, CEU and Center for Social Sciences, Hungary) D2. Educational support services for children with labor mobile parents that stay behind: educational solutions for socio-economic problems? Leyla Safta-Zecheria (West University of Timișoara, Romania) D3. Re-migration of highly qualified people from Romania: a case study of migration and re-migration of Romanian doctors Simona Herczeg (West University of Timișoara, Romania) Conveners: Zsuzsanna Árendás (Center for Policy Studies, Central European University Budapest), Leyla Safta-Zecheria (West University Timișoara, Romania) Discussant: Violetta Zentai (Central European University, Hungary-Austria)</p>
<p>18:00 – 20:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>Panel E – Varieties of Capitalism in Central and Eastern Europe E1. The Making of the European Financial Periphery: The Uneven Effects of Banking Union and Capital Markets Union across the European Union Dóra Pirooska (Corvinus University, Hungary & Central European University Austria), Rachel Epstein (University of Denver, US) E2. Varieties of state capitalisms: historical experiences and current tendencies Judit Ricz (Institute of World Economy, Corvinus University Budapest, Hungary), István Benczes (Corvinus University Budapest, Hungary) E3. The role of the IMF in CEE: shock therapy, the boom, and then the bust Lara Merling (International Trade Union Confederation, US, Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania) E4. Varieties of European Peripheries: A Comparison of Baltic, Southern and Visegrad Member States’ Economic Models Norbert Szijártó (Institute of World Economics, Hungary) Moderator: Visnja Vukov (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain)</p>	<p>Panel F – Chinese Capital Investments in Central and Eastern Europe F1. State capitalism and illiberal neoliberalism: state development in Serbia Samuel Rogers (Open University & University of Bristol, UK) F2. The Flow of Chinese Capital into Eastern European Infrastructures: the Case of the Budapest-Belgrade Railway Line Linda Szabó (Periféria Policy and Research Center, Budapest, Hungary) Csaba Jelinek (Periféria Policy and Research Center, Budapest, Hungary) F3. Chinese investments in infrastructures of Eastern Europe: representations and absences Lela Rekhviashvili (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Germany) F4. Nuclear Power Investments in Central and Eastern Europe: The Cases of Hungary and Romania Sergiu Novac (Independent Researcher, Romania) Moderator: Julia Langbein (Centre for East European and International Studies, ZOIS, Germany)</p>	<p>Panel G – Focus Bulgaria: Capitalist relations and class politics G1. Rent, wealth and worth: misconceptions from the middle-class Jana Tsoneva (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria) Veronika Stoyanova (University of Kent, UK) G2. The Political Economy of Bulgarian Post-socialist Authoritarianism Georgi Medarov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria) G3. Victims of Communism and the “So Called” People’s Court: Anticomunist Hegemony and Rehabilitation of Fascism in Bulgarian History Textbooks Bozhin Traykov (Independent Researcher, Bulgaria) G4. De/re-industrialization, risk and the “ungratefulness” of work Dimitra Kofti (Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece) Moderator: Miladina Monova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria)</p>	<p>Panel H – Capitalist Transformations and Labour Migration from Central and Eastern Europe H1. Honour the asparagus! Romanian Agricultural Labour in Germany during the COVID-19 Season Manuela Boatcă (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany) H2. Social citizenship, fraud and the neoliberal subject: Bulgarian Muslim and Roma migrants and their relations with the state Neda Deneva (Babeş Bolyai University, Romania) H3. Migration infrastructures. The role of recruitment agencies in the European Union Andrea Abbati (University of Urbino, Italy), Claudio Morrison (Middlesex University, UK), Devi Sacchetto (University of Padova, Italy) H4. “The most hardworking people in the world”: exploring Romanian labour migration through the value of being ‘hardworking’ Ana-Maria Cirstea (Durham University, UK) H5. A CEE of change: effects of technological change on CEE agricultural labor migrants in the Netherlands Andreea Ferent (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Tyler Williams (International Institute of Social Studies ISS, the Hague, Netherlands) Moderator: István Horváth (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p>

SCHEDULE OF PANELS AND PRESENTATIONS

Day 2 – Friday, 21 May, 2021

<p>10:00 – 12:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>Panel I – Labor Markets Reforms and Unions in Central and Eastern Europe</p> <p>i1. Power resources and trade union actions to combat precarious work in Central and Eastern Europe Aurora Trif (Dublin City University, Ireland), Valentina Paolucci (University College Dublin, Ireland)</p> <p>i2. The European minimum wage between workers' solidarity and national interests Ruxandra Ivan (University of Bucharest, Romania)</p> <p>i3. The Consequences of the Decline of Neo-Corporatist Coordination in Slovenia Gorazd Kovačič (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)</p> <p>i4. Why trade unions were not able to become engines of a Polányian countermovement in post-socialist Hungary? András Tóth-Eszter Bartha (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Hungary)</p> <p>Moderator: Vassil Kirov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria)</p>	<p>Panel J - Focus Hungary: Collapsing Solidarity</p> <p>J1. Producing the nation through philanthropy: Legitimizing co-ethnic and pro refugee civic action in Hungary Margit Feischmidt (Research Centre for Social Sciences, Budapest, Hungary), Ildikó Zakariás (Research Centre for Social Sciences, Budapest, Hungary)</p> <p>J2. The emergence of global historical political blocks and migration Attila Melegh (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary)</p> <p>J3. Innovation in Capitalist Varietals Michelle Orel Crosby (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary)</p> <p>J4. "We Will Not Become Colonies": Global History and the Semiperipheral Colonial Discourse of the Hungarian Authoritarian Turn Zoltán Ginelli (Independent Researcher, Hungary)</p> <p>Conveners: Karl Polanyi (Research Centre for Global Social Studies)</p>	<p>Panel K – Capitalist Transformations and Racialized Inequalities</p> <p>K1. Waste in the City: Racialized Inequalities of Solid Waste Management in Central and Eastern Europe Joanna Kostka (Lancaster University, UK), Jekatyerina Dunajeva (Pazmany Peter Catholic University, Hungary)</p> <p>K2. Between expulsions and political containment: The (un)stable spatialization of Roma poverty in Romania Filip Alexandrescu (ICCV, Romania), Anghel Ionuț-Marian (ICCV, Romania)</p> <p>K3. Informal and cooperative housing as forms of resistance Catalin Berescu (ICCV, Romanian)</p> <p>K4. Discursive Power to Represent the Roma. Media Coverage and Independent Approaches of the 2008-2009 Roma Serial Killings in Hungary Zsuzsa Plainer (ISPMN, Romania)</p> <p>Moderator: Angéla Kóczé (Central European University, Austria)</p>	<p>Panel L - Case studies from Central and Eastern Europe: Populism and Post-socialist Rural Development</p> <p>L1. Constructing Utopia in the Carpathian Basin: A Semi-periphery Nationalist-Populist Imaginary Robert Imre (Tampere University, Finland), Attila Kustán Magyarai (Tampere University, Finland)</p> <p>L2. State-led Cultural Production in Post-Socialist Hungary – The Case of the Hungarian Academy of Arts Kristóf Nagy (Central European University, Austria)</p> <p>L3. Infrastructuring Raspberries: Agronomists, Cold Chains and the Socialist Base of the 'Red Gold of Serbia' Andre Thiemann (Riga Stradins University, Latvia)</p> <p>L4. The LEADER rural development program – an exercise in reassembling territorial fragmentation under capitalist uneven development George Iulian Zamfir (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>Moderator: Árpád Töhötöm Szabó (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p>
<p>12:00 – 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>Panel M – The Decline of Leftist Politics: Populist Industrial and Welfare Policies</p> <p>M1. Thinking big or small: Populist parties, producer groups and SME upgrading in Poland and Hungary Edgars Eihmanis (European University Institute, Italy), Marek Naczyk (University of Oxford, UK)</p> <p>M2. Ghosts of Empire. The revival of the "natural order" and the extirpation of democracy Francesca Coin (Lancaster University, UK)</p> <p>M3. Welfare for the wealthy? Family policy change since the global crisis in Central and Eastern Europe Dorottya Szikra (CEU, Austria), Cristina Raț (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>M4. Rise of the Authoritarian Post-Neoliberalism in Poland Ümit Akcay (Berlin School of Economics and Law, Germany)</p> <p>Moderator: Camil Pârvu (University of Bucharest, Romania)</p>	<p>Panel N – Economic growth and Debt in Central and Eastern Europe</p> <p>N1. The FDI-led Growth Models of the East-Central and South-Eastern European Periphery Cornel Ban (Copenhagen Business School, Denmark)</p> <p>N2. The rise of the consolidation state: the case of Slovenia Marko Hočevar (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)</p> <p>N3. Understanding (dis)integration: lessons from the Yugoslav debt crisis Ana Podvršič (University of Graz, Austria)</p> <p>N4. Debt pathways: an anthropological perspective on housing debt in Croatia Marek Mikuš (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany)</p> <p>Moderator: Dana Domșodi (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p>	<p>Panel O - Uneven Urban Development, Subordinated Housing Financialization and Racialized Inequalities in The European Semi-Peripheries</p> <p>O1. Dependent housing financialization in Hungary through the case of household debt Zsuzsanna Pósfai, (Periféria Policy and Research Center, Budapest, Hungary, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland), Márton Czirfusz (Periféria Policy and Research Center, Budapest, Hungary)</p> <p>O2. Racialized housing unevenness and capital accumulation through real estate development. A case from Cluj-Napoca Enikő Vincze (Babeş-Bolyai University), George Zamfir (Babeş-Bolyai University)</p> <p>O3. Invisible tensions: specifics of FX housing loans in Romania in the context of housing financialization Ioana Florea (Frontul Comun pentru Dreptul la Locuire, Romania), Mihail Dumitriu (Frontul Comun pentru Dreptul la Locuire, Romania)</p> <p>O4. Eviction infrastructure in Serbia: coronavirus, infra-protecting and criminalisation of solidarity Ana Vilenica (independent researcher, Belgrade/Pančevo, Serbia), Vladimir Mentus (Institute of Social Science, Belgrade, Serbia)</p> <p>Conveners: Enikő Vincze (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Michele Lancione (The University of Sheffield, UK)</p>	<p>Panel P - Work Relations and Gendered Division of Labour in Central and Eastern Europe</p> <p>P1. "The "whole house" in the factory and on the field: gender and generation inequalities in a Macedonian town" Miladina Monova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria)</p> <p>P2. In the name of sexual emancipation: pressures of openness on women in the semi-periphery Ráhel Katalin Turai (CEU, Austria)</p> <p>P3. Engineering Succession: Mediated Relational Work of Arranging Wealth Transfers Among Poland's First Generation Capitalists Mateusz Halawa (Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland), Feliks Tuszko (Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland)</p> <p>P4. From text to film: narratives of Ukrainian solo female migrants in Italy Olena Fedjuk (University of Padua, Italy)</p> <p>Moderator: Mariya Ivancheva (University of Liverpool, UK)</p> <p>Film screening: The panel will be followed by a film screening of the anthropological documentary Olha's Italian Diary + Q&A with director Olena Fedjuk</p> <p>Moderator: Csilla Kató (Astra Film Fest, Sibiu, Romania)</p> <p>Discussant: Marius Lazăr (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p>
<p>14:00 – 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>BREAK</p>			

SCHEDULE OF PANELS AND PRESENTATIONS

<p>16:00 – 18:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>Panel Q - (Book symposium) From the crisis of liberalism to the rise of illiberalism in Hungary: Perspectives from political economy Conveners: Gábor Scheiring (Bocconi University, Milan, Italy), Kristóf Szombati (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle - Saale, Germany) Moderator: Don Kalb (University of Bergen, Norway) PARTICIPANTS: Q1. Book: <i>The Rise of Hungarian Populism: State Autocracy and the Orbán Regime</i> (Emerald Publishing, Bingley, 2019) Attila Antal (Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary) Q2. Book: <i>The Retreat of Liberal Democracy: Authoritarian Capitalism and the Accumulative State in Hungary</i> (Forthcoming, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2020) Gábor Scheiring (Bocconi University, Milan, Italy) Q3. Book: <i>The Revolt of The Provinces: Anti-Gypsyism and Right-Wing Politics in Hungary</i> (New York, Berghahn, 2018) Kristof Szombati (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle - Saale, Germany) Q4. Book: <i>Movement of the People: Hungarian Folk Dance, Populism and Citizenship</i>. (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, October 2021) Mary N. Taylor (City University of New York, US)</p>	<p>Panel R – (Roundtable Discussion) Capitalist transformations and emerging food movements in Central and Eastern Europe Convener: Christina Plank (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria) PARTICIPANTS: Christina Plank (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria), Natalia Mamonova (Swedish Institute of International Politics, Sweden), Irina Velicu (University of Coimbra, Portugal), Hestia Delibaş (University of Coimbra, Portugal)</p>		
<p>18:00 – 20:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>KEYNOTE LECTURE: Costas Lapavitsas (SOAS University of London, UK) Subordinate Financialisation: Its Relevance for Central and Eastern Europe Discussants: Cornel Ban (Copenhagen Business School, Denmark) and Veronica Lazăr (Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania)</p>			
<p>Day 3 – Saturday, 22 May, 2021</p>				
<p>10:00 – 12:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>Panel S - The Afterlife of Nature Extraction Structures following 1989 in Romania S1. The “glorious”, communist past and the “green”, ecologic present: Anthropological perspectives over the Danube Delta fishing communities and their natural resource management Oana Ivan (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania) S2. Forest change and timber flow in the infrastructural space of late capitalism. A case study of the Viseu River Valley in Maramures, Romania Iulia Hurducaş (Sheffield School of Architecture, UK) S3. Carpathian forest frontiers: households and fiefdoms, regional comparisons Monica Vasile, (Maastricht University, Netherlands) S4. Barren fields of corn and wheat: On the ruination of the medicinal plant research and industry after 1989 in Romania Ágota Ábrán (History and Art Museum, Zalău, Romania) Conveners: Ágota Ábrán (History and Art Museum, Zalău, Romania), Andrei-Sorin Herţa (History and Art Museum, Zalău, Romania)</p>	<p>Panel T - Institutionalizing Anticommunism. Representations of Capitalism in Romanian Film and Literature T1. Anticommunist Anticapitalism: The ‘Good Capitalism’ in Romanian Post-Communist Poetry Ştefan Baghiu (Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania) T2. Anticommunism was not enough. The Bankruptcy of Romanian Film Industry of the 1990s Claudiu Turcuş (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania) T3. Deetatization of Culture, Privatization of Politics. The Case of the Publishing Houses in Post-Communist Romania Adriana Stan (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Cosmin Borza (Sextil Puscariu Istitute of Linguistics and Literary History, Romania) T4. Anti-capitalism in Stalinist Films: What happens when ‘Gender’ and ‘Communist Bodies’ are at odds? Bogdan Popa (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain) Conveners: Claudiu Turcuş, (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Camil Ungureanu (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain)</p>	<p>Panel U – Creative industries and the Capitalist Commodification of Art U1. Creative cities: commodification of art and cultural gentrification at the periphery of European capitalism Miki Branişte (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania) U2. Locality, Solidarity, Knowledge in the Freelance Virtual Community: the Case of Translators in Poland Kateryna Novikova (Expert at GUS - Statistics Poland) U3. Work, Pleasure and Pop-Culture: negations, interrelations and “bricolage” in Rompop Mihai Lukács (Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania) U4. Identity Crisis and the Right in Liberal-Age Romanian Theatre Lucian Ţion (University of Singapore, Singapore) Moderator: Oana Mateescu (University of Bergen, Norway)</p>	<p>Panel V - Case Studies from Romania: Inequalities and Political Activism V1. How a poor country becomes rich? Is “good governance” and in particular fighting corruption the pre-requisite for economic growth and welfare? Why anti-corruption policies failed to deliver? The Romanian case Daniela Ionescu (University of Birmingham, UK) V2. Attitudes to social inequality, subjective social status and psychological wellbeing – an analysis of the Romanian context based on survey data Sorana Constantinescu (Babeş-Bolyai University), Daniela Angi (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Gabriel Bădescu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania) V3. Participatory budgeting in CEE Countries: lessons from Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic, plus Moldavia Adrian Dohotaru (Romania) V4. Marketing Religion and Nationalism in a Post-Socialist Environment: Romania’s Family Referendum and the Emergence of a New “Anti-System” Party (AUR) Raluca Ana Alecu (National School of Political Science and Public Administration - SNSPA, Romania) Moderator: Andrei Ţăranu (National School on Political Sciences and Public Administration, Bucharest Romania)</p>

SCHEDULE OF PANELS AND PRESENTATIONS

<p>12:00 – 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>KEYNOTE LECTURE: Jonathan Hopkin (London School of Economics, UK) Great Transformations in 21st Century European Periphery: The View from Southern Europe Discussants: Attila Meleg (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary) and Dana Domşodi (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p>			
<p>14:00 – 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)</p>	<p>Panel W - The Commodification of Labour and the Global Supply Chains in CEE countries</p> <p>W1. From prefix capitalism to neoliberal economism: Russian automotive industry as a laboratory in capitalist realism Jeremy Morris (Aarhus University, Denmark)</p> <p>W2. The workplace effects of global supply chain dependence: Romania's automobile industry Zoltán Mihály (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>W3. Commodifying labour in Eastern Germany: the triumph of neoliberal morality Katerina Ivanova (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany)</p> <p>W4. Work and Livelihood in Corna, Roşia Montană Imola Püsök (University of Pécs, Hungary)</p> <p>Moderator: Irina Culic (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p>	<p>Panel X - Anthropological Perspectives on Capitalist Relations in Central and Eastern Europe</p> <p>X1. "Rivers to the people": energy transition, water grabbing and ecopopulist unrest in the Balkan Mountains Ivan Rajković (University of Vienna, Austria)</p> <p>X2. "It Belongs to Someone on Paper, But It's Nobody's": Small Shareholding and Its Discontents in a Croatian Worker-Owned Company Ognjen Kojanic (Independent Scholar, US)</p> <p>X3. Citadel of Fire: Spatialization of time in the post-industrial city of Hunedoara, Romania Vlad Gheorghiu (University of Aberdeen, UK)</p> <p>X4. Elevating the Standing of Vocational Education and Training in Romania Maria Pantea (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>Moderator: Natalia Buier (Madrid Institute for Advanced Study, Spain)</p>	<p>Panel Y - The Capitalism's New Clothes: Critical Theories in Central and Eastern Europe</p> <p>Y1. Is there a way forward with the critical theory? Lorin Ghiman (University of Art and Design, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)</p> <p>Y2. The poverty of capitalism. Philosophical critiques of capitalism in post-Communist Romania Ciprian Bogdan (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>Y3. "Now or Never!": notes on the life and times of the Romanian middle-class subject Alexandru-Vasile Sava (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>Y4. Critical theory and the crisis of socio-ecological reproduction Attila Szigeti (iASK, Hungary; Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>Y5. The Poignancy and Relevance of Critical Theory Here and Now Gáspár Miklós Tamás (CEU, Austria)</p> <p>Y6. From the Local Critique of Ideology to Thinking the Next Transition Ovidiu Ţichindeleanu (Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania)</p> <p>Conveners: Ciprian Bogdan (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Gáspár Miklós Tamás (Central European University, Austria)</p>	<p>Panel Z - Neo-Liberal Subjectivities in Central and Eastern Europe: Genealogies of Appropriation and Forms of Resistances</p> <p>Z1. Beyond neo-liberalism: what is above happiness and well-being? Elena Trifan (Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania)</p> <p>Z2. Struggles for Professionalization: the Case of Romanian Providers of Personal and Spiritual Development Services Anca Simionca (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>Z3. Psychology, work and the new capitalist therapeutic cultures in contemporary Romania Sorin Gog (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)</p> <p>Z4. Healing Capitalism. Forms of spiritual connection and community at a New Age Festival Raluca Moşescu-Bumbac (SNSPA, Bucharest, Romania)</p> <p>Z5. Vernacular Resistance: anarchist praxis against capitalism and oppression in contemporary Romania Alex Boguş (Colectivul Autonom Acasa, Romania)</p> <p>Z6. Lifestyle migration in a Slovenian ecovillage: performing resistance in times of constant economic growth Petya V. Dimitrova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria)</p> <p>Conveners: Elena Trifan (Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania), Raluca Moşescu-Bumbac (SNSPA, Bucharest, Romania)</p>

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Thursday, 20 May, 12:00 – 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95679696540?pwd=clU1OWtlZDV5a1VJMk1XWUMxRE90QT09>

Meeting ID: **956 7969 6540**

Passcode: **2021**

Dorothee Bohle

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Title: **Capitalist Transformations in East Central Europe since the Great Recession: What Do We Know? What Have We Missed?**

Abstract: There is a broad consensus that capitalism in East Central Europe, which was characterized by relatively radical forms of neoliberalism, has changed since the Great Recession. Yet there is little consensus on what is at the core of this transformation, and how far-reaching the changes have been. Reviewing recent literature on East Central European capitalism, the presentation asks three related questions. 1. If neoliberalism has implied the retreat of the state from economic roles, does the recent return of the state in the economy herald the end of neoliberalism? 2. Is there a causal rather than merely incidental relationship between transforming capitalism and the turn to authoritarian politics? 3. How to make sense of right-wing governments' double attack on liberalism as a force of economic dispossession and, simultaneously, as an advocate of political emancipation of women, ethnic and sexual minorities, and migrants? Rather than fully fledged answers, the presentation develops propositions to inspire new research on capitalist diversity on Europe's periphery.

Discussants: **Daniela Gabor** (UWE Bristol, UK) and **Eniko Vincze** (UBB, Romania)

Friday, 21 May, 18:00 – 20:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/93178075997?pwd=dG1sV0RKQzVQQUdSL21pdzdvdGdtQT09>

Meeting ID: **931 7807 5997**

Passcode: **2021**

Costas Lapavitsas

SOAS University of London, UK

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Title: **Subordinate Financialisation: Its Relevance for Central and Eastern Europe**

Abstracts: Financialisation in developing countries has been extensively researched but its characteristic features remain unclear and should be distinguished from financial liberalisation and globalisation. There are two fundamental theoretical approaches to it, namely 'subordinate' and 'dependent' financialisation, both of which are relevant to Central and Eastern Europe. Subordinate financialisation is highly variable creates ties of dependence. Furthermore, in Central and Eastern Europe there are ties of dependence based on industrial networks. Both are sources of economic vulnerability.

Discussants: **Cornel Ban** (Copenhagen Business School, Denmark) and **Veronica Lazăr** (Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania)

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Saturday, 22 May, 12:00 – 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/94037565117?pwd=QkQzN3gxMmcvQ09FYnA2Y3ZGeFRzUT09>

Meeting ID: **940 3756 5117**

Passcode: **2021**

Jonathan Hopkin

Institutional Affiliation: London School of Economics, UK

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Title: **Great Transformations in 21st Century European Periphery: The View from Southern Europe**

Abstract: The crisis in the Euro area has placed the Southern European democracies under unprecedented economic, political and social stress. Here I argue that Southern Europe's rapid modernization process has created an economy in which markets are deeply embedded in political and social institutions hostile to change. These institutions are unsuited to the Eurozone system of economic governance which Southern Europeans strove so hard to join, but which now requires them to embrace rapid economic adjustment and liberalization. The imposition of austerity and pro-market reforms, far from promoting change, is actually more likely to entrench the social coalitions that sustain the current arrangements. Instead, reforms need to be aimed at redistributing power and opportunity from insiders to outsiders, but the existing political parties and elites are ill equipped to deliver this.

Discussants: **Attila Melegh** (Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary) and **Dana Domşodi** (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING

Friday, 21 May, 14:00 – 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99458989913?pwd=YkdYNGRYOEh5UVdxMkFhRXBRWHZWdz09>

Meeting ID: **994 5898 9913**

Passcode: **2021**

Olha's Italian Diary

Director and research: **Olena Fedjuk**

DoP: Eszter Csepeli, Sound: Zoltán Kovács, Editor: Victor Onysko,

Length: 52'

Film Synopsis: Olha is a migrant woman from Ukraine working as a care worker in Italy. Unlike many of women in the similar situation – middle-aged, away from home, working often illegally and long hours looking after elderly people – Olha does not forget about herself. She believes in love and thinks it is possible to find a beautiful romantic relationship even at the age of 57. Even if the relationships between migrant women and local men are considered to be a transgression on both sides. Olha's Italian Diary is a work in progress, a film which aims to break away from the "separation with the family" focus in transnational migration. It is an intimate sneak-peek into one of the contemporary taboo topics: intimate lives of the female migrants away from home.

Moderator: **Csilla Kató** (Astra Film Fest, Sibiu, Romania)

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Discussant: **Marius Lazăr** (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania)

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PANELS & ABSTRACTS

PANEL A

EUROPEAN UNION AND THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN DEPENDENT ECONOMIES

Date: Thursday, 20 May, 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98535571725>

Moderator: **Manuela Boatcă**

Professor of Sociology and Head of School of the Global Studies Program, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany

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A1. Still waiting for Polanyi in Brussels

Laszlo Bruszt

Institutional Affiliation: Professor, Department of Political Sciences, Central European University, Austria

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Abstract: The paper revisits the debate about the existence of a Polyanian drive in the EU, a process that would allegedly lead to the re-emergence of some form of embedded liberalism at a continental level. It sides with those who have claimed that still Hayek rules the day in Brussels. Using the example of the integration of the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, it makes two claims. First, it argues that the Eastern enlargement has been dominated by market enhancing policies while limiting the role for market correcting ones. Counter-movements against the growing role of the transnational market in distributing opportunities and wealth came in forms that have in the end strengthened the dominance of

the “Free markets for free” movement in Europe. In the pre-accession period, the core countries used the Commission to counterbalance the potentially most damaging negative developmental consequences of market integration. In the post-accession period, the spreading of economic nationalism in the CEE, on the other hand, strengthened the domination of the ordoliberal orthodoxy within the EU. Second, the paper takes issue with the claim that by increasing heterogeneity in the EU, the integration of the CEE countries has just reinforced the dominance of the Hayekian federal features of the EU. It argues that the problem is not with heterogeneity per se, but with the way heterogeneity is re-presented at the level of Brussels. It is the confederal structure of representation that holds back the emergence of a transnational counter-movement that could finally bring Polanyi to Brussels.

A2. Reinventing the local economy in dependent market economies: the role of developmental coalitions

Gergő Medve-Bálint

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Abstract: The East Central European dependent market economies (DME) heavily rely on the inflow of foreign capital. The main competitive edge of these countries has so far been their pool of cheap, skilled labour, which tended to attract foreign investments in low value-added activities. However, this may set important limits to the ability of DMEs to upgrade their economies and overcome their current semi-peripheral position in the global markets. Hence, nearly thirty years after the capitalist transformation commenced, East Central European countries face another transformational challenge: in order to avoid falling into a middle-income trap, DMEs need to reposition their economies and find new comparative advantages. However, this would also require the dismantling

of the core institutional features of the DME model, which has been competitive primarily in the low value-added segments of complex manufacturing industries. This paper addresses this issue from the local perspective. It argues that even though from the outset such an economic transformation of the DME model may face severe constraints, the process has already begun in certain locations where local developmental coalitions represent the major drivers of economic change and upgrading. The paper empirically substantiates the argument by comparing the economic trajectories of the cities of Gdańsk in Poland and Cluj-Napoca in Romania. Relying on an extensive set of interviews conducted with local public and private stakeholders, the paper reveals how local development coalitions have contributed to the major transformation of the local economies and how the two cities have become hubs of research, development and innovation by attracting high value-added foreign investments mostly into the ICT sector. In the case of Gdańsk, public authorities have been the main

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drivers of change by initiating a lasting cooperation between the dedicated agencies of an active city hall and the regional assembly. In contrast, intensifying collaboration between local universities and private businesses contributed to the economic upgrading of Cluj-Napoca, where public authorities have played an enabling rather than a leading role. In spite of these differences, the two cases reveal several commonalities

as well: in both cities local political leadership has been stable for a long period and EU funds have greatly contributed to successful economic transformation, which has taken place in a frequently changing, at times even adverse external political environment. The paper thus concludes that the repositioning of the DME model is possible at the local level even without the involvement of the central government.

A3. In or out? Comparing the old (Southern) with the new (Central and Eastern European) peripheries of the European Union in the context of Eurozone participation: a comparative political economy approach

Anastassios Chardas

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Abstract: One of the issues that is rarely -if at all- discussed by the official institutions of the European Union (EU), is that of the non-participation of specific countries from Central and Eastern Europe in the Eurozone, even though they have fulfilled the convergence criteria long ago. Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary are -according to all official EU reports- vibrant capitalist political economies, fully integrated in the European political economy. It would thus be logical to conclude that the EU would have pushed these countries to enter the Eurozone so as to strengthen the project of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) both politically and economically. Yet such policy pressure does not seem to have been exercised, even though according to the EU Treaties, participation in the EU is inexorably linked with eventual adoption of the euro. This situation seems particularly odd, given the political energy that was afforded by the EU since 2010 so as to keep the countries of the Eurozone Southern periphery (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain) inside the common currency. The policy instruments that have been used

by the main EU institutions in order to achieve this objective, occasionally took the form of blackmail and intimidation.

The article will compare the political economy trajectories of the old and the new peripheries of the EU in order to empirically answer the perennial questions that have been asked during the last ten years: is it better in political economy terms for the EU countries to be in or out of the Eurozone? Does participation in the Eurozone indeed restrict the member states in exercising fiscal and monetary policies? Did the countries of the new EU periphery take advantage of the policy leeway that non-participation in the Eurozone affords them in terms of implementing anti-cyclical economic policies? Empirically, we will examine in depth and compare the economic policies that have been implemented in the two sets of countries during the last ten years, using official Government resources and data from each country. We tentatively conclude that participation in the Eurozone has indeed constrained the political economies of the Southern EU member states and these constraints are primarily responsible for the continuous difficulties facing the social economies of these countries. If that is the case, we conclude that the member states of the new EU periphery may be better off outside the EMU from a political economy perspective.

A4. Losing the 'global'? (Re)building Bosnian enterprises across transition

Anna Calori

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Abstract: This paper charts the rise and fall of Yugoslavia's globalist economic dream through the case of Energoinvest, a large enterprise in Yugoslavia's semi-periphery (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Specifically, it historicises its transformation from a socialist self-managed giant into a private company post-neoliberal transition. The paper places this case study at the centre of multiple, converging or contradicting long-term processes globalization and de-globalization, industrialization and de-industrialization, which partly transcend the caesura of 1989.

As one of the largest Yugoslav exporters, Energoinvest was the protagonist first of a "leap outwards", which embedded it in Yugoslavia's economic partnerships with the Global South. After a brief phase of socialist reforms, which entailed a process of restructuring into a holding, the company's operations were halted abruptly by the outbreak of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Afterwards, the company was subjected to a very controversial privatization process (still ongoing), which reshaped it into a set of disconnected SMEs with a reduced employment capacity. In spite of the peripheralisation effect entailed in the project of neoliberal restructuring, some of these enterprises are still holding onto the global alliances forged during socialism. As the paper contends, this company was at the centre of two clashing visions of post-war economic

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development, and two different sets of notions about what the future configuration of Bosnia's post-socialist economy should look like. Should the country rely on its previous socialist-global giants, or should it turn to SMEs development? What would be the fate of workers' ownership and employment rights in the newly established enterprises? And how have these enterprises sought to reconfigure their place and position on the global market through transition, in contrast to what envisioned by international development institutions?

This debate, as the paper argues, betrays a much more complex and long-term discussion about the prospects of semi-peripheries in the global economy, about notions, visions,

and expectations of "globality" within former self-managed workplaces, and about the contested legacies of "socialist globalization" after the collapse of state socialism. Based on extensive archival research and oral history interviews with workers and managers of "globally engaged self-managed enterprises", as well as international actors involved in the restructuring of formerly socially-owned enterprises. The paper tentatively concludes that the promises of globalisation and development post-1995 were actually translated in peripheralisation and marginalisation of a formerly globally engaged and mobile workforce, thus fostering a cognitive dissonance between horizons of expectations and spaces of experience.

PANEL B

FOCUS UKRAINE: NEO-LIBERALISM AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE STATE

Date: Thursday, 20 May, 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98044228973>

Moderator: **Alona Liasheva**

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B1. Temporalities of (re)production: Ukrainian garment workers in global supply chains

Oksana Dutchak

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Abstract: Ukrainian garment production has been embedded in global supply chains since 90's. This embeddedness fundamentally shapes temporal rhythms of local production and through it – labour power reproduction of the predominantly female workforce. Global supply chain architecture regulates the two main resources for reproduction, available to workers: material income and production-free time. Marxist theory of social reproduction allows demonstrating how the embeddedness into the global garment supply chains – with their poverty wages and temporal regimes of "just-in-time" and "fast fashion" – interplays with the local post-Soviet context of relative retreat of the state from regulating

both production and reproduction. For women, selling their labour power in such a localized global production within capitalist system, where reproduction is subordinated to production, and where material and temporal resources are inversely related, these results in both material and temporal poverty. Temporal resources, are, however, less flexible by nature: their accumulation is constrained by natural daily rhythms. Temporal resources are also secondary – because of the current socio-economic formation, manifested in subordination of reproduction to production and the central meaning of labour power for the survival of the working-class people. In the end, temporalities of reproduction are constrained by temporalities of production and by its dominance both in terms of providing production-free time and how this time must be used to reproduce labour power.

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B2. Post-post-Soviet factory regime in Ukraine: decomposing embeddedness

Denys Gorbach

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Abstract: The paper takes an ethnographic look at the evolution of factory regimes in the post-Soviet Ukraine. It was the author of this very concept, Michael Burawoy, who first explored ethnographically factory regimes in the post-Soviet area in the early 1990s. Describing the unusually wide working process autonomy and the hegemony of informal hierarchies and procedures, he conceptualised them as part of the post-Soviet “merchant capitalism” - a blind alley in the process of capitalist development. Researchers who followed in Burawoy’s footsteps continued refining and updating his analysis of the post-Soviet factory regime, so different from developments in the countries of what later came to be the eastern EU. In the

2000s, they forecast capitalist “normalisation” of the post-Soviet industrial relations as the economic growth attracts foreign investments and pushes towards a rationalisation. However, instead of the neoliberal standardisation, Ukraine has seen a transformation into a different direction: the “post-post-Soviet” factory regime, typical at industrial enterprises, both public and private. I studied this regime during a total of ten months of fieldwork in an industrial city in the east of Ukraine in 2018-2020. The new regime keeps the main traits of the previous extreme conjuncture of survival, taking them into a different macroeconomic context. The post-Soviet imperatives of industrial paternalism are put in the context of politico-economic competition (which makes them indispensable) and of profit motive (which prompts disinvestment). The result is an eroding paternalism, which is, however, still able to largely maintain social peace and ensure sufficient profitability.

B3. “We are cut off from everything”: infrastructural vulnerability in frontline communities in Donetsk region

Anastasiya Ryabchuk

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Abstract: Prior to 2014, Donetsk was Ukraine’s second largest city, surrounded by a myriad of smaller satellite-cities, all connected into an industrial network, centred around coal mining and heavy industry. Residents of smaller towns and villages around Donetsk, commuted to these cities for work and access to most social infrastructure, such as hospitals, centres for administrative services, institutions of higher education,

etc. Many urban residents had relatives and summer houses in nearby rural communities, while elderly village dwellers kept in touch with their children in cities, looked after grandchildren during summer vacations, and passed on canned food and sacks of potatoes. These networks were abruptly cut off in 2014. Frontline communities at some 10-20km from Donetsk were isolated economically, geographically and socially. In contrast to NGO reports from frontline communities that focus on vulnerable social categories, and see vulnerability as a personal characteristic, I propose to focus on infrastructural vulnerability witnessed by residents, and the consequences of capital flight and resulting emptiness of frontline communities.

B4. Migrants from Donbass in Belarus and Ukraine: a comparative history of crisis.

Volodymyr Artiukh

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Abstract: In his postdoctoral project, Volodymyr is studying the movement of migrants from Donbass to the rest of Ukraine and Belarus. His research focuses on how the displaced people and labour migrants experience three types of social and economic disintegration: destruction caused by the military conflict in Donbass, abandonment resulting from economic demodernization in the rest of Ukraine, and depopulation in

Belarusian countryside. His project combines ethnography with historical research and aims to situate these experiences in the divergent political economic trajectories of the two post-Soviet countries in a post-crisis decade.

Bio: Volodymyr completed his PhD in Sociology and Social Anthropology at the Central European University in 2020. His dissertation is an historically-informed analysis of labour in Belarus centred on workers’ agency in the context of bureaucratic labour control. Alongside his postdoctoral project, he is currently working on a book manuscript based on his dissertation.

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PANEL C

FOCUS ROMANIA SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND 'COUNTER-MOVEMENTS' IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Date: Thursday, 20 May, 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/92353493221>

Conveners:

Sergiu Mişcoiu

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Diana Mărgărit

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Panel Description: Despite the heterogeneity of their claims, participants or goals, the waves of protests that rapidly spread all over the world after 2010 can be perceived as popular instruments that have been consistently concerned with both the political crisis of representation, the dominance of the capitalist order, the constantly increasing social gap between rich and poor and, in the end, the pauperisation of lower classes. As rightfully Polanyi observed, the expansion of market economy is done at the price of the weakening of democratic institutions. As a consequence, the impact of global economic relations over domestic policies entailed

large popular manifestations of outrage and discontent which eventually culminated with political removals or dismissals from governmental service.

This panel seeks to explore the diverse ways in which social movements in Central and East Europe have reacted as 'counter-movements' (Polanyi) to global transformations and expansion of capitalist relations in the past years. The presentations shall point out, among others, some of their particularities in respect to other previous waves of social movements, such as the large participation of young middle-class people, the use of new media and channels of communication in order to both mobilize and spread the information and the critique of political class for misrepresentation of the popular interests and complicity in corrupted behaviour next to global economic actors – the Big Capital -. Moreover, by using different (quantitative and qualitative) methods, case-studies and comparative analyses, the presentations shall highlight the impact of the popular uprisings on the domestic political status quo, as well as on the global processes of governance in which states, corporations and civil networks play different and disproportionate roles.

C1. Romanian social movement (2012-2019) – between a Polanyian counter movement and the reinforcement of the status quo

Victoria Stoiciu

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Abstract: After more than two decades since the civil unrest in 1991, during which the main forms of collective mobilization were organized by trade unions, in 2012 thousands of citizens spontaneously took to the streets in a protest that continued for more than a month. This mobilization set a precedent, a series of civic protests emerging in the following years (2012-2019). In my presentation, I analyse these mobilizations by situating them in the wider context of Romanian political economy. I argue that in spite of the pronounced neoliberalism that is characteristic to the Romanian post-communist economic model, a cross-party political consensus, combining economic liberalization with minimal social protection managed to keep under control the tensions produced by the economic

transition and ensured a fragile social peace. The anti-crisis policies, undertaken by a right-wing government in 2010-2011 have suspended this consensus and intensified the liberalization, by cutting social protection, wages, and social rights. The 2012 civic upraise is analysed from the perspective of the Polanyian counter-movement – I argue that it represents a reaction to the expansion of the market logic to areas previously protected by minimal legal provisions, such as workplace, health, welfare. Further on, I analyse the factors that obstructed the coagulation of a Polanyian counter movement inside the Romanian protests. I look at the dynamics of the Romanian protests and the way in which they evolved from an anti-system and anti-market discourse to an anti-corruption agenda, rejecting any criticism towards the economic liberalism and reinforcing the status quo.

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C2. Protests targeting the past vs. protests targeting the future: Recreative activism and the Fridays for Future mobilization in Romania

Ruxandra Gubernat

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Henry P. Rammelt

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Abstract: In September 2019, a first protest of the Fridays for Future/Climat Strike global movement took place in Bucharest. Of the one thousand participants, around 70% were pupils or students, most of them first time or unexperienced protesters. These “post-transition” citizens, representatives of the Generation Z, protested peacefully, yet being very vocal and showing a strong in-group solidarity.

Romania witnessed waves of mass protests over almost one decade, that lead to changes in both the political field and the public perception on protesting. Contradicting argumentative patterns on the backwardness of Eastern Europe, Romania became one of the most prominent examples of efficient social mobilization; in line with tendencies in the region of increasing contention and an end of the catch-up character of activism (Ekiert & Grzegorz 2018; Fagan & Sircar 2017). Since 2011/12 already, young, formerly politically inert citizens redefined democracy following Western ideals for the modern state and politics, through massive protests. Analysts noted that these protests managed to transform the ‘democracy of parties and not of citizens’, as Romania has often been described prior to the waves of mobilizations in the 2010 era, into a ‘democracy of citizens and not of parties’. At least since 2015, one might observe that protests, having corruption as a master-frame, took a critical stance towards national governments, demanding for a change not only on the policy level, but especially for a change in the way politics was done. Undoubtedly, these protests widely incorporated Western discourses on corruption and Statebuilding, embracing and being consumed with solving “transition” grievances.

The politicization process that started in 2011/12 and that ultimately led to the spiral of protests, as well as the predominant patterns of engagement, were explained by Gubernat & Rammelt (2017) through the appearance of a new form of unconventional political participation: recreative activism. They’ve argued that recreative activism requires less commitment than classic activism, stronger relies on social bonds established and maintained outside the sphere of political involvement, and is perceived as an enjoyable activity but, by its existence, is considered tantamount to political change. This concept refers to a non-violent and non-confrontational culture of protest, making use of very up-to-date repertoires of dissent.

In this paper we argue that the massive protest waves of 2011/12 until 2018 were mainly using mobilization frames originating from problem areas associated with the results and the manner of the regime change - and, consequently, with post-communism - whereas the FridaysForFuture/ Climate Strike protests are concerned with a different type of transition: the transition to a green and more just society. However, the latter also conforms to the patterns of mobilization and protest behavior of recreative activism. Thus, we will analyse the results of a protest survey carried out by Gubernat & Rammelt on the September FFF/ Climate Strike protests. They reveal that protesters’ claims and concerns are future oriented: while still seeing corruption as one of the key features of the current situation, protesters belonging to the FFF/Climate Strike movement in Romania are done solving issues of the past. The survey shows a shift in attributing blame: corporations are seen as the ones responsible for the precarious situation of our modern society, while governments and politicians are more the passive players that ‘could and should’ implement policies stopping companies from further exploiting society and environment. This evidence will be used to further develop the concept of recreative activism, incorporating lifestyle features of this young generation of protesters, such as their desire to be virtuous members of society, contributing to bettering themselves and the world they live in, manifested through patterns of engagement and protesting.

C3. Ways of Seeing/Ways of Protesting: Visuals in Transnational Protest Analysis

Dana S. Trif

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Abstract: Ritualistic behaviour in protest action has become a trademark of the most recent wave of large-scale political demonstrations. This paper evaluates the challenges of applying qualitative content analysis to the visual artifacts

publicly documenting such protests in three major cases: the 2014 Sunflower Movement in Taiwan, the 2016/7 South Korean pro-impeachment, anti-corruption rallies and the 2017 anti-corruption, pro-justice marches in Romania. In all these instances, political messages have been supported by a seemingly arbitrary choice of protest paraphernalia: candlelight in South Korea, I-phone lights in Romania, public square sit-ins in Taipei. Together with a protest choreography involving marches through public spaces and the repetitive chanting of slogans, such actions have

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supported the idea of a newly emerging transnational wave of pro-democracy movements. The similarity of their political messages has contributed to the movements' global appeal, as has the mass media distribution of images taken at these rallies.

My project evaluates publicly available photographs with the aid of Qualitative Content Analysis. A focus on *content* and *description* was considered necessary in order to deepen the comparative analysis.

C4. Anticorruption as social fantasy and political instrument. A comparative approach

Diana Mărgărit

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Abstract: Despite the fact that Romanian society was perceiving corruption as an endemic phenomenon with significant consequences at political, social and economic levels, it became the main topic of protests only later, on the occasion of the 2017 anti 13 decree rallies. My presentation focuses on the evolution

of the anticorruption narrative during the successive waves of protests from 2012 until 2018. Even though understanding this topic requires the in-depth analysis of multiple aspects, I will rather concentrate on how and why anticorruption emerged as a dominant topic during the later waves of protests compared to the previous ones. By using theoretical tools specific to political opportunity structure and framing analyses, I seek to provide some possible explanations related both to the political scene and to social and cultural transformations that Romanian society faced during the last decades.

PANEL D

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES FOR DEPENDENT FAMILY MEMBERS IN TRANSNATIONAL SPACES OF CARE AND LABOUR

Date: Thursday, 20 May, 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)
Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/93922938431>

Conveners: Zsuzsanna Árendás

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Leyla Safta-Zecheria

PhD, Research Assistant, Department of Educational Sciences, West University of Timișoara; Ștefan Odobleja Research Fellow, New Europe College Bucharest, Romania

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Discussant: Violetta Zentai

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Panel Description: The past decade has seen growing numbers of transnationally mobile working-age people from Central and Eastern Europe settle or spend extended periods of time abroad with or without being joined by dependent family members. The relocation and leaving behind of dependent family members have led to educational and social service responses in both receiving and sending countries directed at

fulfilling the needs of migrating dependent people, as well as those left behind (especially those of children). The proposed panel seeks to critically investigate the discourses and practices surrounding the shift to attending the needs of dependent family members in times of labor mobility by investigating the emerging transnational spaces of care and education. In this, the panel asks: (1) how is the presence or absence of family members in relationships of (inter)dependence constructed as a problem to be re-dressed through services? (2) which normative ideals are reproduced through the prescription of solutions (e.g. those of the normative nuclear family as autonomous care and economic support unit, those of mothers as caregivers to be condemned or replaced etc.)? (3) how are local networks of care and solidarity incorporated, reworked, ignored or disintegrated through service provision? (4) how are the migratory process and the service and policy responses understood by the actors involved in them (mobile children, children left behind, absent and present parents and primary care givers, educators, child welfare experts, agenda-setters, policy-makers etc) and (5) how can these perspectives best be addressed methodologically? 6) how are gender,

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domestic and care relations reworked through processes of geographic proximity or separation? (7) how does technology help to breach or rework processes of separation and mediate processes of care? (8) how is the condition of being mobile

or left behind transformed by the presence or absence of precarity? (9) how do processes of migration interact with wider social care systems in both receiving and sending countries, such as the education and the national health care systems?

D1. The effects of transnational mobilities on children and their schooling: teacher narratives on return migrant children

Zsuzsanna Árendás

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Vera Messing

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Abstract: As a direct consequence of the country's EU accession, Hungary experiences a significant increase in its labour mobility directed towards Western Europe, some of it resulting in return migration (roughly half of the total outbound migration). New types of mobilities produce changes in the family structure and affect children in multiple ways. Some of the children become mobile with their parents, while others remain left behind with one of the parents or other family members. The paper would like to contribute to the deconstruction of the essentialized 'child' and 'child experience' and argue for a social status and class-driven approach, further diversified by the socio-cultural contexts and geographical locations.

Care for such children, including their schooling implies various challenges. Learning difficulties of left behind children, emotional and psychological challenges they encounter now emerges as a 'problem' in some schools, and so does the reintegration of return children, begging for reflexive pedagogies and innovative methods.

The proposed paper is based on case studies of a few schools and their pupils, located in different locations in Hungary, including a middle-class bilingual school in Budapest and a segregated 'Roma school' in a poor region of Eastern Hungary. It focuses on the child agencies and experiences regarding the social and educational re/integration of return children, also on the teacher narratives and practices related to children effected by transnational mobilities. It pays special attention to the 'voice of the child', searching for specific child perspectives and narratives on transnational migrant experiences, on narratives of mobility related 'gains' and 'losses'- social and emotional costs, learning and cognitive benefits, potential symbolic gains related to social prestige, etc.

D2. Educational support services for children with labor mobile parents that stay behind: educational solutions for socio-economic problems?

Leyla Safta-Zecheria

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Abstract: The literature on the relationship between education and migration often discusses the potential changes in the educational system of immigration countries to ensure better educational support and integration for migrant children. A smaller strain of literature also discusses the potentialities for upward social mobility and educational attainment of children who remain behind while their parents migrate. Nevertheless, the educational support that children left behind by labour mobile parents do or could receive remains understudied, while being an increasingly widespread phenomenon in countries with high rates of emigration, such as Romania.

The proposed paper critically takes stock of current educational services offered to children "left behind" in Romania by labour mobile parents working abroad in other European countries. This special vulnerable group has recently developed into

an object of policy proposals, social and educational service development, and even general moral panic (see Cojocaru et al., 2015). Yet, it is still unclear how much of this moral panic is justified. Therefore the proposed paper asks: how much of the "moral panic" driven expansion of services responds to the actual needs of this vulnerable group? How do potential beneficiaries of educational actions define their own needs and those of their community? How are these needs defined and framed by programs seeking to respond to them?

Building on in-depth qualitative research (ethnography and qualitative interviews with professionals, children, parents and other community members), the proposed paper contrasts formalized NGO based socio-educational support services in urban centres with informal care and educational support networks in small urban centres, lacking standardized support services for this vulnerable group, as well as situates these observations in a broader discourse analysis of the creation of the population of "children left behind" and the prescriptions made to improve their situation.

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D3. Re-migration of highly qualified people from Romania: a case study of migration and re-migration of Romanian doctors

Simona Herczeg

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Abstract: The migration of people from Romania in the post-communist period is a topic of exhaustive research in the specialized literature. Nevertheless, re-migration is a topic that is rarely touched upon. This research focuses on the phenomenon of re-migration of highly qualified Romanian citizens, with an emphasis on the professional category of doctors. A privileged space in the research is given to the medical system and public health, since there is a major threat to public health given the large number of doctors who leave the country. In the context of brain drain, doctors have been included in the specialized literature as a separate category, given the profound impact their migration has on the national

health system and indirectly on the health and the physical wellbeing of the entire population.

Based on a grounded theory methodology, including semi-structured and open-ended interviews with re-migrated doctors, my research explains the mechanisms that drive migration, as well as remigration of doctors. As my research shows, the reasons behind doctors' decision to leave less developed countries (like Romania) for a fresh start in developed countries, range from poor working conditions, poor pay and socio-political instability. Nevertheless, once abroad doctors' feel frustrated by "remaining the Romanian doctor", feeling that they cannot completely flourish in their new institutional and professional context, hence the potential for stimulating re-migration. I conclude that restoring public health security can be done by stimulating re-migration and by offering support services to returning doctors.

PANEL E

VARIETIES OF CAPITALISM IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Thursday, 20 May, 18:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/97744274669>

Moderator: **Visnja Vukov**

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E1. The Making of the European Financial Periphery: The Uneven Effects of Banking Union and Capital Markets Union across the European Union

Dóra Pirokska

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Rachel Epstein

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Abstract: Since the US financial meltdown in 2008 that sparked a Eurozone crisis centred on European banks, the European Union has introduced a range of new initiatives to bring greater stability and in theory also shared prosperity to EU member

states. Banking Union standardized bank supervision within the Eurozone, ostensibly with knock-on stability for non-Eurozone members through the inclusion of large multinational banks. Capital Markets Union is an effort to deepen and cheapen access to capital through the proliferation of funding instruments. Per the Single Market's logic, stable banking and more and better access to finance across the EU should dampen developmental disparities. In reality, however, the underlying structural differences in Eastern vs. Western financial markets are so severe that the EU's new regulatory structure feed into peripheral financialization. In particular, East Central Europe has very low levels of stock market capitalization, continuing high levels of foreign bank ownership in many countries, thin corporate bond markets and very little access to securitization.

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Market-based banking, in fact, hardly exists in the East. Unreflective of these differences, EU innovations in financial regulation exclude or marginalize large swaths of EU member states through supervisory disempowerment, decreasing autonomy of bank subsidiaries, and the continued higher price of financial resources. We find that the Single Financial Market

established through Banking Union and Capital Markets Union not only threatens to reify an enduring East-West divide, but also weakens European integration because these structures incentivize Eastern members to pursue financially nationalist strategies or to seek finance outside the EU.

E2. Varieties of state capitalisms: historical experiences and current tendencies

Judit Ricz

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István Benczes

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Abstract: In this research paper we aim to explore whether historical state capitalism models offer any analogies with (and potentially lessons for) contemporary experiments of Hungary and other CEE countries. In the political rhetoric of the recent hybrid regimes in the CEE region (especially in Hungary and Poland) the reference towards the successful East Asian developmental states is explicitly present. According to our hypothesis this is however valid only on the rhetorical level, and on the institutional and/or policy level differences dominate.

After analysing (and operationalising) historical state capitalist experiments, we aim to look at institutional changes and reveal main dynamics and driving forces of these changes. According to our hypothesis the direction of changes (and the underlying fundamental approach) is totally different in the historical East Asian and the contemporary CEE cases. In East Asia the economic and institutional system was given (and predetermined by contextual factors, such as situational imperatives and nationalism), and the newly emerging national capitalist elite

was a result of a competition-based market selection procedure (only those who have successfully complied with the export performance standards set by the government, have been supported and could thus survive). In contrast in the case of the recent CEE statist regimes, the logic of institutional changes is different. In this latter case institutions (and policies) are tailored to favour some pre-selected new national capitalists (whereby the criteria for selections is political loyalty and personal ties, and not linked to any preceding economic performance).

As long as in the case of the East Asian developmental state the historical interplay of external (global and regional) and internal forces have led to an evolutionary process of institutional changes leading towards increasing external competitiveness, in the case of the CEE countries the central government is driving institutional change according to its own (more political than economic) priorities leading to higher levels of corruption and rent-seeking.

On the policy level in East Asia the ultimate aim of any government intervention was to maximize economic growth via improving export performance (and was thus dominated by a competition-based and market-friendly approach), in contrast the CEE governments have rather different underlying objectives mainly related to political stability (and thus dominated by relational and bureaucratic coordination procedures). According to our analysis the East Asian success stories have been enabled by (external and internal) contextual factors, which makes the classic developmental state model non-transferable and unrepeatable in other times and places. On a higher abstraction level though some historical lessons for contemporary statist experiments in the CEE region can be formulated.

E3. The role of the IMF in CEE: shock therapy, the boom, and then the bust

Lara Merling

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Abstract: My presentation will focus on the central role played by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in shaping the transition to market economies of countries in CEE. First, I will talk about the role of played by the IMF in the immediate

aftermath of the fall of communism, when it was a key player in the design of reforms and institutions in the entire region. The IMF followed the standard recipe of what is known as the "Washington Consensus" which pushed for aggressive liberalization of the economy and privatization of state-owned assets. The type of policies they imposed failed to bring any of the promised growth and most former communist countries experienced at best a lost decade, with many economies finding themselves to be much smaller in 2000 than in 1990.

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These policies had devastating social impacts throughout the 1990s, as poverty and unemployment soared. I will provide an overview of what these policies were, what assumptions they relied on, and their questionable results.

After the initial shock, the 2000s brought somewhat of a boom in many countries in the region that started growing. However, much of this boom was fuelled by credit bubbles that can be linked to IMF policies that pushed for liberalization of the capital account. These policies made the economies of CEE countries vulnerable to external shocks. The global financial crisis triggered a “bust” in many CEE countries, which resulted in deep recessions.

As the influence of the IMF seemed to be fading away in the early 2000s, the institution underwent massive efforts to rebrand itself and claim to be concerned with issues such as inequality, inclusive growth, and climate change. However, after the post 2008 “bust” triggered by the global financial crisis, the IMF made its comeback using the same Washington Consensus policies of its past. While in its research the IMF recognizes the role it played in the bust of many CEE economies, its programmes do not adjust their approach accordingly. This will be shown by looking at its loan programmes from the post-crisis period.

E4. Varieties of European Peripheries: A Comparison of Baltic, Southern and Visegrad Member States’ Economic Models

Norbert Szijártó

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Abstract: This paper examines and compares the economic models of three distinct periphery regions of the European Union, the Baltic (quasi-liberal or dependent market economies), Southern (mixed market economies) and Visegrad (dependent market economies) countries. As a consequence of the global financial crisis and the euro crisis, countries of the Southern periphery suffered from a protracted recession with crucial negative economic and social impacts, while new member states of the Eastern periphery (Baltic and Visegrad countries) enjoyed a rapid post-crisis recovery, solid growth and continued catching up process. The varieties of capitalism literature offers a theoretically solid and well-known framework to analyse diverse economic models, however, exclusively concentrates on the role of supply-side institutions (corporate governance and finance systems, industrial relations regimes, education, training and skill regimes, inter-company relations and innovation systems). Therefore, we apply an additional approach, the neo-Kaleckian macroeconomics, which emphasizes the connection between distribution and

aggregate demand and focuses on the demand-side of the economy (exports, household consumption and relations among the demand drivers of economic growth). In parallel, and of course in a complementary way, we employ both methods to understand and evaluate the diverse performance of peripheral economic models in the European Union. Empirically, we provide a comparative statistical analysis covering large number of indicators representing both classical varieties of capitalism and neo-Kaleckian macroeconomics. The global financial crisis and the euro crisis had substantial effects on national economic models in the European Union, thus we also investigate the pre-crisis and post-crisis developments. Our initial assumptions are that (1) supply-side institutions (based on the varieties of capitalism literature) differ significantly among periphery member states; (2) demand-side economic developments (grounded on the New Kaleckian macroeconomics) indicate strong similarities among member states during the pre-crisis period but evolving diversity since the global financial crisis; (3) European Union (and Eurozone) membership – institutional provisions, rules and regulations and coordination of certain economic policies connected to supply-side and demand-side indicators – had limited and soft impacts on national economic models during the pre-crisis period, however, the strengthened and complemented post-crisis economic governance of the European Union have considerably altered peripheral economic models.

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PANEL F

CHINESE CAPITAL INVESTMENTS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Thursday, 20 May, 18:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98500603835>

Moderator: **Julia Langbein**

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F1. State capitalism and illiberal neoliberalism: state development in Serbia

Samuel Rogers

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Abstract: The relationship between state capitalism and illiberalism is strengthening. Since the 2010s, inflows of state capital into so-called illiberal democracies in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) have risen, particularly from China. This article addresses an understudied aspect of the illiberal capitalist state: its burgeoning relationship with external sources of state capitalism and what this means for illiberal development. Empirically, this study analyses Chinese state

capital inflows into the Serbian energy and military hardware sectors. Regrettably, due to travel restrictions, data-collection is limited to scholarly and online sources and therefore, future research should uncover more fully the components of such agreements. This article contributes to literature on state capitalism by clarifying and uniting two ambiguous terms: (1) state capitalism itself and (2) illiberalism, against the backdrop of an insistence on understanding locality-specific state development. Key outcomes are (a) an augmentation of analytical rigour of the term 'state capitalism': the 'where' of state capitalism, and; (b) a deeper comprehension of the capitalist dynamics of illiberalism in CEE.

F2. The Flow of Chinese Capital into Eastern European Infrastructures: the Case of the Budapest-Belgrade Railway Line

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Abstract: As the last decades have witnessed a systematic fading of the global hegemony of transatlantic powers (Arrighi 2010), a multipolarity of global governance has emerged, allowing also China to expand its foreign policies onto a global scale. The novel forms of dependencies that this kind of restructuring of global power relations has opened space for may also concern Central and Eastern Europe, which is otherwise historically understood as a peripheral part of the European power bloc; and the countries of which in course of the late 2000s crisis has been put under particular pressure to seek alternative sources of financing for their economic development. As a result, new channels for state loans and foreign direct investments have emerged, and even if capital outflows from China have targeted mainly at the core countries of the European Union (i.e. France, Germany,

the UK) (Merics 2019), in the last decade Chinese business and Chinese state politics have gained a momentum in the Eastern peripheries, too.

Compared to the EU's core, in Central and Eastern Europe, including both members and non-members of the Union, Chinese investments have been less carried out through mergers and acquisitions, less for learning new high-end technologies, but more for seeking new markets as well as opportunities for infrastructural developments in fields of transport, energy, and communication, and also for tourism (Drahokoupil 2017, Szunomár 2018). The political framework and conditions for economic cooperations have been structurally varying by the launch of the regional level '16+1' (now '17+1') Cooperation, which features the agreements of the Chinese state with other regions from global peripheries (i.e. the FOCAC, and CCF) (Jakóbowski 2018).

Accordingly, in order to learn more about the socio-economic consequences and geopolitical implications of the growth of Chinese FDI in Europe, it is also worth visiting specific cases of Chinese capital investments in Central and Eastern Europe, and

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exploring their interplay with all local, European, and global politics. The aim of this paper is to do so through a critical study of the infrastructural development of the Budapest-Belgrade railway line, which within the broader framework of China's Belt and Road Initiative is politically being narrated to be a means for improving transportation, and for facilitating Chinese-European trade. However, as critical political economic literature on infrastructures (Furlong 2019) has firmly stated infrastructural developments can not only act as foundations for economic development and social inclusion, but they

also create an instrument of wealth extraction, may enhance inequality, and contribute to potential crises. Given that this particular development project, to be led by multiple states, is dismissing to use EU funds, and to be carried out with huge amount of Chinese loans, instead, by a consortium of Chinese and local companies with strong political ties on both sides, its study can fairly raise and critically discuss questions of the role of rent-seeking in creating inequalities, of the new forms of dependencies and of changing geopolitics in Central and Eastern Europe.

F3. Chinese investments in infrastructures of Eastern Europe: representations and absences

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Abstract: This article aims to critically analyse existing contested knowledge on Chinese, primarily infrastructure-related investments in Eastern Europe and post-Soviet Eurasia, pointing out limits of existing approaches and suggesting further possible paths for research. First, it overviews existing empirical knowledge on infrastructure investments in different sub-regions of Eastern Europe, but also in Russia, Caucasus and Central Asia, revealing substantial diversity in local and regional responses to the rise of China's influence in Eurasia. Second, it overviews how Chinese infrastructure investments and economic diplomacy is currently interpreted in (semi- and) academic literature, revealing problematic

over-emphasis on Chinese threat in contrast to representing EU and broadly conceived West as benevolent, innocent or normatively superior power. Third, the chapter deconstructs the narrative of benevolent EU to uncover so far silenced role of the EU in creating open and FDI dependent economies on Eastern periphery, and suggests linking research on Chinese investments in Eastern Europe with broader spatial reorganisation of global capitalism. Overall, the chapter argues that debt-driven large infrastructure projects can pose significant challenges for the region, and it seems that Chinese investments have the potential to further undermine existing regulatory settings and accountability mechanisms. Yet, these processes cannot be thought through without rethinking existing developmental paradigm, historically and currently instituted by and still mostly benefiting western (former) imperial centers.

F4. Nuclear Power Investments in Central and Eastern Europe: The Cases of Hungary and Romania

Sergiu Novac

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Abstract: The global nuclear industry has been in decline for the past three decades. However, in the context of efforts towards climate change mitigation, it appears to return in force, under the guise of a 'net-zero CO2' electricity producing technology. In this presentation I will focus on nuclear new-build projects in Central and Eastern Europe, where this technology plays a very important role in the energy mix. More specifically, I will engage with two cases of attempts to expand

nuclear capacities, one in Hungary, the other in Romania. Hungary is the rule, where an existing historical dependency on Russia in the nuclear sector was reinforced through a new deal for another nuclear power plant. Romania, the exception, who operates Canadian design nuclear reactors and plans to expand capacities, provides a case involving competing interests from China and the US. By setting these two cases side by side, the presentation will explore who builds new nuclear power plants in Central and Eastern Europe currently and how – meaning, mainly, where does the money come from? More broadly, the key issue is what this means in terms of realignments of interests in Central and Eastern Europe and what new dependencies are emerging in the process?

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PANEL G

FOCUS BULGARIA: CAPITALIST RELATIONS AND CLASS POLITICS

Date: Thursday, 20 May, 18:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/93215783586>

Moderator: **Miladina Monova**

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G1. Rent, wealth, and worth: misconceptions from the middle-class

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Abstract: One can see two main targets of liberal critique of post-socialism in Bulgaria today – one which looks up and attacks corrupt oligarchic capital, and one which looks down and attacks ‘backward’ and ‘unproductive’ masses who vote in a political ‘butler class’ that serves the oligarchs. The attack against oligarchic capital centres around its violent and corrupt origins and practices, whereas the one against the ‘masses’ centres around its ‘passive’ mentality and culture of dependency. Many of the local tycoons in the energy, finance, construction, telecommunications and other sectors are dismissed as inauthentic capitalists – highlighting local deficiencies whilst preserving the legitimacy of capitalism intact. Similarly, the masses of the working poor and the unemployed are subjected to discourses of individual responsabilisation again indexed to cultural backwardness, and not to capitalist relations of exploitation. Importantly, the liberal critique of both is indexed to state socialism - oligarchic capital gets framed as a particularly local (Eastern) anomaly ill-bred by an undead ‘communism’, and the presumed ‘passivity’ of people is linked to their Eastern/communist mentality and nostalgia for a nanny state. In this way, both function as ballast for ‘zombie socialism’ arguments (Chelcea and Druta 2016) which malign and incapacitate anti-capitalist critique in the

region. A key notion that structures some of these narratives is the idea of ‘productivity’ – both oligarchic capital and the poor and unemployed are denounced as ‘unproductive’ – the former for their corruption and the latter for their presumed laziness. These invectives habitually come from representatives of the self-identified middle class in Bulgaria: a miniscule social grouping, by “objective” as well as “subjective” criteria alike. This paper proposes a focus for leftist critique in the region which also centres on the notion of ‘productivity’ but turns it against capitalism and neoliberalism instead. Much work has already demonstrated the significance and role of rent-bearing assets relative to wealth-producing capital (Mihalyi and Szelenyi 2017; Christophers 2020) and the ways in which neoliberalism creates and promotes rentier activities (through the ownership and control of scarce assets – credit money, natural resources, real estate, patents, intellectual property rights radio spectrum etc) which allow elites from both sides of the former Iron curtain to extract income based on the ownership and control of scarce assets (Hudson 2012; Mihalyi and Szelenyi 2017; Christophers 2020). Far from pertaining only to the “deficient, Balkan” capitalist countries, big rentiers everywhere undertake no useful (‘productive’) work – as coveted by liberals – and depend on others to produce surplus value, part of which is extracted as economic rent. Meanwhile, this liberal critique and its “creative class” bearers remain blind to the role of the working-class as the chief producer of value in capitalism, chastising them instead as incorrigible “social parasites”. We explain how these discourses ensure the longevity of capitalism despite the series of structural crises (and external shocks, such as the pandemic) plaguing it.

G2. The Political Economy of Bulgarian Post-socialist Authoritarianism

Georgi Medarov

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Abstract: Today, over 30 years after 1989, the early optimism for a quick transition to liberal democracy in Eastern Europe is long gone. Even mainstream transitological experts started talking about the “new authoritarianism” and “postmodern totalitarianism”. In this paper I will trace the authoritarian shift in

the case of Bulgaria and its affinities with neoliberalism. Bulgaria is often exempted from the debates around authoritarian tendencies in post-socialist Europe. Yet, despite the country’s staunch pro-EU positions, Bulgaria is not an outlier in terms of rise in racism, discrimination, gender inequalities, lack of press freedom, etc. Such authoritarian tendencies are accompanied with anti-labour and anti-social legislation (extension of the working day, anti-union policies, regressive taxation, slashing of welfare).

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Often the affinities between neoliberalism and authoritarianism are explained away with references to ideological affinities between them or as a shared expression of the interests of the transnational capitalist class. Based on the study of the politico-economic transformations of Bulgaria, I will demonstrate that it is possible to show the conditions of possibility for this authoritarian shift not by reducing it to a singular logic (of a particular class interest or ideological affinities between

neoliberalism and authoritarianism), but by studying the political economic relations, and positioning them in their transnational and technological contexts. In other words, taking cue from Engels' theory of authoritarianism, I will look at the connection between the organic composition of capital and the authoritarian tendencies in post-socialist Bulgaria. With the caveat that Engels was writing in the context of pre-fordist capitalism, whereas today we are in a post-fordist one.

G3. Victims of Communism and the “So Called” People’s Court: Anticommunist Hegemony and Rehabilitation of Fascism in Bulgarian History Textbooks

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Abstract: Over the past three decades, aggressive anticommunist readings of the recent past have become hegemonic in Bulgaria, as part of a process in Eastern Europe. Anti-communism in Europe has its ideological roots on the one hand in fascism, as the enemy of the left, but also on the other in the theses of the founders of neoliberalism (Foucault, 2008; Landa, 2018). The anticommunist reading of history in EE has its influences from the second wave of historical revisionism that arose in Europe in the 1980s (Ghodsee, 2014; Traverso, 2007). In specific Bulgarian context, Zhelyu Zhelev's book, *Fascism* (1982), parallels the revisionist wave. The book is widely read as equating fascism and communism through the analytical framework of totalitarianism (Valiavicharska, 2014). This paper examines anticommunism as an ideological element of

neoliberal complex hegemony (Williams, 2020) on the cultural front in Bulgaria. I focus on the 10th grade history textbooks scandal of 2019, as an example of the interrelation between capitalist state and civil society, where various public figures, NGOs and foundations with ties to the ruling regime influence the educational process. The history textbooks example contains key characteristics of the anticommunist rewriting of history: speculation with numbers, equating communism and fascism as totalitarian, silent rehabilitation of fascist figures as victims of totalitarianism. The anticommunist hegemony has larger political implications, demonizing the antifascist struggle, denying the capitalist roots of fascism, it opened the ideological space for extreme right and fascist politics and demoralized left political organizing by attacking any notion of social redistribution as leading to tyranny. Today, the legacy of antifascism is being attacked again by the same ideology that, in its fear of political empowering of the working classes in Europe, proclaimed fascism a salvation from the Bolshevik threat.

G4. De/re-industrialization, risk and the “ungratefulness” of work

Dimitra Kofti

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Abstract: This paper explores relations between shifting politics of labour and workers' wider political responses in the context of flexible and financial capitalism in Bulgaria. Based on research conducted among workers in Sofia and in Pernik it pays attention to different types of risks experienced among workers who often describe their work as one that has become more “ungrateful” over the course of time. This anthropomorphic portray of work opens up workers' critical

views about processes of de/re-industrialization, about the middle class and about neoliberal politics. By paying attention to risk, a common euphemism that describes flexible employees' agency in contexts where little space for choice seems to be left, it looks at workers indebtedness, exposure to health hazards and resistances. The paper shows how risk is being shaped both through ideas on exposure and on choice and at binaries that both positions assume. It further takes into account the methodological challenges of approaching narratives based on multiple temporalities and overlapping postsocialist periodizations in the context of successive “crises”.

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PANEL H

CAPITALIST TRANSFORMATIONS AND LABOUR MIGRATION FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Thursday, 20 May, 18:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99689571851>

Moderator: **István Horváth**

Professor of Sociology, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania, Chair of the Research Institute for National Minorities, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

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H1. Honour the asparagus!: Romanian Agricultural Labour in Germany during the COVID-19 Season

Manuela Boatcă

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Abstract: Societal crises act like magnifying glasses that reveal existing inequalities and often exacerbate them as a result. By triggering social closure tendencies and restrictions on existing rights, they belie official narratives of solidarity, unity and progress. The motto of the European Union “Unity in diversity” lost its already crumbling credibility within a short period of time, globally but also within Europe, due to crises such as the “summer of migration” in 2015 and, more recently,

due to the exploitation of vulnerable Eastern European migrant workers during the corona pandemic. The paper focuses on the role that unequal citizenships and the regulation of social mobility played in the context of such crises in the case of Germany, in order to show how the political economy of cultural differences, which dominated both the media coverage and policy regarding the New Year’s Eve events in Cologne 2015 and on the seasonal workers in 2020, has turned into a nationalist political economy of consumption in the case of Eastern Europeans workers in Germany in the early stage of the pandemic and is being reinforced a year later during the second pandemic asparagus season.

H2. Social citizenship, fraud and the neoliberal subject: Bulgarian Muslim and Roma migrants and their relations with the state

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Abstract: This paper approaches the question of transformations of citizenship in Eastern Europe through the lens of how individuals relate to the state through their everyday acts and conceptualizations of citizenship. I take two cases of Bulgarian migrants in states of the European Union to demonstrate a particular mode of engaging with the state which transgresses the particularities of their different experience as labour migrants. Drawing on ethnographic research that I did with Bulgarian Muslims in Spain and Bulgarian Roma in the Netherlands and Germany, I trace the relations that these migrants have developed with their home states and their destinations states where they act as European citizens. I focus on one hand on their concept of deservingness that is based on an individual contract with the state, and at the same time on the view of the responsible and caring state that they develop. The case of Bulgarian Muslims

demonstrates a way of negotiating unemployment benefits as a ‘return investment’ to the state in which the citizen enters a contractual individualized quid-pro-quo relation where the state, in this case the Spanish state, owes a form of return of welfare contributions. At the same time, the Bulgarian Roma migrants in the Netherland commit housing subsidies fraud as a way to claim back a position of deserving citizens in an uneven relation with the Dutch state. Instead of insisting on the exceptionality of such instance, I argue that we need to analyse them as a symptom of the current crisis of citizenship in the European Union. Drawing on the case of Bulgarian Roma engaged in precarious labour and short-term intensive mobility between Bulgaria and the Netherlands, I show how labour conditions in both countries and the structures of the welfare regimes effectively exclude them from access to social citizenship and confine them to the realms of informal work, thus putting them in a position of differential inclusion. In this context, social benefits fraud is not simply a survival strategy, but a claim to a right – the right of social support by the state and the society. In both cases, I see an articulation of citizenship s a relation to the state that is individualized

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and based on an expectation of responsibility from the host state, that is also formed on the basis of a disappointment and disengagement with the home state. In this context, I seek

to explain the process of meaning making through which a transgression becomes normalized and part of a struggle for a dignified position.

H3. Migration infrastructures. The role of recruitment agencies in the European Union

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Abstract: In the last thirty years the migratory flows of temporary mobile workers have been affecting the European labour market (Pécoud, De Guchteneire, 2006; Coe *et al.*, 2010). The labour migration regime requires ready, accessible, flexible labour specifically coming from outside national borders (OECD, 2011). Some scholars stress that the flows of migrant labour leads to an increase of the unemployment of the local workforce and to a growth of the precariousness and stratification in the labour market (Alberti, 2016; Andrijasevic *et al.*, 2016; Lillie *et al.*, 2007).

Based on the concept of “infrastructural approach” (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014) this paper investigates the role of Temporary Employment Agencies (TWAs) in Romania. TWA’s facilitate cross-border migration and employment with a variety of roles, services and activities. Infrastructure includes the interconnected technologies, institutions and actors that facilitate the mobility. We look at the international mobility in the EU as the product of the interrelation between these different infrastructures

(Lindquist *et al.*, 2017) working in Romania.

In particular, we collected 20 interviews among TWAs managers and Human resource Managers of companies. Romania’s TWAs support both the placement of the Romanian workforce abroad and the recruitment of workforce from non-EU countries, such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam for Romanian companies (Meardi, 2012). This phenomenon could be seen as a result of both the wave of large foreign direct investments, whose affect Central and Eastern European countries for more than thirty years and of emigration processes of Romanian workers looking for better working and life conditions.

We analyse how temporary work agencies create new strategies to manage these flows and which are the consequence in Romanian labour market. Our paper suggests that the increase of labour intermediation process is having strong effect in all the dimensions of Romanian labour market through a construction of different infrastructures that help the rapid moving of workers. First of all, we claim that, the TWAs changed they recruitment strategies helped by the new technologies: from a direct, face to face recruitment, to an online platform. Secondly, differently from the idea of the guestworkers pattern where the state shape migration flows, we suggest that international recruitment agencies’ and employers are shaping migration flows and producing a strong stratification of labour market. Further, we underline that Romanian workers are able to use TWAs to move inside EU countries to find a job without support any cost (Andrijasevic *et al.*, 2016; Alberti, 2016).

H4. “The most hardworking people in the world”: exploring Romanian labour migration through the value of being ‘hardworking’

Ana-Maria Cirstea

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Abstract: In Eastern European countries, migration represents one of the most ubiquitous strategies for coping with the aggressive, yet fragmented capitalism which followed the dismantling of the Soviet Union. Many theoretical accounts of capitalism after 1989 focus on the grand narratives of this post-socialist ‘transition’, rendering migration a mere export of labour power in the wake of the Cold War. However, the manifold capitalist transformations of the past three decades

do not only result in an increase in migration, but they also shape the very nature of mobility and the daily experiences of migrants. This paper confers with the recent studies of global capitalism that advocate for fine-grained, empirical accounts of class formation in specific locales to make sense of the shift from wage labour to wagelessness (Carrier and Kalb, 2015; Kasmir and Carbonella, 2008, 2014).

To this end, this paper draws on ethnographic research with Romanian labour migrants in North-West London, specifically participant observation and interviews conducted both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. Initially motivated

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by material accumulation, my interlocutors engage in waged labour, precarious self-employment, and informal work within the metropolitan economy. Their uncertain labour expands beyond a means of earning an income, ordering the modalities and interactions of everyday life. In this paper, I seek to present this process through the ethnographic concept of being 'hardworking' (*muncitor*).

Both in their interactions with 'native' workers and fellow nationals, migrants reify being 'hardworking' as an archetypal aspect of Romanian national identity and migration. Such claims could undoubtedly be discounted as manifestations of knee-jerk nationalism or patriotism. However, these 'facile diagnoses of nationalism' (Dzenovska, 2013:205) highlight how capitalist transformations shape and are shaped by the social and material relations in migrants' daily lives. While Brits are considered work shy or lazy, other Romanian migrants, especially Roma people, are also scrutinised based on their

work ethic. This scrutiny is in turn employed to build social ties and to imagine future trajectories.

Mirroring hegemonic norms of racialisation and the abstraction of migrant labour, my interlocutors thus place hard work at the centre of their lives abroad. However, the focus on being hardworking is not simply a reification of structural capitalist processes. Romanian migrants also employ this attribute to navigate the political uncertainty of Brexit and to render themselves indispensable during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Using the concept of being 'hardworking', this paper seeks to illustrate how changing labour relations under contemporary capitalism give rise to new migrant subjectivities that embody and at times resist capitalist and neoliberal norms. Intersected with factors like national identity and ethnicity, the resulting value regimes in turn craft newfound patterns of inequality for and between Romanian labour migrants in London.

H5. A CEE of change: effects of technological change on CEE agricultural labor migrants in the Netherlands

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Abstract: In this study we present an ethnographic account of how new digital technologies reorganize migrant labour in the context of the Dutch agricultural sector. Agriculture (including technology), domestic and export, is a key industry for Dutch GDP, yet most jobs in agriculture are characterized as 3-D—dirty, dangerous, demeaning-(Cremers 2016: 22) jobs and are performed by Central and Eastern European (CEE) migrants (e.g., FNV 2013; SOMO 2016; SOMO 2019, Ivosevic, P., 2018). At present, there are trends across industries both in adoption of automation throughout the labour process, and for evermore precarious forms of employment through legal means (e.g., gig-work). We suggest rising debates about digitalization in agriculture must be bundled with discussion about the seasonal and flexible migrant. Since the classic works of Marx (1992), Ricardo (2004) or Keynes (1930) on the automated future, a rich literature has documented the linkage between technological development and work, working conditions, redundancy of jobs (Frey and Osborne 2013; Acemoglu and Restrepo 2016; Brynjolfsson and McAfee 2014; Ford 2015), possible reforms to protect workers (Ford 2015), or less work (Mason 2015). Two main gaps in this literature are the omission by scholarship of the linkage between technological advancements and agriculture and the little attention paid to these transformations when the dependency on the cheap migrant labour force is at play. The research addresses these

gaps by asking what is analytically distinct about automation's effects on migrant labour vis-à-vis its reiteration: the current main discourses on technological advancements. To do so, the project draws from in-depth interviews and informal conversations with industry, union and farm-labourers and a desk review of government and industry documents. The aim is to critically discuss the implications of automation for the labour process by mirroring the worker's narratives with the mainstream Dutch technology discourses that shape agrarian change. This research utilizes a range of methodologies to surface the impact of (technologically induced) precarious labour on CEE migrant agricultural labourers in the Netherlands. Qualitative interviews were conducted in both English and native languages with Polish and Romania workers. Further interviews were conducted with union representatives, NGO representatives, farm- and greenhouse-owners, and other interested parties. These experiences are then contrasted with the positive representation of emerging agricultural technologies by the Dutch government and agricultural interest groups. In combining these research streams, we can paint a broad picture of Dutch agriculture and CEE migrants along the specific issues facing Poles and Romanians in the Netherlands.

While jobs are changing in ways we cannot anticipate, we also must be cognizant of the shifting manners in which technology manifests. We propose an account of technology as a way of re-shaping labour and managing people. Hence, we examine the factors that affect the way in which technology impacts the worker. While portions of this research are still ongoing, we aim to present findings to this point which illustrate the precarious nature of CEE migrant agricultural labour in the Netherlands and the lack of focus on this issue by policymakers. We also demonstrate that while emerging technology is certainly an important facet of this issue, it is not the only reason for this precarity.

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PANEL I

LABOR MARKETS REFORMS AND UNIONS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Friday, 21 May, 10:00 (Bucharest time zone)
Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91489026065>

Moderator: **Vassil Kirov**

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1. Power resources and trade union actions to combat precarious work in Central and Eastern Europe

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Abstract: Is it futile for trade unions to fight precarity in an unfavourable global context? Although existing research suggests this is possible, there is limited understanding of the interplay of resources that enable unions to address precarity under adverse circumstances. This study employs a power resource approach to investigate how unions overcome their external constraints. It draws upon 130 in-depth interviews

with key informants across nine Central and Eastern European countries to investigate successful and unsuccessful union actions in sectors with differing external resources. In each sector, unions that mobilise their internal resources can improve precarity dimensions, such as low wages, lack of voice, and irregular working time. The results reveal that unions whose objectives are based on convincing win-win discourses can make strides, acting as drivers of change in precarity patterns even in dire circumstances. Moreover, the study introduces a multi-dimensional conceptualisation of union success, identifying union actions that result in measurable improvements in precarity dimensions for all worker types. Future research could investigate union actions that improve a wider range of precarity dimensions for all workers in order to deepen the understanding of unions' role in fighting precarity in adverse circumstances.

2. The European minimum wage between workers' solidarity and national interests

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Abstract: On 14 January 2020, the European Commission launched a consultation for the establishment of a European minimum wage (C(2020)83/14.01.2020), which is likely to be fixed at 60% of the median wage of each member state. While the initiative does not solve the issue of the discrepancies of wages between East and West, it would certainly lead to an increase of the wages in Eastern member states. Legislation on minimum wage would also expand the sphere of competence of the EU beyond the Treaties, towards the field of labour market policy, a field that has always been of national competence. Implementation of this initiative is all the more difficult in the context of important institutional differences between member states, such as the degree of trade-unionism, which varies from 5% to 65%, the lack of a statutory

minimum wage in certain countries (the Nordic countries, Austria, Italy), or the share of workers that earn the minimum wage (ranging from 5% in Belgium and Malta to over 20% in Romania and Bulgaria).

This paper proposes a political science approach to this EU Commission initiative. After disentangling the various political stakes surrounding the proposal for a European minimum wage, our purpose is to map the different positions of stakeholders on the issue – from trade unions and employers to member states, who will have an important say on the matter when the initiative will be negotiated in the Council. We will show that, counter-intuitively, trade unions from certain member states often reject the initiative, since it is supposed to affect their negotiating power at national level and their ability to obtain the desired outcomes from collective bargaining (the case of the Nordic countries, where several voices already opposed the initiative). Member states, on the other hand,

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take into consideration elements such as labour productivity and attractiveness for foreign investors, but also pressure from different national stakeholders.

Three main variables will be considered when inquiring into the orientation of stakeholders on the matter: the structure and tradition of trade unionism in particular member states, the cultural approach to the idea of redistribution and welfare state, and the issue of supranationalization versus sovereignty, which also seems to be salient here since different member

states have already expressed concern over the extension of EU competencies in labour market policy.

While trade unions and member states are split on the issue, employers most often reject such a measure. All these factors point to the probability of the failure of the initiative, since in reality its supporters are rather scarce. The conclusions might also point to the strong national character of trade unions, who prefer favorable outcomes in their own countries over an increase in the standards of living of workers in Eastern Europe.

3. The Consequences of the Decline of Neo-Corporatist Coordination in Slovenia

Gorazd Kovačič

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Abstract: Between 1989 and 2008, Slovenia was an exception within CEE. On one hand, Slovene political and business elites were able to control the major part of industry and financial capital up to 2013, when EU financial institutions enforced the Slovenian government into sale as a part of solving bank crisis. On the other hand, Slovenia's comparatively strong trade unions, social democratic government and employers' organizations, led by developed industrial companies, created a neo-corporatist coordination of wage policies in the private sector, as well as a wide range of social, economic and other public policies. The result was a preservation of a high level of workers' rights, and of a wide range of public services. However, these achievements have gradually shrunk. The reality of the labour market has been a polarization of workers between one group of safe and well-paid high skilled and marketable workers, and another group of precarious and low-paid labourers. The health and pension perspectives of precarious workers are bad. The public health system has been producing longer and longer waiting rows, so people need to pay health services to the private providers.

The drop of power of trade unions in business sector is evident if the field of wages: collective agreements on the

sectoral and branch levels have lost their capacity of defining growth and span of wages, and social dialogue on wages have decentralized and become reduced only to bigger and business successful companies. The reasons for this shift have been tightening of global competition pressure to the companies in Slovenia, right-wing policies against neo-corporatism, and strategic mistakes made by trade unions. There have consequently been two mechanisms left that can direct trends within the labour market, one is forces of market, including workers mobility within the EU, another is political interventions. From the ruling neo-liberal perspective, it seems that the market forces have prevailed over trade unions power and coordination. But the workers' reaction to the local labour market situation has been their mass emigration to the West since 2012, when austerity measures definitively disillusioned younger and well-educated generation. Another option is political intervention. After the marginalization of collective agreements, The Minimum Wage Act has remained to be the only central leverage of wage policy left, and the place of directing wage policy has moved from social partnership to the political arena. The recent radical redefinition and increase of the minimum wage, achieved by of The Left party, disclosed a strategical disorientedness and weakness of the employers' organizations. There is an opportunity for workers to organize politically, but the right wing shifting of focus by chauvinist identity politics is very influential.

4. Why trade unions were not able to become engines of a Polányian countermovement in post-socialist Hungary?

András Tóth-Eszter Bartha

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Abstract: Our goal is to show, through a Hungarian case-study, why trade unions failed to be engines of a Polányian countermovement in Eastern Europe. The abrupt system-change resulted in the destruction of the socialist economic and institutional model within a very short period of time

in Hungary. The ensuing crisis, which lasted until 1997, was followed by a re-industrialisation, principally driven by foreign investors. None the less, many of the wounds of the transformation crisis have not been healed by the re-industrialisation. No wonder, that even after three decades of transition, it is still widely debated whether the transition had brought with itself the hoped and promised "flourishing fields", and fulfilled or not the promise of catching up with the advanced capitalist countries not only in terms of economic numbers, but in terms of democratic development and

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possibilities to better quality of life (Hann, 2019, Scheiring 2019). One would assume, that dislocation, insecurity, rising inequality would trigger the resurgence of trade unionism, as it happened in the 18-19th centuries in England and in Europe, where trade unions are becoming mainstays and have considerable power to act as a Polanyian countermovement (Polányi 1944, Evans 2005, McGuire 2014). Indeed, Polanyi (1944, 184-5) argued that British workers relied on trade unions and their power to monopolise labour markets to achieve the disruption of the market for the factor of production known as labour power.

However, in the post-1989 Hungary we can observe exactly the opposite development. Unions were unable to gain momentum, in spite of the fact that there had been great hopes of union revival during the transition period. The democratisation of the political life opened up the space trade union revitalisation aiming to replace the unions of the state socialist regime. The Liga, the Federation of Democratic Unions, envisaged a liberal-social market economy with a strong welfare state and a neo-corporatist institutional framework within the framework of a liberal-democratic political system. The Workers' Council Movement aimed at establishing workers control over the workplaces like the workers councils of the 1956 revolution, which represented an attempt to find a third road between the Stalinist dictatorship and the restoration of capitalism. Not only pro-democracy grassroots unions called for the revitalization of unions. Reform-minded workplace and higher level cadres of the SZOT, the official (socialist) union organization also hoped that they could

finally pursue "real" professional work and interest representation following the loosening of the political control of the ruling party over the unions. They also aimed at a more pluralistic style regime instead of the party dictates of the past. They hoped to replace the aging top leadership, and develop a more agile, reform-minded union model. With the unfolding of the political changes, the reformist cadres also accepted the transition towards democracy and market economy and hoped that it would be possible to build a neo-corporatist, social market economy, like in Austria, in which trade unions would have an important role in setting national level social policy related to the world of work and employment conditions through national level consultation and collective bargaining at sectoral and workplace levels (Tóth 2000a). In spite of the varieties of offers, none of them were successful to capture the support of workers. Three decades after the change of regimes, unions are marginalized actors in Hungary.

The aim of this article is to explain why trade unions failed to become a successful countermovement, and what follows from this failure regarding workers' strategies. Accordingly, the paper is divided into two main parts. The first part outlines the four sources of power available for unions, whose mastering is necessary for them in order to be able to become a Polányian countermovement. Then, the article analyses to what extent unions could master these four power resources in the post-1989 Hungary. In the second part, we show based on our earlier research results, how workers cope with the fact that they are "lonely fighters", without having strong union presence.

PANEL J

FOCUS HUNGARY: COLLAPSING SOLIDARITY

Date: Friday, 21 May, 10:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98163922457>

Conveners: Karl Polanyi Research Centre for Global Social Studies

J1. Producing the nation through philanthropy: Legitimizing co-ethnic and pro refugee civic action in Hungary

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Ildikó Zakariás

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Abstract: In the proposed paper, we investigate reasons for engagement with refugees and the consequences of these activities both concerning the political stance and the social

position of the helpers. Our attempt will be to interpret the reasons of solidarity in a Polanyian perspective. We will partly analyse the reasons of humanitarian aid provided to refugees crossing Hungary between the spring and autumn of 2015. Secondly, we will use our empirical material on intra-European migrants, Hungarians residing in Germany who became active in refugee support partly as volunteers and partly as employees. We are going to argue that important changes on the helpers' side are unfolding from voluntary initiatives, in the first case this is a change in political views, in the second in their position on the labour market.

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J2. The emergence of global historical political blocks and migration

Attila Melegh

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Abstract: The liberal-humanistic critique of radical and by now mainstream anti-immigrant populist and radical right-wing discourses in Europe and most importantly in Eastern Europe and Hungary is misleading. It is based on Hegelian ideals of liberal-humanitarianism seen as the spirit of history, and simply blames nationalist elites and masses being aggressively outdated (e.g. returning to an awful past). It does so without re-embedding migration and population development into their proper historical-social context. Without a systematic critique of capital, without a Marxist, combined analysis of global material and discursive processes such critiques repeat ideals of humanitarianism, they promote peaceful co-existence and reject

Eurocentrism and racism as “unfortunate”, “wicked”, verbal and institutionalized acts. Such analysts and commentators fail to understand properly, why institutionalized solidarity has not got embedded into East European societies in a neoliberal era, why lower-class masses loudly reject humanitarian help. It is unclear in such an analysis why now and why specifically Eastern European societies started a nationalist ‘revolt’ and most importantly why they give support for the authoritarian right-wing turn using the “migrant” card. They also fail to ask what material processes can be behind the change. It is rarely discussed why migration has gone up in the era of globalization, what are the root causes of such processes and what political consequences we face due to this new wave of marketization. The proposed analysis thus intends to provide this missing, alternative complex Marxist framework in understanding the hegemony of anti-migrant populism in Eastern Europe and Hungary incorporating some of the key ideas of Lukács, Polányi and Gramsci.

J3. Innovation in Capitalist Varieties

Crosby Michelle Orel

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Abstract: How and why does innovation vary within Europe? Utilizing the main claims of Varieties of Capitalism (VoC), including its sub-strands (Dependent Market Economy and Polanyian-inspired measures) which amplify an East-West delineation, the sociological perspective is employed, allowing for different types of firms with different innovation outputs within different sectors, and as affected by state institutions

over a period of time—the early 2000s. The approach utilizes cross-nationally comparative and publicly available data-sets in detailed descriptive analysis and in a nested regression. As a result, a more complex contribution to the innovation disparity story is offered. The findings show less emphasis on stark differentiation in country level institutions, and more evidence for supporting the role of sectoral dynamics. Firm innovative behaviour is indeed better explained using an interactive multi-level approach, where not only state institutions and firm level inputs are considered, but also sector-specific data.

J4. “We Will Not Become Colonies”: Global History and the Semiperipheral Colonial Discourse of the Hungarian Authoritarian Turn

Zoltán Ginelli

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Abstract: “We will not become colonies” – so goes the official statement of Viktor Orbán, who has since 2010 been labelling his Hungarian government “illiberal democracy” and “Christian democracy”. This colonial discourse has set up an anti-Western ‘decolonialist’ Kulturkampf and nationalist victimisation against postsocialist neoliberalism and the European Union, wedded into memories of Soviet colonialism – “Brussels is the new Moscow”. Simultaneously, this discourse also draws upon the Western unrecognition of Eastern European whiteness to construct civilisational and racial demarcation against the global postcolonial world to “keep out migrants” and “defend Europe”, whilst Hungary is competing with postcolonial

migrants in Europe, and opening its economy to the Global East and South.

Analyses of Orbán’s authoritarian turn have dominantly focused on identifying this “new type” of authoritarianism: political typologies of its level of “democracy” (hybrid regimes, semi-authoritarian regimes), or its embeddedness in a global right-wing, populist or authoritarian turn. However, these political and institutionalist approaches are geographically unreflective: they conceptualise the “lack of democracy” along Western values or European dependencies (accumulation regimes, varieties of illiberalism), and reproduce East-West dichotomies or epistemic self-colonisation without reflecting on global historical interconnections. They also fail to understand the local historical epistemologies and experiences upon which Orbán’s colonial discourse

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and political regionalism relies. The postcolonial identity politics of “we never had colonies” and “we will not become colonies” excuses Hungary from global colonial guilt, whilst globalisation, multiculturalism and migration is made the responsibility of former imperialists. But apart from feeding the nationalist “defense of sovereignty”, its global function is to readapt to world hegemonic shifts by exploiting Hungary’s silenced experiences of coloniality. The seemingly “irreconcilable” contradictions within this political communication have specific functions in connection to the new geographical alliances and scalar politics of Hungarian world-systemic integration – as seen in the “new” global ideologies of Christianity or “freedom-loving peoples”.

This paper attempts to deconstruct this recent Hungarian colonial discourse from a postcolonial, global historical and world-systemic perspective to understand the long-term semiperipheral positioning of the country in-between the global centre and periphery. Hungary’s semiperipheral integration to the world economy generated an uneasy and antagonistic in-between positioning dynamic in relation to colonialism: being coloniser but colonised, catching up to but contesting the centre, bridging to but demarcating from the periphery. This paper seeks to reflect on the global historical traces of Hungarian coloniality (colonialism, anti-colonialism, and decolonialism) in order to elucidate this semiperipheral positioning that now surfaces in recent politics.

PANEL K

CAPITALIST TRANSFORMATIONS AND RACIALIZED INEQUALITIES

Date: Friday, 21 May, 10:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95824313916>

Moderator: **Angéla Kóczé**

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K1. Waste in the City: Racialized Inequalities of Solid Waste Management in Central and Eastern Europe

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Abstract: Roma communities residing in Central and Eastern Europe continue to bear a disproportionate burden of their nations’ air, water, and waste problems. Their appalling living conditions are powerful examples of both environmental racism and the everyday functioning of racial capitalism. This article brings to light accumulation of garbage in segregated urban neighbourhoods in the region. It explores in detail racialized dynamics underpinning solid waste management. Building on critical race theory and the critique of ‘market logic’, we argue that within the context of rampant neoliberalism Roma people are so devalued that their lives are subordinated to the goals of municipal fiscal solvency. This constitutes racial capitalism because this devaluation is based on both their race and their surplus status, with the two being mutually constituted.

To support our claims, we present case studies of ‘abandoned’ urban neighbourhoods and expose the way contemporary technologies of administration, expertise, and entrepreneurialism reinforce deeply hierarchical racial inequalities and generate precarious living conditions. We show that unjust waste management services are one instance of capital taking precedence over social justice in a neoliberal state, which results in ethnic and socio-cultural tensions. Moreover, subordination of equity values to commercial interests creates the conditions for “the suspicion against others, the intolerance of difference, the resentment of strangers and the demands to separate and banish them.” (Bauman 1998:47) As a result, there is differential access to goods, services, and opportunities in a neoliberal society divided by race. The question driving this article is how the striking inequality between Roma and non-Roma in Central and Eastern Europe in their access to cleaning services and safe environment has been normalized or has come to be viewed with a kind of ‘peculiar indifference’ (Bubois 1899:157).

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K2. Between expulsions and political containment: The (un)stable spatialization of Roma poverty in Romania

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Abstract: Our presentation explores the theoretical interconnections and the empirical applicability of a conceptual pair (expulsions/systemic edge) advanced by sociologist Saskia Sassen in her recent work (2014, 2015, 2016). Her argument is that the political economy of today's neoliberalism no longer integrates people either as workers or consumers (as in the post-war developmental regimes), but rather it functions on a totally different dynamics. The current logic requires only a small but highly functional economy, whose side effect is the expulsion of individuals and groups who inhibit the accelerated accumulation of financial capital. This process creates a space outside the economy of the haves, which Sassen calls the systemic edge. In this realm, a condition becomes so extreme that it is rendered invisible and ungraspable to the dominant scientific and bureaucratic forms of knowledge. (Sassen, 2015: 174). The edges created by the transformations in the political and socio-economic landscape of global neoliberalism are possible due to what Sassen calls predatory formations. These are heterogeneous

assemblages of law and accounting, technical capacities, the willingness of the executive branch of government/local authorities to see with the eye of global corporations and we may also add, public policies and discourses (Sassen, 2015, 2017). Thus, these predatory formations are the basis for the expulsion of countless individuals (minorities, poor people, refugees etc.) from their places and personal projects. What is really remarkable about today's expulsions are that they are more rapid, anonymous, or faceless, and are often rendered invisible.

What is still missing from Sassen's argument is the internal architecture of the systemic edge. By what mechanisms, processes, and discourses are the expelled rendered invisible? How is life on the edge stabilized and reproduced or ruptured and transformed? We explore these theoretical interconnections by discussing several makeshift Roma ghettos at the margins of two middle-sized cities in Transylvania, Romania. We use semi-structured interviews and observations to reconstruct the histories of the expelled, their invisibilization and modes of resistance. We conclude that making Roma ghettos invisible involves their adverse incorporation into a social and discursive order in which those expelled are depicted as voluntary participants in their own expulsion. This adverse incorporation field (Fligstein and McAdam 2012) relies on specific definitions of the "Gypsy problem", on rules of action and on the positioning of actors as incumbents and challengers. The reproduction of these fields or their possible disruption will determine the political future of Roma ghettos.

K3. Informal and cooperative housing as forms of resistance

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Abstract: The question that the paper will try to answer is if particular forms of informal housing and particular forms of cooperative habitation, namely those of the Romanian Roma can be framed as forms of resistance. While it is easy to admit that the very existence of Roma communities is in itself a form of resistance, it is more challenging to identify the explicit dimensions of the social dissent that accompanies the process of formation of the informal settlements. Equally challenging, from a theoretical point of view is to draw the similarities between the various forms of cooperative housing that are emerging today in the developed societies and the practices related to housing of highly cohesive communities that are struggling to survive in a hostile environment. Yet, there are some common elements, of strategic nature, of formal nature, and of legal nature that must be examined and a certain continuity between resistance as survival and resistance as a form of civic action that aims to overcome oppression.

Going beyond the right to the city (1968) and its transformation into a political slogan I will try to introduce the analysis of informality through the lenses of John Turner's seminal 'Freedom to Build'(1972), the architectural manifesto that reinterpreted the Athena Charter and the legacy of Le Corbusier in the light of the complete alignment of planners to the capitalist mode of production. The practice of building with local material, of using scrap and ready-made gained traction in the 70's and there is a long line of interventions of 'architecture for the poor' (Hassan Fathy, 1969) to Rural Studio and the more recent Pritzker Prize winner Alejandro Aravena (2016). These attempts of the architects to radically reconsider the position of the professional planner will be compared with examples from informal camps, from a refugee camp and from some cohousing communities in Berlin.

'The reeducation of a professional', as Turner would put it, happened in my case through fieldwork in various camps and slums in Napoli, Paris, Cluj, Belgrade or Călărași and the conversion to methods ethnographic fieldwork: participatory observation, visual documentation, interviews. In my paper

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I will present the forms of solidarity that I encountered during fieldwork in several camps and the strategies employed by different communities in order to build their settlements.

In a historical perspective, that should be applied to the particular case of the Roma in Romania and the EU, it is clear

that we should consider the abominable housing conditions as a failure of modernity to solve the problem of mass housing and a failure of capitalism to deal with extreme poverty. My contribution will navigate through the struggles of the planning and design professions to address these issues.

K4. Discursive Power to Represent the Roma. Media Coverage and Independent Approaches of the 2008-2009 Roma Serial Killings in Hungary

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Abstract: Analysing media representations of certain ethno-racial groups is a common topic for social sciences. Still, little attention is paid to the interconnections and power relations between different media organizations, which “produce” such images; however, it is widely acknowledged that various actors of the media environment have different chances to launch new topics and frame social discourses (Jungherr – Posegga – An, 2019).

This paper aims to incorporate the dimension of power which lays beyond public (visual) images of the Roma in Hungary. In doing so, I intend to analyse different (visual) representations of the serial killings in 2008-2009 in Hungary, when people of Roma origin were murdered by non-Roma, who shared

right-wing political beliefs. In doing so, I intend to compare how some the right-wing oriented mass media was presenting the events of serial killings and try contrast it to ‘independent’ approaches: visual campaign of the NGOs, which were revolted by the superficially carried out police investigation. In addition, my presentation also grasps the discursive power (Jungherr – Posegga – An, 2019) that stays behind each socially mediated image. Material and symbolical resources of the right-wing media, the refusal of the state to finance independent documentaries which cover the events etc.

A relevant place is dedicated the documentary of Eszter Hajdú (Judgement in Hungary, 2013) which was almost exclusively shot on the court-room, where the trial of this events took place. As Eszter Hajdú’s crew was the only one, who documented all the 167 days of hearings (with multiple cameras, among which one was placed – with permission – on the desk of the judge), the film reveals the social and political blindness which reinforces exclusion of Roma in Hungary.

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PANEL L

CASE STUDIES FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Friday, 21 May, 10:00 (Bucharest time zone)
Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/97955714285>

Moderator: **Árpád Töhötöm Szabó**

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L1. Constructing Utopia in the Carpathian Basin: A Semi-periphery Nationalist-Populist Imaginary

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Attila Kustán Magyar

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Abstract: In our paper we highlight a particular set of current social media conversations around the utopic nature of the Carpathian Basin **as a right-wing alternative of resistance**. We will also discuss a few of these conversations via actors from the 'epistemic periphery' or 'stigmatized knowledges' and how they may have manifested in some more mainstream media outlets. We claim here that this is an indication of a revival of a specific kind of traditional romantic-nationalist mythic past seeking to deliver a populist response to the challenges of globalization and EU membership. In this case, we seek to explicate a special kind of irredentism that posits the geo-location of the Carpathian Basin or the Pannonian plain as the gathering place for a specific 'civilization': namely the 'Greater Hungary' of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This civilizational argument/discourse operates in discourses throughout both mainstream and social media outlets of all kinds in the region, reinforcing this special kind of **nationalist resistance** in the semi-periphery.

Used as a kind of 'ethnic beacon', the Carpathian Basin is a powerful tool for a 'new', reinvented, brand of nationalism that is pervasive in the region, cutting across boundaries of all kinds (gender, class, religion) in order to (re)create a kind of supra-ethnic category of 'Hungarians' that encompasses all of those pre-modern divisions of ethnicities such as Szeklers in Transylvania, Csangos in the east of the basin, Kuns in the south and many others. It is here that a return to village life in which a single unified ethnicity prevails, a form of Hungarian tradition is (re)constructed which opposes **global neoliberal capitalism**.

A mythical homeland is being (re)constructed via social media, and is being regularly discussed in mainstream media, as well as all kinds of all of actors from the 'epistemic periphery' or 'stigmatized knowledges' which aids far-right groups and right-wing governments in their quest to reject versions of liberalism found in the rest of the world. It also aids these groups and governments in rejecting progressive politics and policies in the region entrenching the region as a semi-periphery through the interpretation of the 'authentic' (and sanctified religiously) homeland in opposition to the inauthentic/non-organic version characterized by neoliberal, liberal, progressive, 'politically correct', and/or 'ivory tower intellectual' (and other similar characteristics) elite-sponsored project.

L2. State-led Cultural Production in Post-Socialist Hungary – The Case of the Hungarian Academy of Arts

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Abstract: This paper examines how right-wing cultural producers forged and failed coalitions with political factions and national capitalists in the 1990s' Hungary. I will analyse the realized and unrealized aspects of this hegemonic project through the case study of the Hungarian Academy of Arts

(HAA). HAA was established in 1992 with the ambition of becoming a public body and representing the cream of cultural producers in a meritocratic manner. However, in the rapidly polarizing political-economic and cultural landscape of the 1990s, HAA had to remain an NGO, while its liberal counterpart got a public body status. From this point, HAA's trajectory was characterized by a constant strive for the public body status, and to reach this goal, the institution intensively tried to forge coalitions with the political and economic actors of the nationalist-conservative elite faction. HAA became

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not only a well-known, but also a divisive institution in 2011 when the Orbán-regime finally turned it into a public body and consequently into the flagship institution of its current hegemony-building process. However, this paper examines the less exposed pre-history of the institution by shedding light on how HAA narrated the widening social inequalities of post-socialist Hungary and tried to forge coalitions with the national faction of capital.

I will pay special attention to the HAA's opening towards national capitalists after the organization's politically loaded rejection of state subsidies in 1992. By showing how only a handful of national capitalists endowed HAA in this period with small donations, I will demonstrate the weakness and state-dependence of the Hungarian national capitalist class of the early 2000s. Consequently, I will argue that the HAA's

'failure of maintaining itself from the market' motivated the organization for strengthening its ties with the political actors of the right-wing elite faction. By supplementing the political-economic analysis of cultural formations, I will also examine the HAA's narratives on the social inequalities of the post-socialist condition. While their understanding provided a partial penetration of post-socialist capitalism, it never led to any form of anti-capitalist politics. Rather, the critique of the uneven, foreign direct investment-based development concluded in a mixture that was nostalgic towards the pre-socialist societal forms and argued for a prominent role of the national capitalist class in the local economic development. However, while these national capitalists could not, the post-2010 Orbán-regime can fund the HAA's operation. Consequently, I argue that cultural production in CEE is state-led because it primarily serves the long-term reproduction of the dominant social order.

L3. Infrastructuring Raspberries: Agronomists, Cold Chains and the Socialist Base of the 'Red Gold of Serbia'

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Abstract: In former Yugoslavia, the transformation to capitalism was marked by economic decline followed by uneven recovery. Serbian raspberries for export followed an opposite trajectory, as post-socialist production grew four-fold, with positive impacts on local livelihoods. This paper traces the competitive configuration of the 'infrastructures of value' – the socio-material network of relations and practices – underlying this expansion. During late socialism, an efficient

interface between small-scale family farms and large-scale cold chain emerged by enrolling raspberries, farmers and several types of infrastructures: infrastructures of containment and transportation (cold stores and roads), legal-scientific infrastructures (contracts, standards) and infrastructuring people (agronomists and technologists). Except for the agronomists, this infrastructural module was replicated by hundreds of private entrepreneurs during post-socialism. Revisiting the collaborative frictions between the 'agronomic' and 'cryogenic modality' of 'infrastructuring value', the article redirects attention to the material labours and controversies that shape food production. Keywords: agronomic extension service; cold chain; cooperative, infrastructures of value; Serbia.

L4. The LEADER rural development program – an exercise in reassembling territorial fragmentation under capitalist uneven development

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Abstract: The EU launched LEADER as an experimental rural development program in 1990, at a time when centralized state development was globally delegitimized. Local-participatory frameworks were on the rise, particularly in development projects in the Global South, while deindustrialization and state roll-back were implemented in the West. In a move interpreted as shift from exogenous to endogenous approaches, bottom-up, participatory, area-based, and innovative thinking constitute the program's principles aimed at tackling the increasing EU-wide territorial inequality. The key policy instruments are Local Action Groups (LAG), which cover administrative units with no less than 80 per cent rural population. By design, more than half of each group's members are private entities.

In Romania, LEADER was initiated during its fourth iteration in the 2007-2013 programming period and 239 Local Action Groups became operational in its fifth, and present, iteration. The size of the territory covered by each LAG allows several units to work as intermediary territorial units between county and communes. Based on each of their Local Development Strategy, they open calls and select small-scale projects to be funded with an average of several tens of thousands of Euro. As part of one of the most complex bureaucratic apparatuses to date, structures of decision involve a plethora of institutional layers between Bruxelles and beneficiaries. LAGs' managerial work needs pin-point precision to successfully attract the meagre, yet much-needed funding, while respecting the program principles.

Within the Relocal research project (www.relocal.eu), I analysed related strategic documents and interviewed stakeholders

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involved in the Maramureş-based LAG Mara-Natur in order to depict the perceptions of spatial justice brought by LEADER. Implementing the project has been a learning process for both the management and members of Mara-Natur. The incurred cost of the pedagogical process involved the assessment of benefits and the adaptation of institutional thinking to a new format. What are the effects of applying a highly complex

format designed for skilled administrative personnel to de-developed areas deficient in administrative capacity? I argue that LEADER acts as a depoliticizing mechanism of reshuffling institutional memory by redrawing territories of responsibility, blurring macro socio-economic contexts, ultimately supporting the logic of capitalist uneven development.

PANEL M

THE DECLINE OF LEFTIST POLITICS: POPULIST INDUSTRIAL AND WELFARE POLICIES

Date: Friday, 21 May, 12:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99595607789>

M1. Thinking big or small: Populist parties, producer groups and SME upgrading in Poland and Hungary

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Abstract: The decade since the Great Recession has marked a return of industrial policy. However, the literature has so far primarily focused on large firms and largely ignored the role of medium and small companies in industrial development and upgrading. This is unfortunate not only because the SME sector constitutes the backbone of most countries' economies. Small start-ups also operate at the technological avant-garde, providing vital spill-overs to the wider economy. This paper aims to address this gap by investigating SME-centred industrial policies in Central and Eastern Europe, a region which has been structurally dependent on large MNCs. Specifically, the focus is on two paradigmatic cases of economic nationalism, Hungary and Poland.

The paper makes two broad contributions. First, to map different trajectories of SME upgrading, we propose an analytical framework that integrates three intertwined policy areas—industrial policy, taxation and minimum wage regulation. We argue that different mixes of these policies promote different types of SME-centred industrial development. In a “low road” scenario in Hungary, largely unconditional financial support for SMEs combined with

looser – “SME-friendly” – taxation and minimum wage regulation have failed to stimulate technological upgrading of SMEs. By contrast, in a “high road” scenario in Poland, the conditioning of financial support for SMEs on technological advancement combined with stricter – “SME-unfriendly” taxation and minimum wage regulations has incentivized SMEs to move up the value chain and increased their potential to graduate into larger industrial champions.

Second, the paper investigates the political foundations of SME-centred industrial policy. The state-of-the-art literature explains SME-oriented policies with partisanship and ideology, as conservative governments try to maintain power by appealing to their constituencies. In a context of ECE “dependent market economies”, SME support has typically been linked with economic and financial nationalists challenging multinationals in an attempt to build a domestic capitalist class. This article takes a different lens focusing on policy legacies and political coalitions / social blocs behind them. Drawing on descriptive statistics, policy reports and elite interviews, we argue that the contrast in SME support in the two paradigmatic cases is best understood by ruling parties' differing links with organized business and labour. In Poland, the ruling PiS party has offered SMEs conditional support because of its privileged links with the Solidarity trade union and weaker links with domestic business. By contrast, in Hungary, conservative Fidesz has offered SMEs unconditional support because it has managed to become the privileged representative of the domestic bourgeoisie while having weak links with the labour movement. The article provides a timely contribution to the burgeoning comparative political economy literature on industrial policy, economic nationalism and conservative nationalism.

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M2. Ghosts of Empire. The revival of the “natural order” and the extirpation of democracy

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Abstract: This paper analyses the emergence of a language of punishment in Southern European countries. It draws on Polanyi (1957) to argue that the devastating effects of the economic crisis in Europe brought the self-regulating market to a deadlock, caused on the one hand by the dire need for reform imposed by the consequences of austerity and on the other hand by the impossibility of reform caused by market pressures and capital flights (Polanyi, 1957:140). In this deadlock, the legitimacy of neoliberalism depended upon the ability to present austerity as a necessary evil in order to prevent the undeserving poor from becoming “a parasitical drain upon scarce resources” (Tyler, 2013: 211). Drawing on

René Girard’s notion of the scapegoat (1982) this paper takes into account three pivotal moments in the public debate of Southern European countries whereby populist leaders (1) denounced reverse racism, (2) warned against the dangers of invasion and (3) launched a “moral and social crusade” to discipline and punish the conduct of disenfranchised women. Using interviews and discourse analysis, it argues that the social designation of a public scapegoat did not succeed in eradicating evil or in pursuing social reconciliation. Rather, it undermined class solidarity and softened the perception of illegitimacy thus normalising a shift towards a “permanent state of austerity” (Jessop, 2014) that is tragically remindful of the fascist solution, “a possibility of transcending the deadlock [...] at the price of the extirpation of all democratic institutions” (Polanyi, 1957:140).

M3. Welfare for the wealthy? Family policy change since the global crisis in Central and Eastern Europe

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Abstract: The relation between family policies and inequality gains pivotal importance in the context of conservative right-wing parties raising power throughout Europe. During the last decade, spending on family policies slightly increased in the EU yet it remains an open question whether all families have equally gained from it. The global financial crisis provided an opportunity window to push through changes that could have been difficult to implement outside of the framing of exceptionality and emergency. How did this affect family policies? In this paper, we examine the consequences of family policy changes between 2008 and 2020 in the case of three Central and Eastern European welfare states with divergent historical configurations of family policies: Hungary, Poland and Romania. To this end, we employ comparative data on family policy outcomes and use the method of microsimulations for families with different demographic composition and socio-economic position.

We contend that right-wing populist governments, in power since 2010 in Hungary and since 2015 in Poland, dealt differently with the issue of family policies and child poverty. Hungary kept discursively an orientation towards family well-being, yet it switched towards fiscal welfare at the disadvantage of long-term unemployed families. Poland introduced a universal and generous family allowance for the first time in its history. Romania, with populist-conservative leaning, but nominally social democratic government between 2016 and 2019, somewhat upgraded the amount of the means-tested support for needy families, yet it also strengthened behavioural controls that adversely affect the most vulnerable families. In parallel, paid child care leaves remained generously earnings-related in Hungary and Poland, while Romania replaced its flat-rate benefit with a more costly earnings-related payment right before the crisis. Importantly, Hungary also grants a universal flat-rate child care allowance, and Poland introduced a means-tested alternative, yet Romania offers no financial support for raising small children for parents who lack the required work record.

The main body of the text exposes and discusses the microsimulations of family income, taxes and social insurance contributions, along with welfare transfers, drawing some tentative conclusions on the diverse faces of populism and their influence upon family policy reforms in the region.

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M4. Rise of the Authoritarian Post-Neoliberalism in Poland

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Abstract: Poland was shown as one of the bright examples of implementation of market reforms accompanied by democratization in the 2000s. Yet, it entered the path of authoritarianization, where the rule of law eroded, and xenophobia and discrimination increased after 2015, when Law and Justice Party (PiS) came into power. This study seeks answers to two questions from the critical political economy perspective: Which factors led to the rise of nationalist-conservative right-wing populists to come to power in Poland? How should the post-2015 political economic order be defined?

Regarding the first question, the paper suggests that the polarization-based power strategy of PiS has been effective under three conditions: (i) the regression of the institutional, organizational and political power of the working class, and the

decline of left-wing politics, (ii) the effects of the global financial crisis, (iii) PiS's successful political entrepreneurship.

As for the second question, the paper argues that an authoritarian post-neoliberal regime is on the rise under the PiS government. Unlike the experiences in Latin America, three dynamics were influential in the post-neoliberal project in Poland: (i) the acknowledgement of the economic nationalism movement, which was led by the local managers of multinational companies, by the state managers, (ii) the PiS government's initiative to establish a 'national capitalism', resulting in the *re-Polarization* of companies in critical sectors, (iii) the establishment of the new conservative welfare regime. Finally, the paper emphasizes that the authoritarian aspect of this post-neoliberal project does not only stem from the xenophobic and discriminatory ideology of PiS, but also from the exclusion of subaltern classes from the decision-making processes.

PANEL N

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEBT IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Friday, 21 May, 12:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95495535008>

Moderator: **Dana Domșodi**

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N1. The FDI-led Growth Models of the East-Central and South-Eastern European Periphery

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Abstract: The paper discusses the consolidation of an export-led growth model in Central and Eastern Europe. Focusing on three distinct time periods (2000-2008, 2008-2012 and 2012-2019), it shows that despite marginal shifts towards consumption-led growth through personal debt or wage increases, the core of the region's economic model continues to be heavily dependent on exports. Combining IPE and CPE analytical frameworks, we show that the consolidation of the CEE export-led model has both systemic and national roots.

Specifically, we argue that growing international competition from Asia in the beginning of 2000s has forced firms in Western economies to seek alternative sources of competitiveness that involved a mix of wage moderation at home and expansion towards the East. The internationalization of Western firms met capital hungry Eastern governments, which were all too happy to use FDI to restore the competitiveness of their outdated SOEs. Backed by a social bloc that involved domestic and foreign capital as well as workers in the tradeable sectors, the export-led growth model took off and generated growth rates well above those in core countries. The 2000s also saw an increase in debt fuelled consumption, that partially compensated for the lack of wage growth in the region.

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The crisis provided an opportunity to put an end to hybridization and to reinforce the export-led component of growth through short-term austerity measures and deeper labour market reforms. These changes consolidated the export-led model that remained in place even amidst political reconfigurations that, at least rhetorically, aimed to fight the economic dependency of the region on FDI. After the crisis ended, however, the closing of the debt-finance consumption

channel combined with the German export boom to the rest of the world and local demographic decline to put upwards pressure on wage-financed consumption increases without inflationary or external balance problems. Yet despite historically low spreads in the region's bond markets, this did not count as a full Kaleckian turn, however, with the region's contribution of consumption.

N2. The rise of the consolidation state: the case of Slovenia

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Abstract: Wolfgang Streeck claims that European countries were after the 2008 crisis structurally forced to save capitalism from itself by absorbing the private debt of banks and large companies. This has led to the second emanation of the debt state after the crisis in 2008, which, as it turned out, is the reason why financial markets and also EU institutions became "suspicious" of the ability of European countries to repay their debts. Hence, the most important goal of policies in European countries has become fiscal consolidation. In this context Streeck speaks of the rise of the consolidation state.

The paper researches and explains the creation of the Slovenian debt state and its transformation into the consolidation state in the period of 2004-2018 within Streeck's theoretical framework. Janša's first government (2004-2008) began introducing radical neoliberal reforms and also enabled many companies and tycoons to get cheap loans from banks. However, when the crisis of 2008 hit Slovenia, it became clear, that these debts cannot be repaid, which resulted in multiple recapitalisations of banking sector, which in turn radically increased the state's public debt. Moreover, from 2008 until 2013 the Slovenian economy experienced twice a deep recession. The combination of the rise of public debt and economic recession in Slovenia led almost to the intervention of the infamous Troika. Hence, every crisis and post-crisis government in

Slovenia was determined to lower the public debt in order to prevent the intervention of the Troika. The only acceptable way to lower the public debt for the capitalist class, financial markets and European institutions has been to cut public expenditures through the introduction of radical neoliberal reforms. Thus, the Slovenian consolidation state began to emerge.

In order to explain the creation of the debt state and its transformation into the consolidation state in Slovenia we will combine the use of various statistical data with an in-depth analysis of the countries strategic documents from 2004 until 2018. First, the paper briefly explains the Slovenian specific transition in the 1990's, which is widely acknowledged and analysed among researchers. The second part explains the rise of the debt state which was the result of neoliberal policies adopted during Janša's first term and the processes of European integration. The third and the main part will be devoted to the explanation of the rise of the Slovenian debt state and to the analysis of policies of fiscal consolidation and attempts to lower the public debt of the three crisis governments, led by Borut Pahor, Janez Janša and Alenka Bratušek and the post-crisis government of Miro Cerar, which has led to the rise of the consolidation state. The fourth and the concluding part of the paper critically evaluates various acts and policies adopted by different governments from 2008 onwards aimed at limiting liberal democracy in Slovenia within the context of the rise of the consolidation state.

N3. Understanding (dis)integration: lessons from the Yugoslav debt crisis

Ana Podvršič

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Abstract: To deepen our understanding of the political (dis) integration processes, especially the current EU existential crisis, this contribution goes back to the 1980s crisis of Yugoslavia. Although Yugoslav socio-economic and political order differs from the EU, the two entities are characterized by federalist-like structures, limited fiscal powers on federal level, uneven

development, and the reinforcement of centrifugal forces after the experience of (sovereign) debt crisis. This contribution combines an original primary resource research on the Yugoslav debt crisis with the Neo-Gramscian accounts on the neoliberal internationalization of states, regulation theory, and studies on structural power of finance and distributional conflicts in times of sovereign debt crisis management. The Yugoslav economic crisis started as the balance-of-payments crisis in the late 1970s and transformed into a foreign debt crisis in the early 1980s after the interest rates hike. Here, the first key moment took place as the federal state took the responsibility for the

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repayment of “private” debts and shifted in favour of austerity- and exports-based policy, and reinforcement of federal powers. The economic and political agenda prolonged and transform the crisis into a severe stagflation, fuelled the contestation from below and political conflicts over the redistribution of the costs of the crisis and of the control of policy-making. Another key moment came when the political interests of the hegemonic bloc of the leading region, Slovenia, became threatened by the rewriting of the federal constitution and the established of centralized fiscal and monetary institutions.

It is argued that the (sovereign debt) crisis policy-making plays a key role in the disintegration process. Regarding the EU and Yugoslavia, the preference given to the centralisation of

crisis policy-making, its subordination to the interests of core region(s) and the international capital, exacerbated the already existing uneven redistribution of the costs and benefits of the integration process between the constitutive unites, as well as between social classes. This undermined the legitimacy of the existing multi-scalar state formation and hegemony of leading social forces. The conversion of the economic crisis into the political one opened space for the emergence and rivalry of new competitive political projects. Here, right-wing and nationalist projects enjoy structural advantage over the pro-labour and pro-democracy-oriented ones as the neoliberal crisis policy-making transformed state apparatuses and further shifted the balance of power at the detriment of subordinated social groups.

N4. Debt pathways: an anthropological perspective on housing debt in Croatia

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Abstract: Since the Global Financial Crisis, anthropologists have taken an increased interest in the phenomenon of debt. Influential contributions theorized debt as a foundational, transhistorical form of social relationship characterized by systematic exploitation, inequality and violence. When applied to contemporary household debt, this totalizing approach entails an emphasis on its moral and political aspects, a static binary view of participants in debt relations as either net creditors or net debtors, and templates for progressive debt politics based on debtor solidarity and debt refusal. Building on more situated anthropological engagements with debt and my ongoing research on household debt in Croatia,

I introduce the concept of debt pathways to draw attention to the varied, processual and ambiguous nature of actually existing household debt relations. Studying debt pathways necessitates three interrelated analytical shifts. First, a closer and deeper engagement with the economics of debt relations is necessary to understand their implications for debtors in terms of exploitation, but also wealth accumulation. Second, we need to pay more attention to how the agency of debtors, interacting with the better recognized structural constraints and opportunities, motivates and shapes their debt pathways. Finally, analysis needs to make room also for contingency at both individual and societal level. Recognizing these dimensions and their interaction is essential for developing a more nuanced and empirically grounded anthropological analysis of the varied and dynamic relations of contemporary household debt, the ways in which people live through and make sense of them, and the implications for their politics vis-à-vis debt.

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PANEL O

UNEVEN URBAN DEVELOPMENT, SUBORDINATED HOUSING FINANCIALIZATION AND RACIALIZED INEQUALITIES IN THE EUROPEAN SEMI-PERIPHERIES

Date: Friday, 21 May, 12:00 (Bucharest time zone)
Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/97363777094>

Conveners: **Enikő Vincze**

Professor, Faculty of European Studies, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania
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Michele Lancione

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Visiting Professor, Urban Studies, The University of Sheffield, UK
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Panel Description: The central focus of our panel is the “housing question” embedded in class structure (Engels 1872) and in the capitalist political economy (Aalbers and Christopher 2014; Madden and Marcuse 2016). We are addressing how has been this economic sector changed during the last thirty years of capitalist transformation in European semi-peripheries, respectively what was the role of housing in these transformations. We propose addressing the housing question at the intersection of uneven urban development and racialized inequalities under the specific contexts of

financialized capitalism. Therefore, our panel aims to contribute to the elaboration of a complex conceptual map about the housing question, rooted in a political economy approach. However, we will not do this in a purely theoretical manner but through several analysis rooted in empirical researches conducted in three CEE countries. We have more papers on Romania, nevertheless, all of them do have an additional value beyond the particularities of the studies, because they are placing the observed local phenomena in the larger political economy processes of big transformations on the stage of global capitalism.

At the end of the day, the panel proposes to generate a scholarly debate about how are several interrelated phenomena functioning today in the housing question of the European semi-peripheries while transforming housing into a source of capital accumulation, such as: uneven development as an endemic feature of capitalism (Harvey, Smith); variegated forms of housing financialization (Aalbers 2017; Posfai et al. 2018); racialization of marginal spaces and precarious labor (Lancione 2018; Vincze et al. 2018).

01. Dependent housing financialization in Hungary through the case of household debt

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Abstract: Dependent financialization has become a key term in understanding Eastern Europe’s structural position in capitalist development especially in the past decades. This paper focuses on household indebtedness as part of the dependent nature of housing financialization in Hungary. Household debt on the peripheries of Europe is an important channel for investing surplus capital accumulated in the core, as well as a source of rent and profit extraction.

The historical trajectory of how household debt has developed in Hungary reflects the generally dependent nature of the country’s integration in the European economic space. From the late 1970s onwards, the housing-related

debt of households started to develop as the state withdrew from housing provision (due to its deepening external public debt since the crisis of the 1970s) and aimed to increasingly privatize this cost to households. The next wave of massive household debt can be tied to the credit boom of the early 2000s. In Hungary (as in many other places in Central and Eastern Europe) this credit boom developed through the subsidiaries of Western banks, who disbursed mortgages denominated in foreign currencies at much lower interest rates but much more risky and volatile conditions than domestic loans. Following the 2008 crisis these loans had devastating consequences, leaving many households in bankruptcy and leading to the loss of their housing and / or to long-term insolvency.

Following the 2008 crisis, this previous form of mortgage lending is no longer possible in Hungary: thus, dependent housing financialization now takes different forms. These post-crisis forms also build on the patterns of pre-crisis household lending: new mortgage loans target much narrower (and economically better-off) social groups, while those who fall out of mortgage lending (because of previous debt or insufficient

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income levels) rely on more risky forms of loans (eg. consumer loans) in order to secure their housing-related costs. This, yet again, leads to lower-income households paying a higher price (and more risk) for accessing housing; and risk-free profitability of financial institutions. Another important aspect is the increasing economic weight and profits of debt management companies, which are professional institutions specialized in buying defaulted debt. This is a lucrative business and a way of further extraction of rents and profits in places where there was a previous wave of financial overinclusion - which means many

of these transnational companies have their most important operations in Southern and Eastern Europe.

In the presentation we will develop how housing loans relate to other forms of household debt (eg. utility debt), on how the institutional landscape has shifted after the crisis, and on why we consider this to be an important aspect of broader forms of dependent economic integration. We will also reflect on how this relates to processes in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

02. Racialized housing unevenness and capital accumulation through real estate development. A case from Cluj-Napoca

Enikő Vincze

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George Zamfir

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Abstract: The Western Romanian city of Cluj-Napoca is among the few Central and East European non-capital cities in economic recovery following the dismantlement of actually existing socialism. Privatization-led housing politics and capital accumulation-driven real estate development, together with racialization and urban branding, (re)produce uneven development and housing unevenness in the neoliberal city. Employing a whole range of data extracted from interviews, statistics and official documents, our research examined the conditions of possibility for the formation of the two extreme housing arrangements at local level: Cantonului colony, close to the Pata Rât landfill; and the luxurious real estate Maurer Panoramic placed at the heart of the city. Together, they illustrate racialized housing unevenness.

The city's uneven development has continuously evolved through different stages. Unevenness also manifests in space through housing, as investment capital sought profit in the residential real estate sector. Ever since its formation in the mid-1990s, Cantonului colony lacked any form of capital investment in housing. Actually, impoverished people were directed to live there in substandard housing conditions precisely because the land had no investment value. In contrast, Maurer Panoramic is part of a pericentral urban area recently targeted by real estate business as a development and profit-making opportunity.

It rises in a district where land exchange value continuously increased since it was zoned as a potential space for urban restructuring. In times when there is capital to be invested, and especially in areas where big territories might be emptied for example by demolishing old factory buildings, the real estate developers are willing to pay high prices for the small individual properties, so many of the latter decide to sell and move out from the area. Local public authorities play their role in this process, besides issuing the mandatory demolition and construction permits.

In the case of a city undergoing capitalist restructuring on the ruins of actually existing socialism, privatization of public housing and state-owned enterprises, alongside with public housing disinvestment, is a crucial initial stage of creating space for capital investment into real estate. While capital accumulation functions as a structural cause of housing unevenness, this is not happening as an abstract process, but through actors guided in their actions by the interests of profit-making: real estate developers, financial institutions, and public authorities – those who benefit from capital accumulation in both an economic and political sense. As an effect of such processes, dislocation pushes the bodies of the pauperized working class into marginal spaces, the latter being the only residential areas that they can afford—areas where they can reproduce their cheap labor force due to their low costs.

Our contribution to urban studies consists in arguing for the central role of housing in the production of spatialized and racialized divisions in the capitalist cities. We argue that processes of uneven development create housing unevenness, but also the subjects that inhabit unevenly developed spaces, while contributing to their racialization.

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03. Invisible tensions: specifics of FX housing loans in Romania in the context of housing financialization

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Mihail Dumitriu

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Abstract: Starting in the early 2000s, the Romanian governments had an active role in creating the market and conditions for FX mortgages and, in general, the FX and private household loans. This coincided with the start of the real estate boom, the EU accession path and its conditions, and a new phase in the almost complete privatization of the housing stock (through right-to-buy in the 90s and retrocession of formerly nationalized properties in the 2000s). In this initial phase of housing financialization, while FX mortgages were accessible discriminatorily to the better-off, reported to and monitored by the National Bank, consumer loans were promoted to the larger population (including lower income) and less regulated, often invisible as housing loans.

In a second phase, as the 2008 crisis reached Romania, the new IMF, WB and EU loans imposed austerity reforms and, at the same time, supported policies for the real estate and credit market, further advancing FX mortgages for those with higher and more stable incomes. Currently, a new phase of housing financialization is on its way in Romania, with even more embedded tensions: foreign banks increasingly targeting poorer strata, with housing-related micro-credits; and new

WB national evaluations recommending the diminishing of state support for FX mortgages (actually required by the WB a decade ago) and the redirecting of public budgets towards financialized public-private partnerships in build-to-rent developments.

Our paper describes the changes in the housing financialization process through policy analysis and the use of secondary statistical data available on the websites of several financial institutions. In addition, by the means of media investigation, we are also going to look at how, in the last decade, the tensions embedded in the different phases of housing financialization emerged, more or less visibly. The latter reflects that housing financialization and indebtedness are not homogenous processes, but do have different effects on the line of class inequalities and have a contribution to their reproduction. We will observe the following trends of tensions: (1) several hundred middle class families organized group court trials against foreign banks which gave unlawful mortgage contracts in euro with variable interest rates; (2) the media conflicts between the debtors, their lawyers, the Romanian government and the foreign banks, after the adoption in 2016 of the fore-closure law allowing the defaulted debtors to bailout by repossessing their mortgaged houses to the creditor banks (improving the debtors' previous condition); (3) the invisible tension between higher income FX mortgage debtors more protected by the state, and the lower income consumer credit debtors, who hardly benefit from any legal protection.

04. Eviction infrastructure in Serbia: coronavirus, infra-protecting and criminalisation of solidarity

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Abstract: The infrastructure approach has a special fit in studying housing in post-socialist contexts. After the violent wars in Yugoslavia, housing transformed from the basic right and "infrastructural whole" into one of the most important spaces for accelerating social exclusion and inequalities. Together with other infrastructure networks, housing infrastructure was 'unbundled' and segmented employing privatisation, restitution, financialisation and "transitional frauds". The "epidemic of evictions" and acceleration of housing

dispossession started in Serbia through legislative changes in 2016 when the state introduced private bailiffs as a supposed solution to the problem of "inefficient enforcement" of court verdicts. According to the most indicators, in Serbia, one of the poorest countries in Europe, where nearly 25 per cent of the population lives on the brink of poverty, privately owned houses and apartments are often the only assets available for seizure.

During the total lockdown period in March 2020, two main measurements related to housing were introduced. The moratorium on mortgage payment in the form of a three-month break on the payment of instalments and the recommendation to the Chamber of Public Bailiffs of Serbia by the Ministry of Justice to pause the evictions during the state of exception. While the Bailiffs reduced the range of their activities, the evictions kept on producing displacements.

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During the pandemic, anti-eviction work gained a new urgency. While working to maintain fragile and vulnerable housing and related food infrastructure, members of the housing movement in Serbia have been in parallel working on pressuring the state to expand the public housing and care infrastructure. In Serbia, anti-eviction work has been more often than not happening in the zone of illegality and operating in the narrow grey spaces left open by institutions and eviction infrastructures. Strict measures enforcing the criminalisation of solidarity have been used to construct this work into 'solidarity crimes'.

To conceptualise every day (un-)making of (post-)socialist housing infrastructure in Serbia as a continuously reconfiguring socio-material process, we will use the concept of infra-protecting. The research presented here is based on two main types of material. The first is collected from written sources, such as national legislation, reports produced and published by state institutions and civil sector organisations. The second type of material is collected through observations of anti-eviction and mutual aid work in Belgrade before and during the pandemic.

PANEL P

WORK RELATIONS AND GENDERED DIVISION OF LABOUR IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Friday, 21 May, 12:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/96995784846>

Moderator: **Mariya Ivancheva**

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P1. "The "whole house" in the factory and on the field: gender and generation inequalities in a Macedonian town"

Miladina Monova

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Abstract: In early versions of his work, Polanyi conceptualized "householding" as a fourth form of integration (in addition to reciprocity, redistribution, and exchange) referred to a "closed group", acting as "self-sufficient unit. Although he later dropped it, or rather subsumed it into the principle of redistribution, different scholars since used it as an appropriate tool to understand local models of responding to capitalist transformations (R. Halperin 1994, Gregory 2009). Other Polanyi's followers have built the concept of the house as a metaphor that permits the understanding of indigenous models of economy. (Gudeman and Riviera 1990, Gudeman, Hanns eds, 2015). By bringing kinship back into the field of economic anthropology, and within an urban context this

paper approaches hierarchies and inequalities along gender and generation lines as structural relationships that shape householding logics and livelihood strategies.

The presentation draws on a case-study of urban households in the city of Prilep (North Macedonia), traditionally combining cash cropping (house-based tobacco growing) with waged labour. An examination of several household working configurations will show the way in which post-socialist deindustrialization, recent reindustrialisation in the context of global industrial division of labour, and finally Covid-19 crisis burden even more women and elderly, while driving young people to migration. With shrinking households and shrinking social relationships that ensure household reproduction, we observe what people call "getting the whole house in the factory and the field" - a metaphor of the way in which household and its specific division of labour eventually subsidizes the market and global capitalism.

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P2. In the name of sexual emancipation: pressures of openness on women in the semi-periphery

Ráhel Katalin Turai

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Abstract: The post-socialist transition brought about the rhetoric of emancipation, also in the field of sexuality. In my theoretical framework, on the one hand, I use critical feminist studies, which highlight the persistence of patriarchal power structures and contextualize sexuality as a social phenomenon embodying inequalities (Fahs 2014). On the other hand, I rely on critical post-socialist studies which discuss the region as in a semi-peripheral, economically and culturally dependent relation to core countries understood as the West. Ideas of Eastern European backwardness manifest in questions of sexual traditionalism and homophobia, and the idea of being open to new pleasures and experiences neatly fits into the logic of capitalism (Kašić 2005, Woodcock 2011, Barna et al. 2017, Mészáros 2017, Csányi 2021).

My presentation examines how global sexual discourses on sexual openness affect women in post-1989 Eastern Europe, through a Hungarian case study on lesbians' exclusivity. I will argue that this case of sexuality illuminates the shortcomings of recent emancipation narratives. I identify two main sources of discourses of "openness": LGBTQ NGOs and sexual objectification of women in the for-profit sector. These discourses are embedded in the rhetoric of Western freedom and global emancipation of a backward East – in opposition to the dominant pro-natalist, sexist and homophobic right-wing nationalist discourse of the Hungarian government. These three together embody a "falsity of sexual choices" for women

in the region (see Kašić 2005). Following the global trend of mainstream popular culture and its pornographic logic, sexual objectification encourages women's lesbian experimentation. Nevertheless, supported by Hungarian homophobic discourses of family, women are also pressured to eventually abide by men and bear children, even after same-sex experiences. This might explain why many lesbians do not want to take a risk to start a relationship with a bisexual woman. At the same time, international LGBTQ discourses, in the name of progressivity, demand lesbians to be inclusive towards bisexuals, otherwise they are labelled "biphobic".

My research examines the context in which this rejection is defended and attacked. As my empirical resource, I analyse a Hungarian LGBTQ online discussion and I show its main pillars. In the debate, lesbians who refused to date bisexual women were called out for being discriminative, internalized homophobic, and exclusionary. References to a family-oriented Hungary on the one hand, and "Europe", "America" and "abroad" on the other, were used in the thread to support clashing arguments of what constitutes freedom of speech and choice. The rejection of bisexual women by lesbians is a topic seldom discussed even in sexuality studies, in contrast to the heated debates on the rejection of trans people who identify as women. That would exceed the limits of my presentation, but I consider the narrative mechanisms and implications parallel. I will argue that Hungarian lesbians' "phobia" emerges in the context of competing global discourses of capitalist heteropatriarchy. It sheds light on how narratives of sexual emancipation actually puts constraints on women in Eastern Europe, irrespective of their sexual orientation.

P3. Engineering Succession: Mediated Relational Work of Arranging Wealth Transfers Among Poland's First Generation Capitalists

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Abstract: This paper is based on research in progress, which tracks the work of management consultants, tax, business, and family attorneys, wealth managers, psychotherapists, coaches, and other external experts who organize and manage succession processes in wealthy entrepreneurial families. Working in Poland more than thirty years after marketization allowed for a boom in family business, these "engineers of succession" are called on to ensure a smooth transmission of

wealth, power, and privilege from the first, nouveau-riche generation to the next. If scholars working in the early 1990s marvelled at the process of "making capitalism without capitalists" in the Central and Eastern Europe, now the first generation of often self-made capitalists is embarking on a project of social reproduction as they attempt to make wealth and privilege durable beyond their lifetimes. In the process, they discover that they need to leave the masculinized public world of business and engage in practices and considerations of care, empathy, cultivation, love, intra-family mediation, and others, that are culturally and politically feminized and relegated to the private domain. Drawing on the work of Sylvia Yanagisako on emotions as forces of production, and Viviana Zelizer on relational work, we zoom in on a new caste of professionals who promise to manage this process and ensure an alignment between capital and family, wealth and kinship. By studying succession, we are using ethnography and discourse analysis

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to understand postsocialist embourgeoisement and elite reproduction, the biopolitics of microlevel family transactions contributing to macrolevel inequalities, and the role of expertise in relational work around money, wealth, and inheritance. The research is based on participant observation in succession events such as conferences and workshops, on interviews with selected “engineers of succession,” and on content analysis of some trade publications of Polish family business organizations. The analysis presented addresses the issue of gender through conceptual lenses of theories of social reproduction, emotional

labour, and relational work and relational accounting. The succession expert discourse differentiates operations around the transfer of wealth according to the gender of the descendants. Even in masculinized industries and patriarchal families, the issue of transfer of power and control, as well as raising next generations worthy of inheritance, is often framed as work of women or performed through culturally feminized practices of empathy, negotiating and enacting family unity, or managing emotions and relation to cool down conflicts and produce agreement.

P4. From text to film: narratives of Ukrainian solo female migrants in Italy

Olena Fedyuk

Research Fellow, “RightsLab: Towards Transnational Labour Rights? Temporary Work Agencies and Third Country National Workers in the EU” (2021-2024), University of Padua, Italy

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Abstract: How does the media we chose determine the outcome from the same field research? The presentation discusses a correlation between an academic text and a documentary film – both of which address the same topic – private lives, romantic and sexual relations formed in the course of migration by women migrating alone. These relations, - as both the text and the film argue, - are often seen as a side product of “proper care-work” and an “inappropriate transgressions”. Both media are determined to maintain the complexity of such encounters by contextualizing a wide

range of intimate relationships as power relations of uncertain economic situations, dismantling the dichotomy of paid vs. unpaid sexual relations and scrutinizing the boundaries of care work. Drawing a complex picture of sexual, romantic and intimate encounters between migrant women and local men with various motivations, degrees of exploitation and rewards on both sides, both media seek to step away from the “trauma of separation from family” perspective, often dominating the discussion of the experiences of female migration and shifts the gaze towards women’s personal ambitions and desires in migration.

The presentation will be followed by a film screening of the anthropological documentary: **Olha’s Italian Diary + Q&A** with director

Olha’s Italian Diary

Moderator: **Csilla Kató**

Astra Film Fest, Sibiu, Romania)

kato@astrafilm.ro

Director and research: **Olena Fedyuk**

DoP: Eszter Csepeli, Sound: Zoltan Kovacs, Editor: Victor Onysko

Length: 52’

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PANEL Q - (BOOK SYMPOSIUM)

FROM THE CRISIS OF LIBERALISM TO THE RISE OF ILLIBERALISM IN HUNGARY: PERSPECTIVES FROM POLITICAL ECONOMY

Date: Friday, 21 May, 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)
Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/94653646468>

Conveners: **Gábor Scheiring**

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Kristóf Szombati

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Moderator: **Don Kalb**

Professor, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway
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Panel Description: The collapse of liberal democracy in Hungary represents one of the most paradigmatic cases of the contemporary rise of illiberal culture and politics. An erstwhile 'poster boy' of democratic transition, under the leadership of Viktor Orbán's Fidesz party, Hungary emerged as a hybrid, competitive authoritarian regime and a regional

stronghold of illiberal politics. While many argue that Hungary represents a unique example, conditioned by a historical legacy of nationalist anti-liberalism, political economic analyses have shown that the country fits well into the international trend of democratic backsliding in the context of neoliberal globalisation. In many respects, Hungary has been a vanguard case, adapting avant-garde neoliberal policies, which explains why the illiberal countermovement is also deeper. The four recent books presented in this book symposium address the question of illiberalism from a culturally sensitive, multidisciplinary perspective drawing on insights from political economy, economic sociology and anthropology. The books contribute to our understanding how the thirty years of capitalist transformation in Hungary is linked to the rise of the new right-wing cultural hegemony, the stability of illiberal rule, and the authoritarian restructuring of the institutional landscape. The panel will touch upon several of the themes of the conference, such as 'the limitations and external enablers of current varieties of capitalism', 'the emergence of neoliberal subjectivities', and 'the uneven record of forms of mass resistance to the dislocations produced by the market economy'. The presenters are from different institutions. The presentation of the four books is followed by a roundtable discussion with the authors and the chair of the symposium.

Q1. Book: The Rise of Hungarian Populism: State Autocracy and the Orbán Regime (Emerald Publishing, Bingley, 2019)

Attila Antal

Faculty of Law Institute of Political Science, Coordinator of the Social Theory Research Group at Institute of Political History, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary
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Abstract: This book offers a historical and theoretical investigation into how Orbán's authoritarian, populist

regime has emerged, exploring factors such as the country's authoritarian populist past, the charismatic charm of populist leaders, and cooperation between neoliberal and state autocracy. Backlash from globalization, dissatisfaction with the European Union and international fiscal institutions have created a situation in which Orbán's regime is able to thrive. The book provides a thoroughly researched historical narrative and an alternative critique of right-wing populism.

Q2. Book: The Retreat of Liberal Democracy: Authoritarian Capitalism and the Accumulative State in Hungary (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2020)

Gábor Scheiring

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Abstract: Reorienting the scholarship on democratisation, the book analyses how the model of dependent capitalism

affected democratic consolidation in Hungary. Building on a three-year empirical work resulting in novel qualitative and quantitative data, the book shows that the rightward turn of the working class and the polarisation of the economic elite explain the strength of illiberalism. The book advances the concept of the accumulative state as an authoritarian response to the tensions of dependent integration into the global economy.

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Q3. Book: The Revolt of The Provinces: Anti-Gypsyism and Right-Wing Politics in Hungary (New York, Berghahn, 2018)

Kristof Szombati

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Abstract: The book offers the first in-depth ethnographic monograph on the New Right in Central and Eastern Europe,

exploring the making of right-wing hegemony in Hungary. It explains the spread of racist sensibilities in depressed rural areas, shows how activists, intellectuals and politicians took advantage of popular racism to empower right-wing agendas and examines the new ruling party's success in stabilizing an 'illiberal regime'. The book focuses on interaction between social antagonisms emerging on the local level and struggles waged within the political public sphere.

Q4. Book: Movement of the People: Hungarian Folk Dance, Populism and Citizenship. (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, October 2021)

Mary N. Taylor

Assistant Director, Center for Place, Culture, and Politics, Graduate Center of the City University, New York, US

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Abstract: The book is an historical ethnography of Hungarian folk dance revival. It investigates the role of folk- dance revival

in the cultivation of political personhood and construction of the 'folk,' 'ethnonation,' and 'national affect' across tumultuous rounds of incorporation of the Hungarian state into the world capitalist system. It gives insight into the cultivation of ethnonational sentiment under conditions of (neo)liberal governance, as well as nuances in understandings of 'the people' that are silenced by liberal antipopulism.

PANEL R

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: CAPITALIST TRANSFORMATIONS AND EMERGING FOOD MOVEMENTS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Friday, 21 May, 16:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/92292009873>

Convener: **Christina Plank**

Senior Researcher, Institute for Sustainable Economic Development, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna and Visiting Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Vienna, Austria

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Panel Description: Central and Eastern European countries have a long history of manifold practices of food self-provisioning. In some countries, smallholder farms are the key domestic food producers, yet they are increasingly marginalized (such as in Romania, Bulgaria or Hungary) because of capitalist transformations. In other countries, food self-provisioning is popular among urban dwellers at their summer residences, such as in the Czech Republic, as a hobby to grow fresh food. The production, distribution,

and consumption of self-grown food play an important role in strengthening social cohesion, environmental sustainability and food re-localization in these countries. Some of these food practices have their roots in the socialist past but have a lot in common with Western European concepts such as re-peasantization, agro-ecology, organic farming and urban gardening. Despite such evidence, there is still poor research in this region related to the capitalist transformations of food systems and the associated emerging movements of resistance.

Our panel starts from the observation that, during the last decade we observe an increase in mobilization around food and farming in both Eastern and Western Europe. Embedded in broader national or transnational justice movements, new forms of alliances and associations addressing the limits of conventional food systems have proliferated across Europe. The organization of the second Pan-European Nyéléni

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Forum on food sovereignty in Cluj-Romania (2016) is only one illustration for such emergent form of activism, where different food producers and consumers, activists and scholars met to exchange their ideas on local and global alternatives, debating how the production, distribution and consumption of food could be organized in a more democratic way. Other transition movements that spread in the region, i.e. the just food movement, the permaculture movement, as well as the ecovillage movement offer different sustainable practices based on principals of social justice.

During our round table discussion, we will discuss these movements and recent forms of resistance and critically address the concepts of alternative food networks, food sovereignty or food justice. We ask: How are the concepts of alternative food networks, food sovereignty and food justice used in Central and Eastern Europe (if any)? What role could scholar-activists play in strengthening sustainable practices and mobilization around food self-provisioning? What social-ecological transformations are needed to ensure the democratic control of the food system?

Participants:

Christina Plank

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PANEL S

THE AFTERLIFE OF NATURE EXTRACTION STRUCTURES FOLLOWING 1989 IN ROMANIA

Date: Saturday, 22 May, 10:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95065565945>

Conveners: **Ágota Ábrán**

PhD, History and Art Museum, Zalău, Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania

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Andrei-Sorin Herța

PhD candidate, History and Art Museum, Zalău, Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania

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Panel Description: Before 1989, especially after 1975, organised, structured, and centralised networks of nature extraction existed in Romania, which have been restructured or disassembled afterwards. This panel brings together presentations dealing with networks of industry and research from different areas of nature extraction (forests, fishing, medicinal plants), describing their fate throughout the past 30 years. We believe that both political systems are 'ways

of organising nature', nature and system working through each other (Moore). While we can observe a clear difference between such 'working through' before and after 1989, we also argue that the new structures build upon the already trodden networks, knowledge, and practice of the previous regime.

As we describe the disassembling and reconfiguration of these networks of nature extraction, we trace the new logics and practices of working with diverse non-human entities to inject them into commodity chains. What are then the differences and similarities between extracting nature before and after 1989? If we see both regimes as having projects of compelling nature to work for capital accumulation, why are there differences and similarities in the way they go about doing that? What is the link between the new global economic relations and actual governance practices – practices often associated with a market triumphalism – that produce or emerge from this transformation? What are the new actors (activists, policymakers, new technologies) that influence the nature extraction networks and build new subjectivities?

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S1. The “glorious”, communist past and the “green”, ecologic present: Anthropological perspectives over the Danube Delta fishing communities and their natural resource management

Oana Ivan

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Abstract: In 1991, the Danube Delta, the largest marshland in Europe, famous for its biodiversity, became a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Due to this designation, new regulations concerning local use of the environment have been imposed by the Romanian government and the European Union. Relying on participant observation, in-depth interviews and oral histories as main research methods, this paper scrutinizes from a cultural anthropologic perspective the changes in the local patterns of natural resource use before (1880s-1950s), during (1960s-1980s) and after communism (1989). The findings discuss how the resource exploitation of the Danube Delta has been under constant transformation, from capitalist system, to communist one, and back to capitalism combined with “green”

policies today. The second part of the research focuses on the present practices pointing to the locals’ perceptions of the environmental discourse. Considering the fact that it seems that personal agenda of the authorities weigh more than the rule of law, locals from the Danube Delta see democracy and environmental protection rules as a means for people in key positions to have a monopoly over the highly valued resources of the protected areas, which they profit from in illicit ways. Consequently, this research argues that due to new environmental policy-making, that systematically ignored the local participation, and due to the weak law enforcement in the context of post-communism, the fishing communities in the Danube Delta experience an acute social and environmental degradation today. The gap between authorities and locals is ever so wider as there seems to be little mediation between the two parties due to their different perceptions on nature, environment and ecology.

S2. Forest change and timber flow in the infrastructural space of late capitalism. A case study of the Viseu River Valley in Maramures, Romania

Iulia Hurducaş

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Abstract: Within a growing interest in urbanism and urban studies into approaching territories outside the urban, this research engages the forest as an urbanisation landscape. Historical forms of colonisation have and still are violently erasing complex bio-social forested landscapes through extending urban patterns of inhabitation and artificial crops and timber plantations (see Cronon 1999, Tsing 2005, Heckenberger 2014, Princen and Topalovic 2014). As the artificialisation of the forest landscape is reaching a climax, prompting the World Wide Fund to designate 11 “deforestation fronts” at the tropics, and scientists to call forth a “Plantationcene”, as the critical point where mass plantations have altered natural landscapes (see Haraway 2015), this research explores the multiple territories of timber trade and forest transformation.

Responding to recent calls for the use of qualitative research methods to study urbanisation processes at planetary scale (see Brenner and Schmid 2016, Streusel 2020), I present the case study of the forested territory adjacent to the Vişeu river valley in Maramureş, northern Romania. A mixed research methodology has been pursued, making use of ethnographic fieldwork, timber flow statistical analysis and geo-spatial mapping, policy document analysis, and the mapping of the

historical process of construction of a forested landscape designated for extraction.

As contemporary trends in forest governance aim towards the dismantling of centralised state infrastructure (see State of the World’s Forests in 2018) while shifting towards extra-territorial forms of governance (see Keller Easterling 2014) I interrogate the international regulations that shape the global forest landscape, and how they transform the forest in the Vişeu valley. Analysing the institutional infrastructure around contemporary forms of timber certifications that foster a landscape of risk mitigation I show how local and international businesses navigate this landscape in search for “cheap nature” at “the last frontier of capitalism” (Moore 2015).

Mapping the last 20 years of timber trade to and from Romania as registered in the Food and Agricultural Organization statistics, I interrogate the requirements placed on forested landscapes to source the growing demand for timber. Ethnographic fieldwork discloses the conflicting paradigms of forest management and of the market that place differentiated requirements on forested landscapes.

The findings point towards a space at the border of the European Union where ethically and non-ethically sourced timber is mixed up and sorted according to market needs, and the emergence of a local landscape of speculation on forested land.

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S3. Carpathian forest frontiers: households and fiefdoms, regional comparisons

Monica Vasile

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Abstract: I propose for this paper to discuss two regional trajectories of forest extraction: one in the Western Carpathians of Romania, in the Apuseni Mountains, and one in the Eastern Carpathians, in the Vrancea Mountains. These two regions have developed different patterns of forestry in postsocialism, also drawing on their respective sediments of socialism – (1) in Apuseni, a model of independent small-scale forestry, based on individual households and (2) in Vrancea, a model of forestry fiefdoms. Model 1 is about practicing a household-based forestry and creating flexible networks of forest harvesting, processing and selling. The keywords for this model are

freedom and flexibility, as well as resistance to exploitative patronage. Independent trade is also a key element here. Model 2 is about the development of local middle-size enterprises that harvest, process and sell timber, hiring locals as labor. In this model, extraction is driven by authoritarian patron-client relations, controlled by politicians and marked by labor vulnerability, rising inequality and limited resistance capacity. Both models feature forests as territories of intense domestic extraction and they can both be understood as ramifications of a frontier moment, a boom of the timber market after 1989. The comparison draws on insights from many years of research, on fieldwork in both areas, interviews and surveys. In the presentation I will focus on the stories of particular actors and events that shaped local conjunctures, and I will use a narrative style.

S4. Barren fields of corn and wheat: On the ruination of the medicinal plant research and industry after 1989 in Romania

Ágota Ábrán

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Abstract: Early 20th century Hungarian and Romanian scientists who worked on advocating the 'case of medicinal plants' campaigned for cultivation and collection cooperatives, organised exportation, botanical and chemical research, closer cooperation with the medicinal and pharmacology industry, and government support. That is, they worked to make medicinal plants recognisable as valuable and controllable commodities while making places of collection and cultivation into commodity frontiers or frontiers of appropriation, where both the work of people (the village poor, women, and children) and plants could be inserted into commodity chains supplying apothecaries in Budapest, Vienna, Graz, Halle, and even the US. While the outcome of their advocacy work fell short of their expectations at the beginning of the 20th century, the mode of organising the medicinal plant industry and research network of the Romanian People's Republic and especially later on of the Socialist Republic of Romania seemed to follow the

visions of these earlier advocates. Thus, if we see capitalism as a 'relentlessly innovative quest to turn the work/energy of the biosphere into capital' and we see the RPR and RSR as state capitalist systems, increasing the potential extraction of value of medicinal plants seems a reasonable move. What happens then after 1989 when throughout the '90s and early 2000s the networks of Plafar and of the Fundulea medicinal plant research station which together created the network of the medicinal plant research and industry in Romania crumble under waves of privatisations, corruption, national and international competition, and personal conflicts? As one scientist mentioned with tears in her eyes, the fields of (cheaper) corn and wheat that replaced the wide variety medicinal plant cultivations in Fundulea seem barren compared.

This presentation based on a year and a half anthropological fieldwork and archival work on the Romanian medicinal plant research and industry asks then: What does the both symbolic and material statement of the barren corn and wheat fields tell us about 'Cheap Nature' and 'projects that compel nature-as-oikeios to work harder and harder – for free, or at low cost' and about the place Romania occupies in the circuit of capital that sustains such projects.

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PANEL T

INSTITUTIONALIZING ANTICOMMUNISM. REPRESENTATIONS OF CAPITALISM IN ROMANIAN FILM AND LITERATURE

Date: Saturday, 22 May, 10:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91057371129>

Conveners: **Claudiu Turcuş**,

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Camil Ungureanu

Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain

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Panel Description: The papers of this panel explore the ideological biases against recent communism that literature and film, the two core sectors of Romanian cultural production, developed and further disseminated during Postcommunism. Our focus is not restricted to an analysis of the artistic imaginaries and typologies, but also deals with the institutional

structures of film and literature, with all their legislative and marketing underpinnings, that established the narrative of backing a capitalist better world against the remnants and ruins of communism. Although this was the mainstream view of the Romanian public space during the 1990s, local artists and intellectuals did not approach it from what we idealistically assume it should be an oppositional, critical point of view, but embraced and popularized it, from the position of high art that was still very influential in Romanian culture. This conformist, and often opportunistic stance gained cultural producers' immediate public recognition, sometimes political or financial profits. Even more, it was shared both by survivors of the old regime, who rushed to capitalize on their long-nurtured anticommunist mindset, and by young artists, who learned to explain the capitalist precarities they experienced in their youth by a still-kicking communist enemy they hadn't actually encountered.

T1. Anticommunist Anticapitalism: The 'Good Capitalism' in Romanian Post-Communist Poetry

Ştefan Baghiu

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Abstract: Romanian post-communist poetry has been often described as anarchist and militant for social causes. The latest studies in literary scholarship and criticism have stated that the poetry of the 2000 generation was the moment when "the ideological agenda gains consistence on the leftist side" (Iovănel, 2017). As Vladimir Pasti argues (2006), Romanian post-communism has often been viewed as "the road paved with purifying suffering which the Romanian society had to take from 'bad' communism to 'good' capitalism". Therefore,

militant poetry, leftist as it is described, would also come to incorporate this perspective whereby capitalist structures should be criticized for their negative aspects, although they are often seen as byproducts of the communist legacy, and not inherent vices of capitalism itself. This paper analyses the way in which anticapitalism has only been a face of anticommunism in Romanian post-communist poetry, and paradoxically a permanent regret that capitalism does not manifest at full power, but merely as a hybrid of this "burdening" communist legacy and Western tendencies. As anticapitalists, Romanian poets of the early 2000s always stated, in fact, that the main problem in Romanian society is that social structures are not capitalist enough due to their communist legacy.

T2. Anticommunism was not enough. The Bankruptcy of Romanian Film Industry of the 1990s

Claudiu Turcuş

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Abstract: This paper describes the ways in which the Romanian film industry was restructured in the 1990s. It also explores the structural, legislative, financial and ideological

continuities of this period with the manner in which this field of cultural production was organized in the 1970s and the 1980s. Using a contextual analysis of several documents from the National Archives of Romania (RoFilm Fund, 1986-1989), interviews with the most influential film directors of that period and primary research data, and scholarly sources (both in Romanian and English), I will argue that the collapse of the state-socialist modes of film production, financing, and

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distribution produced adverse structural effects in the 1990s: the myth of free-market, the illusion of capitalist oriented cultural production undermined the desired relaunch of the

Romanian film industry as a national cinema and postponing the integration of this cultural domain within a transnational network.

T3. Deetatization of Culture, Privatization of Politics. The Case of the Publishing Houses in Post-Communist Romania

Adriana Stan

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Cosmin Borza

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Abstract: The paper addresses the process of the post-communist denationalization by focusing on the privatization of cultural institutions, through the case of some major Romanian publishing houses (Editura Politică/Humanitas, Univers, Minerva, etc.). Our approach acknowledges the leading role of humanist intellectuals in launching and legitimizing devices of privatization immediately after 1989, a curious phenomenon which both fit into, and extended the larger

pattern of literature-centrism developed by socialist cultures. These intellectuals' enthusiastic siding with principles of market capitalism, from their new positions of book publishers and cultural managers, paved the way towards the fast implementation of neoliberalism. At the same time, these intellectual groups gained through this process of privatization the upper hand in the public narrative on main ideological topics, such as the memory of communism, the interwar far right, the path of Occidentalization. Our analysis traces several empirical stages of this particular privatization of culture: 1) the legislative frame of denationalization, and market liberalization; 2) the publishing policies and the promoted book collections; 3) the dissemination of the anti-communist ideology that enabled publishing houses themselves to serve as political platforms. Overall, we aim at explaining how this intellectual enterprise failed to ensure direct economic and cultural profits, but was spectacularly successful in establishing a long-term recipe for neoliberal restructuring in several areas of society.

T4. Anti-capitalism in Stalinist Films: What happens when 'Gender' and 'Communist Bodies' are at odds?

Bogdan Popa

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Abstract: Rather than using gender as an analytic to understand bodies in communism, this paper suggests that the concept of a communist body can bring back a historical materialist method, which draws on a dialectical theory of anti-capitalism. In discussing Paul Calinescu's *The Valley Resounds* (1949), I show why a dialectical method matters. In opposition with the Cold War articulation of gender identity, which sees people's sexed bodies on a path to becoming free, communist bodies in Calinescu's film were primarily vehicles to promote

a Marxist ideal of human emancipation. A communist person is a producer of a new system of human organization, unlike the gendered person in the US imagination that represents the potential of a territory of independence and freedom. A communist became a productive body on the basis that socialism has been achieved in Eastern Europe. A productive body was not only a material realization of a socialist society, but also its on-going task. To articulate differently this apparent paradox, the communist's bodies mattered only as a vehicle for advancing a communist ideal that was already present. In the Soviet dialectical conception, men and women were not given as a material embodiment that was fixed and unchanging. According to a Marxist logic, they were elements in a mode of production that had to continuously abolish capitalism.

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PANEL U

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND THE CAPITALIST COMMODIFICATION OF ART

Date: Saturday, 22 May, 10:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98958537809>

Moderator: **Oana Mateescu**

Researcher, Frontlines of Value, University of Bergen, Norway

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U1. Creative cities: commodification of art and cultural gentrification at the periphery of European capitalism

Miki Braniște

PhD student, Theater and Film Faculty, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cultural manager, president of Colectiv A Association, Founding member, The Paintbrush Factory, Romania

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Abstract: The presentation will analyse the contemporary developing of social art practices and discourses in Cluj-Napoca in the frame of the city's capitalist transformations during the past two decades. My research focuses on the critique of creative industry and commodification of art in post-communist cities as exemplified by the work of a significant part of the Cluj-Napoca artistic scene.

For this study, I interconnect theoretical references with interpretations of documents such as activity reports and the city's strategies, interviews with cultural workers or cultural researchers. Analysing the modus operandi of artists, curators, and cultural actors of Cluj-Napoca, I present the creative pattern based on reaction as a response to the undergoing changes within the socio-political environment of the city marked by the capitalist transformations. The artistic and cultural production was profoundly marked by the transition period and by the Great Recession effects and later, by the effect of the urban development policies of the city. The wider expansion of the urban regeneration theory, that attributes an economic growth factor to culture, based on the existence of creative industries, persuades the local authorities to create a new narrative of Cluj-Napoca concentrated on the image of a creative city. In 2017, following a study conducted by the World Bank, Cluj Napoca is considered the most important urban development pole in Romania and is called the „magnet city” that attracts a population with skilled labor force.

Cluj-Napoca Town Hall needed to legitimise its new development plans that sought to put the city on Europe's map and one way to start this process was the application for the title of Cluj Napoca European Cultural Capital 2021. The values of the European Union are disseminated by supporting major cultural programs, including the granting of the title of European Cultural Capital. The candidacy process and this title are often seen as chance for the cities to gain cultural, social and economic benefits, foster urban regeneration, change the city's image and raise its visibility on an international scale. Due to the pressure on the European Union to remain a competitive force in the global capitalist economy, art and culture do not escape this tension, being embedded in the creative industries that generate a new vision, that of culture as source of profit. This title is often a moment to put all cultural drivers and values of a city in order to stimulate tourism, cultural consumption and economic growth, reason why we need to address this subject more critically.

The presentation will focus on the contribution of culture to the development of the city and how it is used by the city hall in order to create adherence to new urban policies, whose end result is the increasing of prices for real estate and rents and the gentrification of the post-industrial and central areas. The narrative of creative city and its implementation strategy results in the intensification of gentrification (already existing for other causes) and it makes Cluj yet another city whose policies of urban regeneration fail the inhabitants and generate social inequalities. The city becomes one of the first urban centres in the country where gentrification is massively felt and is a relevant case study for larger urban processes that force it to grow in order to remain competitive on the European labour market.

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U2. Locality, Solidarity, Knowledge in the Freelance Virtual Community: the Case of Translators in Poland

Kateryna Novikova

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Abstract: The main goal of the paper will be to present qualitative analysis of the selected practices of the local embeddedness, knowledge sharing and solidarity at work outside the organization based on the freelance activities of the Polish translators. Analysis will be based on the hidden participant observations and several in-depth interviews with the virtual community administrators (on social media) that are freelance translators as well. Translators all over the world use specialized professional and social media platforms not only to look for orders, gigs, part-time or full-time jobs. There is enormous amount of network resources, easily available through search engines or specialized online dictionaries – taking into consideration the peculiarities of translator's work. However, translators have developed remarkable online community of mutual support and solidarity that works both in terms of specialised knowledge (language issues, entrepreneurship and employment issues) as well as informal reflections and advices in the local context. There is an international example of the Proz.com, that can be compared with the local Polish social media groups (based particularly on Facebook) including dozens of thousands of member and tens or hundreds of posts and comments every day. Usually

translators and interpreters work as portfolio workers, self-employed or small entrepreneurs. Sometimes they are full-time employed. Certainly in Poland there are quite a few translators that work extra hours based on civil agreements, usually in addition to their employment contracts in other professional areas (e.g. language teachers etc.). Considering their flexible work timetable and changing places of work, cooperation with multiple partners and lack of strong connections with any particular organisation one can describe them in general as freelancers. On the whole locally disembedded freelance workstyle is characteristic for creative industries, and translation and interpreting is one of them. It seems that the development of mutual help freelance community of translators as creative workers is interesting not only in terms of mere knowledge sharing practices, but in connection with general solidarity at work and local identity practices. Specific knowledge sharing practices can be considered a part of particular community creation practices. Another crucial concept in this perspective is solidarity, along with social capital, reciprocity and trust as important motivators for knowledge sharing. In the world of growing economic complexity, social uncertainty, and neoliberal pressure of creativity and cooptation, translators propose specific coping strategies in their everyday knowledge sharing, solidarity and mutual support practices in global and local dimensions.

U3. Work, Pleasure and Pop-Culture: negations, interrelations and “bricolage” in Rompop

Mihai Lukács

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Abstract: Easily accessed pleasure and entertainment are central to the local productions of popular culture (especially in Romanian pop music or *Rompop*), in a close relation to a definition of work. Because pleasure is less and less accessible in late capitalism, various popular songs from 2010 to 2020 talk (in Romanian) about finding pleasure in new ways, especially through indirectly gratifying, disciplined and forceful activities such as work. This approach reminds us of Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* (1966), where he explores the lack of satisfaction in work by itself, analysing it as unpleasurable and painful, as a way of moving from immediate satisfaction to its deferral. Searching for an impossible pleasure, the musical subjects move away from play to work, from immediate satisfaction to delayed satisfaction, from receptiveness to productiveness, from absence of repression towards a constricting security. In the Eastern European context, the pleasure principle is replaced by *reality (work)*, as reflected in the lyrics of recent pop stars such as Nosfe, Killa Fonic or Neli.

This *reality principle* was connected by Marcuse through new emerging sophisticated technologies to late capitalism in a permanent tension between work and pleasure. Behind the reality principle, one can identify the scarcity, a poor society unable to satisfy human needs without constant restraint, renunciation, delay. Any possible satisfaction can be possible only through hard work (what Nosfe directly calls “shovel, pan mixer, sackful of cement, baluster”), where pleasure is suspended and pain is constantly present for a very long duration (the whole adult life). In this sense, a pleasure principle is incompatible to popular culture *reality*, dominated by the repressive regimentation of necessary capitalist work. Given that the theory and politics of cultural studies celebrate the active subversion of popular culture, this paper will investigate the process of “bricolage” (Dittmer & Bos, 2019): how local musical subcultures (such as trap and manele in Romania) appropriate for their own purposes and meanings the concept of work and how the explored images are transformed in ways not intended by their producers; how the described processes are rearticulated to produce oppositional meanings and subvert the Marcusean *reality* and to offer the possibility of non painful pleasure.

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U4. Identity Crisis and the Right in Liberal-Age Romanian Theatre

Lucian Ţion

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Abstract: In this paper I posit that theatrical arts in Romania are caught in an identity crisis between the ideological past and what is generally perceived to be the non-ideological present. Using Žižek's dictum that the vilification of totalitarianism is a stopgap for critical thought and a green light for the popularization of capitalism, I look at the way in which theatrical productions staged in the last few years in Romania attempt to negotiate their position between "bad" communism and "good" capitalism, considering in the process the institutional leverage that makes popularization of right-leaning discourses

possible. In this vein I argue, following Adorno and Horkheimer, that Western-styled musicals and other imports or crude local adaptations thereof are used to maintain the status quo of totalitarian liberalism against attempting a societal transformation that could endanger the latter's dominance. Moreover, I argue that in translation from one cultural context to another, popular theatrical entertainment in neoliberal Romania becomes infused with nationalism, resulting in a pedestrian provincialism that is far from aligning Romanian culture to the West, as these productions intended. In looking at the cultural output of a handful of theatres in Romania I try to identify what, if any, are the ideological currents in the arts, while assessing the possible chances of counter leftist discourses to change the current orientation of Romanian theatre toward the right.

PANEL V

CASE STUDIES FROM ROMANIA: INEQUALITIES AND UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT

Date: Saturday, 22 May, 10:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/96529690803>

Moderator: **Andrei Țăranu**

Professor Hab. PhD. Deputy Dean of Faculty of the Political Sciences of the National School on Political Sciences and Public Administration, Bucharest Romania

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V1. How a poor country becomes rich? Is "good governance" and in particular fighting corruption the pre-requisite for economic growth and welfare? Why anti-corruption policies failed to deliver? The Romanian case.

Daniela Ionescu

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Abstract: The present study questions two largely shared assumptions in regard to the fight against corruption. The first assumption largely promoted by IOs and academia is that "good governance", in particular low levels of corruption correlates with economic growth and general public welfare. In other words, a country is rich because it has low levels of corruptions. There is a plethora of studies suggesting this. From which many has been generated by the very institutions that promote such "good governance" polices. (e.g. World Bank, European Union, IMF).

However, the methodology adopted was to compare across country not across time. In other words the pile of studies showing a correlation between levels of welfare and levels of corruption, for example, do not answer to the fundamental question: how a poor country became rich? Was it because it had "good institutions"/low levels of corruption which conduced to economic growth and development or was it because it, first, adopted certain economic policies which conduced to economic growth and which afterwards triggered lower levels of corruption. In other words, the pile evidence supporting the first assumption are only establishing a correlation without demonstrating a causation.

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The second assumption is generated by the fact that fighting corruption is always associated with the “right type” of economic policy which promotes economic neo-liberalism, the free-market. Fighting corruption validates neo-liberal economies morally not just economically. According with the general view “free market”, less public sector, less state, etc is a guarantee for low levels of corruption. Against this background, the study discusses the case of Romania after 15 years of Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (starting from 2005 when, presumably, “the right” reform as asked by the European Commission came into place). Romania,

according with the findings, stands as a failure for the type of anti-corruption policies envisaged by the EU. However, it is argued that this failure does not necessarily spring from a lack of domestic will to implement them “correctly” but rather from a structural fault. “The fault” in this case it is measured against economic growth and poverty levels. All in all it is argued, that countries like Romania, are examples that contradict both assumptions: that fighting corruption is a prerequisite for economic growth and development; that the neo-liberal economic agenda carried that accompanies it is “the right” economic policy.

V2. Attitudes to social inequality, subjective social status and psychological wellbeing – an analysis of the Romanian context based on survey data

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Abstract: Recent data from Eurostat (2019) places Romania among the European countries with the highest level of income inequality. However, the objective income inequality is often

inaccurately reflected in individuals’ perceptions on the matter, while perceptions on inequality have important implications for redistribution policies (Hauser and Norton, 2017). This may mean that inaccurate perceptions of inequality can become a contributing factor in perpetuating faulty redistribution policies. It is therefore important to assess the match between objective and subjective assessments of inequalities, as previous studies show that people tend to perceive inequalities to be lower than they actually are (Hauser and Norton, 2017; Gimpelson and Treisman, 2016). Moreover, previous research has shown that subjective social status (SSS) predicts wellbeing (psychological functioning and health related factors) better than the objective economic status (Adler et al, 2000; Schneider, 2019). Our paper aims to evaluate the moderating effect of subjective inequality on the effect of subjective social status on wellbeing in Romania, based on survey data collected at the beginning of 2020. In addition, we will discuss the relationships between measures of objective inequality at regional (county) level and subjective inequality.

V3. Participatory budgeting in CEE Countries: lessons from Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic, plus Moldavia

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Abstract: Participatory budgeting (PB) was brought in CEE countries by social and environmental activists as a democratic tool aimed to enhance participation and deliberation on public policies. It is still considered to be, disregarding its mediocre achievements in Europe, a democratic instrument aimed to foster social inclusion, transparency of local authorities but also as a process that devolves power from the representative level of authorities to a much participatory constituency. Instead, in the course of implementation PB in CEE countries became a more or less a technocratic tool, with a feeble participation

devoid of the social justice premises of the Porto Alegre World Social Forums where it was popularized to activists outside Brazil. In the CEE diffusion it has an insignificant budget and also an adaptation that fostered neoliberal subjectivities based on individual proposals and an electronic individual voting system with no collective deliberation. This investigation is based on a Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology, with field research in the above mentioned countries and interviews and workshops with BP activists, literature review from the last 15 years, but also focusing on narratives of activist struggles with local authorities in Romania for a better institutional design of PB. This struggle might be translated into a future legislative proposal that I am currently working on and that will be discussed with the participants at the symposium.

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V4. Marketing Religion and Nationalism in a Post-Socialist Environment: Romania's Family Referendum and the Emergence of a New "Anti-System" Party (AUR)

Raluca Ana Alecu

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Abstract: The controversial 2018 referendum in Romania on whether the constitutional definition of family should be narrowed to that of a union between a man and a woman failed to meet the 30% threshold required for its validation. However its result, while disappointing for its proponent's goal to reset Romania's political agenda, launched - as this paper argues - a new type of neo-liberal competitor on the country's religious services market. As the campaigns for and against the referendum highly polarized Romanian society, the result was widely considered a substantial failure for the Coalition for Family (Cff). The umbrella group that initiated the push to alter the Constitution acted with the financial support and logistics of several religious denominations (most notably the Evangelical and the Orthodox ones) and failed despite its aggressive free-market behavior in promoting its religious agenda. However, its marketing strategy (an aggressive social media presence, a savvy flexibility in accommodating different denominations, and a competitive and bold approach in public debates and a powerful TV exposure) while echoing a similar strategy professed by the Evangelicals in recent years, set a new standard in marketing religion for a post-socialist audience and can be safely compared with that of a classical capitalist entrepreneur.

As my paper argues, while the result of the referendum undoubtedly disappointed Cff's supporters, the Coalition did not abandon its anti-secular ambitions, but instead tried to

take them to a new level, by announcing plans to reposition itself as a prospective pan-Christian conservative party, both trying to attract the religious older Romanian voters, and to better position itself along the lines of the Christian conservative World Congress of Families, a US-based coalition with plans for several countries in the region.

Still, while its rhetoric echoed that of similar religious anti-gender movements in other Central European countries (Croatia, Slovakia, Slovenia), its influence began to fade and its plans to reposition itself as a conservative party remained only a dream.

Just over two years later, a new "anti-system" party, the Alliance for the Unity of Romanians (AUR), echoing Poland's populist and nationalist Law and Justice party, became the fourth-largest party in the country's parliament, with an agenda mirroring the Coalition for Family's anti-gender and religious agenda, albeit with a more pronounced nationalist and pandemic-oriented twist.

My paper will argue that the success of AUR can be seen as a case-study in religious resilience, as AUR absorbed the lessons offered by the failure of a more religious diverse and anti-LGBT oriented Coalition for Family, and wisely adapted its otherwise strongly nationalist and pro-family agenda to better suit the new social and political context, dominated by the COVID-19 pandemics. The arguments will be supported by an ongoing research of the Cff's discourse, before and after the referendum, using an in-depth content-based analysis of its public appearance, press releases and social media posts, but also of the public discourse of several leaders of AUR.

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PANEL W

THE COMMODIFICATION OF LABOUR AND THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS IN CEE COUNTRIES

Date: Saturday, 22 May, 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)
Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/97274028497>

Moderator: **Irina Culic**

Professor, Department of Sociology, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania

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W1. From prefix capitalism to neoliberal economism: Russian automotive industry as a laboratory in capitalist realism

Jeremy Morris

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Abstract: This exploratory and review essay views Russia as a particular state-capital accommodation-assemblage characterized by neoliberal subjectivization of the population in a particularly stark manner. This argument is a departure from perspectives on Russia as a semi-periphery, instead proposing its thorough incorporation into the current moment of global capitalism. While 'state capitalism' has analytical purchase, 'authoritarian neoliberalism' is proposed as a more sharply focussed lens in examining Russia in the global context. This is important too in reorienting political economy to accommodate more grounded methodologies, including ethnography and other empirically subjective

accounts. While beyond the scope of the essay, existing ethnographic accounts and empirical materials – particularly relating to Special Economic Zones in Russia are incorporated in the argument. In making its argument, the essay reviews the contribution of Foucauldian approaches to neoliberalism and neomarxian political economy. Then it reviews the varieties of capitalism approaches and their critics as well as the debates on state capitalism pertaining to Russia by Ilya Matveev, and as pertaining to state capitalism in general. Further the essay reviews recent work on Eastern Europe as examples of vanguard authoritarian neoliberal governance. Finally, this approach allows the essay to argue that Russia is not only a 'normal country', but that it anticipates contemporary developments towards more post-democratic capitalist futures, along with their counter-currents.

W2. The workplace effects of global supply chain dependence: Romania's automobile industry

Zoltán Mihály

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Abstract: The paper addresses the implementation of lean techniques in a plastics factory with a subsidiary in north-western Romania, treated as a dependent market economy (Ban 2014, 2016; Nolke and Vliegenthart 2009; Tarlea and Freyberg-Inan 2018). The study utilizes a qualitative methodology, consisting of participant observation sessions and in-depth interviews with various factory employees. Host

country economic, political and social circumstances granted by the influence of both global and national institutions emphasizing liberalization, enticed the company to transfer lean practices without hindrances. However, the findings show that host country economic dependence can be detrimental for the transfer of practices from the home country, a fact underlining lean production's ideological character (Harley 1999; Stewart et al. 2016). Low complexity production, legislative deregulation and overall unbalanced industrial relations upset work practices, creating frequent employee conflicts alongside work intensification.

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W3. Commodifying labour in Eastern Germany: the triumph of neoliberal morality

Katerina Ivanova

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Abstract: Work has been transforming globally over the past decades, with the new forms of precarious and post-Fordist labour emerging worldwide. However, I argue that the shifts in the experience of work under modern capitalism have been even more marked in postsocialist contexts than they were in the west. Ever since the German reunification of 1989, Eastern Germany has been a testing ground and the avantgarde (Engler 2002; Buck and Hönke 2013) for the new labour regimes. By using the 'grassroots approach' (Narotzky 2012) for studying these economic transformations, I focus on how the commodification of labour and implementation of neoliberal policies played out in my fieldsite on the level of individual experiences, biographies and moralities.

This paper is based on the material gathered throughout one year of ethnographic fieldwork in the East German town of Zwickau, known for its automotive industry. In the GDR times, iconic socialist car Trabant was produced at Sachsenring plant in Zwickau. Unlike other Eastern German towns, Zwickau is considered to be a success story of postsocialist transformation, as it attracted massive investment from Volkswagen in the early 1990s and managed to sustain its industry. However, there is little stability and job security outside of the VW

plant, the salaries still differ significantly in the East and West and the trade union's efforts to bring working hours down to the 'western' level have brought no results in almost 30 years. Politically, Zwickau, as Saxony in general, shows strong support (about 30%) of the right-wing party AfD. During my fieldwork, I conducted interviews with the former and current automotive industry workers of various levels, supplier industry workers, trade union activists as well as local politicians. I also attended numerous public and political meetings, related to the automotive industry as well as the regional elections.

Building on my fieldwork material, I discuss changes on the labour market in Eastern Germany, such as massive post-unification unemployment, the boom in qualification and temporary employment agencies and the neoliberal Hartz IV reform. I also show how these processes played out on the local level in Zwickau and the individual experiences of my interlocutors. In this paper, I also examine the 'countermovements' to these transformations, such as the 'Monday protests', as well as their failure. As previous research in the anthropology of postsocialism shows (Bartha 2015; Dunn 2004; Dale 2006), the experience of work in socialism provided grounds for Eastern Germans to contest the viability of modern capitalism. In contrast, I suggest that such a 'social' alternative has been to a large extent defeated by neoliberal hegemonic discourse. This process, I argue, also contributed to framing issues of employment in individual rather than structural terms on the local level.

W4. Work and Livelihood in Corna, Roşia Montană

Imola Püsök

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Abstract: Echoing the title of the volume edited by Susana Narotzky and Victoria Goddard, in my presentation I will focus on works and livelihoods of the people in Corna, Roşia Montană, as they are observable now. I have been conducting anthropological research since 2018 in the village, where since the arrival of a Canadian mining company in 1997, and the closure of the state-run goldmine in 2006, locals are living in a state of permanent liminality, where all aspects of their lives (environment, relationships, material goods) have become temporary and provisory. In an attempt to provide a thick description (Geertz), rather than analyse macroprocesses, I will focus on individual decisions and aspirations of those still living in the village. Inspired by the aforementioned volume, by anthropological understandings of post-socialism and political ecology, as well as Tim Ingold's dwelling perspective, and Árpád Szokolczai's idea of permanent (trichster) liminality, I will focus

on presenting the economic strategies of my interlocutors, and the way these are intertwined with their social and ecological relationships. I will stress, that in their endeavours to make a living, people engage with their environment, and their failure to do so reflect failing personal and social relationships as well. The experienced impossibility of the locals of Corna to find sustainable solutions or alternatives to their economic struggles lie (at least partly) in the brokenness of their social networks. The livelihood strategies of the people of Corna will be presented in the wider socio-economic and microhistorical context of the past thirty years of post-socialism as it manifested in Roşia Montană. I understand studies of anthropology, ethnographies of the particular (Abu-Lughod) to be potential specifics of wider social phenomena. In this case, by understanding the dramatic changes in work and livelihood, and in the economic and social strategies these people in a disadvantageous situation adopt, we gain a different perspective on the changes and challenges presented by the post-socialist version of market capitalism, on the changes these mean for the working class, and especially for those working in the heavy industries.

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PANEL X

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CAPITALIST RELATIONS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Saturday, 22 May, 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95069291747>

Moderator: **Natalia Buier**

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X1. “Rivers to the people”: energy transition, water grabbing and ecopopulist unrest in the Balkan Mountains

Ivan Rajković

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Abstract: The state regimes in the Balkans are increasingly targeting natural resources as the latest frontier of capital accumulation. Such is the initiative to create 3,500 small hydropower plants meant to boost the region’s sustainability and facilitate its energy transition in line with the Paris climate agreement. While nominally carbon-free, small hydropower plans entail channeling rivers and streams into tunnels and pipes, with devastating socio-environmental impact both for the immediate users of mountainous water regimes and the broader public. In the popular imagination, such development is seen as pushing beyond the limits of commodification, something that endangers ‘life’ itself. From Slovenia to Albania, Romania to Greece, new grassroots social movements are emerging to address the uneven distribution of ecological harm and gain associated with these projects (often in conjunction with increased extraction of rare minerals such as lithium). Focusing on the ageing regions of the Southeast Serbia - where water grabbing is compounded by rapid

depopulation and fervent pensioner-cum-ecological activism - I explore *Odbranimi reke Stare planine* (River Guardians of Stara mountain) - a motley network of affected villagers and their urban kin, ecologists and nature lovers, and a wide chunk of citizenry mobilised through online platforms. Waging a ‘water war’ against the investors, the river guardians also oppose the people to the state. But exactly what ‘people’ are summoned here? Neither nation, citizenship or class describe them fully. Rather, water here functions as an empty signifier - a nexus in creating an alternative eco-populist universality, and environmental struggle begins to generalize other social frontlines. But unlike in Laclau and Mouffe’s model of populist chains, ‘life’ is not merely the stuff of signs: its equivalences are made in living webs and cycles, in an intergenerational moral ecology connecting the dead, the living, and those still to be born. And if the rivers came to be the basis of new insurgent kinship, it is so because they could be imagined as the last shared substance, at once traversing different species, places and times. Such unison, however, is not free from cleavages of class, gender and age. I show how such rivers connect, as well as divide, and explore the potentials of ecopopulist mobilization in the Balkans more broadly.

X2. “It Belongs to Someone on Paper, But It’s Nobody’s”: Small Shareholding and Its Discontents in a Croatian Worker-Owned Company

Ognjen Kojanic

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Abstract: In this paper, I ethnographically examine property relations in the case of ITAS, a metalworking company in Croatia. ITAS workers have been legally recognized as owners of their company since 2007, after years of struggle against the private previous owner that culminated in a bankruptcy process.

Some in ITAS tried to articulate a notion of ownership different from the concept of property that has characterized the post-socialist transformation of economic and political relations in Croatia. This case has attracted activists, artists, journalists, and scholars, who have promoted it as a successful case of resistance to privatization outside of the company. At the time of my research, in 2017 and 2018, ITAS was a shareholding society struggling to survive in the capitalist market for high precision metalworking. Many worker-shareholders did not

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expect any tangible benefits from owning shares, due to the economic problems that the company was facing. The majority of ITAS workers did not even see the value of participating in decision making, which was the right that shares granted them

in principle. What are the challenges for articulating worker ownership and how does the political economy of peripheral capitalism shape the understanding and practice of property rights?

X3. Citadel of Fire: Spatialization of time in the post-industrial city of Hunedoara, Romania

Vlad Gheorghiu

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Abstract: My work expounds upon anthropological theories of memory and the spatiality of time, while contributing to ethnographic studies of the Balkans, specifically of Romania. This research seeks to capture the role of historical memory divided among those coming of age in either pre or post socialist Hunedoara, and the ways in which these subjectivities inform their imagination of future city planning. The research explores Hunedoara's role as a former socialist showcase city and traces its transvaluation up to today's current local discourses between a generation split by the component of either first or second hand experiences and memories of the communist past. Essentially, the work explores the poly-temporality of the citizens of Hunedoara as they develop aspirations for the city's future, highlighting newer

entrepreneurial trends arising amidst generations born only on the cusp of the city's shift into a capitalist free market. The research was developed since 2019 when I conducted fieldwork between the months of January and March. The research methods I used included semi structured interviews, participant observation, local observation, online documentation (netnographic data) and archival data collection. Analysing visual methods were employed throughout the research and was often coupled with more active approaches: from photo elicitation to archive research, from visually documenting my path to image analysis of representations of the city. Data showcases the shifts in Hunedoara as a concept itself, from its inception as a worker's utopia to the violence of the regime change which made countless social, economic, and visual marks upon the city still visible today. Lastly, it is important to note that my work seeks to explore Hunedoara not through the lens of public discourse, but instead access it through the memories of its inhabitants.

X4. Elevating the Standing of Vocational Education and Training in Romania

Maria Pantea

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Abstract: Initial vocational education and training (VET) is reaching policy momentum in Europe. A commitment for making VET a "first choice" was part of the Skills Agenda for Europe in 2016–2020 and the emphasis remained. As elsewhere, VET has been by far, the most intensely reformed educational sector in Romania. Elevating its status is a recent policy concern that comes as a late remedy for a decision to interrupt VET and in a context of strong pressure from the

industry. The presentation discusses the main reforms of the Romanian VET system over the last 30 years, including the recent efforts for reshaping its image. It examines the unsolved tensions generated when compelling policy goals intersect young people's choices and it challenges the assumption that problem of VET is (mainly) one of image, as currently implied in the policy rhetoric. The presentation argues that elevating the standing of VET requires more than an 'image makeover' and social marketing. In doing this, the presentation interrogates the quality of education in Romania's VET and the *precarisation* of employment. The analysis is based on a large-scale qualitative study involving over 250 young people and 100 teachers, employers and policy makers.

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PANEL Y

THE CAPITALISM'S NEW CLOTHES: CRITICAL THEORIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Date: Saturday, 22 May, 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)
Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95005277741>

Conveners: **Ciprian Bogdan**

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Gaspar Miklos Tamas

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Panel Description: The fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe left an ideological void soon to be filled by various social and political actors with an aggressive pro-capitalist agenda. And nowhere is this newly forged neoliberal consensus better exemplified than in the fact that in spite of their differences, liberals, nationalists and even social-democrats from CEE countries have all ended up in being champions of "transition", the magical word expressing the necessary purgatory for those in search of the capitalist paradise. In this context, the fall of the communist regimes has been portrayed as the irrefutable proof that any attempt to criticize capitalism

is a utopian and, thus, potentially criminal gesture. No wonder that the rare attempts to criticize capitalist relations were mostly relegated to the academic and epistemological sphere, only after the 2008 financial crash, social and political actors started more or less radically to question the capacity of the current system to deliver on its promises. We believe that thirty years after the fall of communism, it is time for a renewed reflection on the various epistemological attempts from CEE countries to critically address capitalism in its global and/or local functioning which might be summed up in a series of questions that our panel seeks to address: what are the basic assumptions of the various critical theoretical perspectives (such as those informed by Marx, Polanyi or the figures of the Frankfurt School etc.) articulated in CEE countries? How are Western critical theories translated and adapted to the realities of CEE? How do theories interact with social and political practices? What is the role of philosophy in the critical theories emerging in CEE? How is real communism understood and interpreted by these critical theories? What is the role of transition in imposing capitalism in CEE? How apt is the concept of neoliberalism to describe the capitalist development in the region? What emancipatory prospects are articulated by critical theories from CEE?

Y1. Is there a way forward with the critical theory?

Lorin Ghiman

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Abstract: There is no need to embellish things: the academic and, for the most part, the entire cultural milieu in CEE countries straightforwardly promote the same pro-capitalism ideology, whereas the differences make up only for the preferred flavor of it. A sober look at the state of affairs would have to concede that this ideological monopoly is under any serious challenge in the CEE countries. As a matter of fact, this is nothing new. The first generation of the Frankfurt School was confronted with the same situation, and articulated its program to at least explain, if not change the state of affairs. In a way, we stand today in the same situation like them almost a century ago, facing the same theoretical and practical challenges they faced, differences notwithstanding. This invites the question what can one learn and what should one change in the theoretical and practical

approach the critical theory put forth, if this long standing tradition of thought is to be of any use today. Starting from the core issues of a "critical theory of society", the intervention seeks to identify the main points where it failed, or fell short, or was simply overrun by the societal changes, and attempts to sketch at least a few proposals for further critical work better suited for our current historical situation. First, the intervention would argue that one of the most blatant weak spots of the "old" critical theory was its dependence on the psychoanalytical vocabulary, and makes a few modest proposals on how else to work out the sociological phenomena pertaining to that issue. Secondly, it will take another look at the concept of technology, and the role it takes in the construction of current overarching ideology, as well as the reproduction of the social status quo. And, thirdly, takes a look at the model of society that Adorno and Horkheimer, as well as others, used to contrast with the social realities of the time.

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Y2. The poverty of capitalism. Philosophical critiques of capitalism in post-Communist Romania

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Abstract: Unlike other CEE communist countries, Romania did not develop a genuine, clearly identifiable Marxist intellectual tradition. With few exceptions, intellectuals were coping with the social and political pressures of the communist regime by retreating in purely aesthetic or philosophical debates. No wonder that after the collapse of communism, Romanian intelligentsia tended to embrace more or less enthusiastically a pro-capitalist agenda. Given this context, the emergence of a small, but active group of philosophers in Cluj-Napoca in the 2000's trying to articulate an anti-capitalist stance informed in various degrees by Marx seemed nothing short of a miracle. This presentation will focus only on two expressions of this philosophical anti-capitalism: the first one is shaped by Gáspár Miklós Tamás's intellectual activity of reappropriating *via* György Lukács, and many others, the Marxist legacy, an effort which, lately, has been reoriented towards a Leninist position by Alex Cistelean; while the second is rooted in Claude Karnoouh's

attempt to filter the Marxist critique of capitalism by using the philosophical insights developed by Heidegger and Gérard Granel, an influence which is clearly visible in Alexandru Polgár's philosophical reconstruction for justifying a renewed critique of capitalism. In the first part of my presentation, I will try to reconstruct these two major stances by focusing on the way they articulate the relationship between theory (or philosophy as its main expression) and practice. In the second part, I will indicate with the help of 'nonidentity', a term developed by Theodor Adorno, that in spite of their sophisticated accounts both stances encounter difficulties in articulating the interaction between theory and practice whether by inflating the role of theory/philosophy (Tamás, Karnoouh, Polgár) or, on the contrary, by minimizing it (Cistelean). A non-reductionist dialectical articulation of this relationship bears importance for envisioning possible forms of resistance against capitalism in a Central and Eastern European context still very much dominated by a neoliberal agenda by allowing local practices that challenge specific forms of exploitation and injustice to co-exist and be reinforced by theoretical efforts that critically address the functioning of capitalism as a global system.

Y3. "Now or Never!": notes on the life and times of the Romanian middle-class subject

Alexandru-Vasile Sava

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Abstract: Developing a proper conceptualization for the category of "the middle class" represents a thorny challenge for any theory of class stratification. With regards to approaches centred on relations of production, the middle class represents an "impure" category, neither fully in charge of production, nor fully subordinated to its processes. Moreover, frameworks that conceive class in terms of income or consumption patterns hardly have an easier time of containing the category's inherent volatility, especially when tackling issues such as social aspiration, social recognition, or the intersection of class with other vectors of identity. This task is further complicated when confronting the situation of a peripheral country, such as Romania, where class relations intersect with the dynamics of national and global flows of labour and capital, as well as with the effects of a transition from a planned to a market economy. With this in mind, I will sketch out in the following paper an outline of what a concept of the middle-class subject particular to post-socialist Romania might look like. The theoretical framework I will be using is primarily rooted in Marxian class

analysis, with some developments made in line with postwar French political theory (Althusserian and Deleuzo-Guattarian). It will involve advancing a social ontology of class that understands classes less as fixed social categories waiting to aggregate masses of individuals within themselves, and more as modes of temporal existence that engage individuals, shaping their lived temporalities in such a way as to constitute them as historically-determined class-subjectivities. This endeavor will require pursuing a number of conceptual dimensions, primarily: (1) the bipolar relationship of middle-class subjectivities to capital and labour; (2) the way in which local middle-classes refer to and interact with national and transnational capital; (3) the stratification of class by racial and ethno-national factors; (4) the particular role consumption plays in producing both the daily lives and the social consciousness of the middle-class; (5) the constellation of events and the historical horizons that determine the historical consciousness of the Romanian middle classes; (6) the perils of right-wing political radicalization facing middle-class subjects, due to their vulnerable class position. The end result will be the demarcation of a model of Romanian middle-class subjectivity that could be used to analyse and engage with Romanian society from the point of view of class-politics.

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Y4. Critical theory and the crisis of socio-ecological reproduction

Attila Szigeti

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Abstract: After a long time neglect of the political economy of capitalism in favour of normative theories of distributive justice or communicative rationality, and of cultural theories about the (mis)recognition of cultural, sexual, racial etc. identities, contemporary critical theory has returned to the critique of capitalism. Some current trends in critical theory (primarily:

Social Reproduction Theory and World-Ecology) are arguing for an "expanded conception of capitalism" (Fraser): capitalist economic production (exploitation of wage work within commodity production in order to accumulate surplus value) is dependent on the expropriation of the extra-economic sphere of social reproduction and nature. This talk will critically examine the possibilities of integrating the expropriation of reproduction perspective with Marxian critical theory and critique of political economy (more precisely with Marxian theory of value, its class-antagonistic context, and Marxian theories of capitalist crisis.)

Y5. The Poignancy and Relevance of Critical Theory Here and Now

Gáspár Miklós Tamás

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Abstract: Critical Theory in the narrower sense – Frankfurt and environs plus sequels in Wertkritik &c – differs from revolutionary theory at a decisive point. Marxism is a complex and evolving theory known to humankind in various guises but all of these variants were united in the acceptance of a few assumptions such as

- the causes of human discontent are historical in nature;
- capitalism is new;
- capitalism is not what it appears to be, cf. commodity fetishism and reification;
- the true analysis of capitalism shows that it is a profoundly self-contradictory system;
- this also shows that the overcoming of capitalism is rational, hence real.

Critical Theory is the first variant of this theory – similar to other strands of 'Western Marxism', q. v. – for which the attempt to overcome capitalism (i. e., socialist revolution) is history. Philosophy is actual again – says Adorno in a famous

phrase – for the moment of its realisation has been missed. The 11th thesis on Feuerbach was thus recalled. He does not only refer to the failure of the Russian revolution to persist in being revolutionary. What he refers to, and so do many others openly or not, is the defeat of the revolution in the West (meaning mostly what was then Central Europe: Germany and the former Habsburg empire and perhaps Italy), a defeat ultimately clinched by fascism: in Hungary, Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain and, preventively, in other places by the preemptive counter-revolutions in Poland, Romania, Lithuania, Greece &c. The capitulation of the two European 'democratic republics', France and Czechoslovakia, were also counter-revolutionary events, especially the first, where the bourgeoisie preferred Hitler to Léon Blum, solemnised by similar betrayals, Munich and beyond. By 1940, Hitler dominated the whole European continent except Russia. There have never been Western socialist attempts at overthrowing capitalism – never with any chance of success – and there is still no Western socialism (or Eastern either, but that's a different story). Fascism has accomplished its mission which was to save capitalism even at the price of ending the political class rule of the bourgeoisie. The task appeared to be then to analyse capitalism radically but without assuming the rationality (hence, the reality) of its historical demise accomplished by its main adversary.

Y6. From the Local Critique of Ideology to Thinking the Next Transition

Ovidiu Țichindeleanu

Philosopher and critical theorist, Chişinău, Institute for Social Solidarity, Romania

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Abstract: A decade ago I was making a series of appeals for the development of a "critical theory of postcommunism" with a regional grounding and a defined temporal scope, arguing that the material and ideological transformations from the decades following 1989 have to be conceived in their own immanence and thus brought together into an original field of

critical theory. We had witnessed throughout the region of the former Socialist Bloc the destruction of industries and socialities, and the creation virtually from zero of entirely new culture industries, the redefinition of the visualities and fundamental divides of new public spheres, of class, racial and gender divides, of the new formal and informal political spheres, as well as the emergence of independent groups and spaces. "Transition" was the fundamental concept of this historical shift, destruction and realignment of materialities, and Benjamin and Kracauer, rather than Adorno or Habermas, were closer to the archaeological

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necessities of studying this field of critical theory. Yet I argued that the three inter-dependent pillars of the cultural ideologies of the transition, defining its immanent field, have been Anti-Communism, Capitalocentrism and Eurocentrism. Accordingly, I pleaded for the necessity of engaging in intellectual work and activism in three simultaneous directions: rethinking socialism, anti-capitalist and non-capitalist conceptions and experience, and decolonial thought. Thirty years after 1989, the transition has arguably ended, "integrating" with varying degrees of success the former Socialist Bloc into the semi-periphery of the world-system, and settling particular articulations of

coloniality. In the same time, the popular perceptions of the transition remain generally negative, and the body of critical theoretical work that has emerged in the past decade from Eastern Europe across disciplines and cultural sectors has started to cross into mainstream. Consequently, I argue that radical thought is needed at the cusp of this bifurcation, and I plead for the continuation of the local tradition of critical theory in the international conditions of a post-capitalist and post-colonial transition, offering also an evaluation of the current trans-sectorial articulations of anti-communism, capitalocentrism and eurocentrism.

PANEL Z

NEO-LIBERAL SUBJECTIVITIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: GENEALOGIES OF APPROPRIATION AND FORMS OF RESISTANCE

Date: Saturday, 22 May, 14:00 (Bucharest time zone)
Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91676281809>

Conveners: **Elena Trifan**

Institute for Social Solidarity, Post-doctoral fellow, National School of Political and Administrative Studies, Romania

trifan.elena@gmail.com

Raluca Moşescu-Bumbac

MA, National School of Political and Administrative Studies, Bucharest, Romania

raluca.independent84@gmail.com

Panel Description: The past three decades of post-socialist transformations have generated not only a capitalist market economy, massive privatizations and commodification, but also a new cultural imaginary and institutionalized socialization spaces that produce new ethics of capitalism. This panel focuses on the emerging middle class from the region and takes a sociological and anthropological look at how capitalist subjectivities are socially embedded and the way in which capitalism is rendered meaningful in every-day life. Competitiveness, resilience, self-reliance, entrepreneurial

creativity, flexibility, etc. are just a few of the features the self has to acquire in order to successfully face the new capitalist environment in the region. The main argument of this panel is that the radical rupture with the socialist past has meant, along new class relations and erosion of solidarity networks, also a new mode of subjectification. Personal development programs, professional programs centered on employability, personal skill enhancement, formative coaching and training, alternative spiritualities are all part of the post-socialist cultural ontology and capitalist ethics of every-day life in Central and Eastern Europe. The middle class appropriates capitalism through consumerist cultures converted in logics of social distinction in which the 'Western life-style' plays a major role, but most of all through a re-shaping of the self and its adaptive capabilities to global market economy. The panel is also open to presentations that emphasize how these capitalist transformations are resisted in the region through forms of alternative communal life, festivals, eco-anarchism and socialist socialization spaces. What these forms of resistances have in common is a critical stance towards the marketization of every-day life and erosion of solidarity that took place during the last three decades of capitalism.

Z1. Beyond neo-liberalism: what is above happiness and well-being?

Elena Trifan

Institute for Social Solidarity, Post-doctoral fellow, National School of Political and Administrative Studies, Romania

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Abstract: If neo-liberalism breeds individuality through multiple methods, one must wonder if an off button can be set. On the promise of aiding people manage life and its hardship,

self-help and personal development has the adverse effect to overburden and hold accountable their audience for their own well-being. The key mantra only you are responsible for yourself hides the social structures that actually are responsible for how one's life is set. Another important consequence is that it tends to blame others for their own failures, paving the way for discrimination and victim blaming. However, some part

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of its discourse has been overturned and made available as help for persons that have been systematically discriminated. The need for self-help and personal development can't just be ignored and scoffed as just a middle-class practice that enhances alienation and suppresses class consciousness. It most clearly draws attention on the emotional distress that living in capitalism can provoke. Loneliness, alienation, and addictions are just a few of several modern ailments of the soul living in late-stage capitalism.

My presentation will have two unequal sections. The lengthiest one will focus on my findings concerning the practice of personal

development and how it is linked with neoliberal ideology. My fieldwork was conducted in Bucharest and my interviews focused on the social consequences on practicing personal development. I observed how does practicing personal development influences the relation people have, with their friends, with their significant others or with their work life. Moreover, I analysed how emotions and perception of the self are being transformed during the process. The latter second section is an invitation to explore alternative approaches on happiness and well-being that have been deployed in handling personal development, with focus on Romania. The purpose of this mirroring is to see if there is an alternative to the neoliberal subject.

Z2. Struggles for Professionalization: the Case of Romanian Providers of Personal and Spiritual Development Services

Anca Simionca

Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania

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Abstract: This paper looks at the efforts undertaken by providers of personal and spiritual development services in Romania to carve out a field of recognized expertise and to institutionalize an understanding of themselves as professionals. In the past years, the sector of personal and spiritual development services and practices has dramatically increased in Romania. The phenomenon has received its due attention from sociology scholars (Gog 2016; Simionca and Gog 2016; Simionca 2016; Trifan 2016; Palaga 2016; Tobias 2016), who have scrutinized the link between the requirement of the contemporary neoliberal economic regime and the type of subjectivity that these programs attempt to form. Various arguments have been formulated about the extent to which the type of features that the personal development programs try to develop in their clients are instrumental to the individualizing logic of the contemporary neoliberal economic regime. Far from being a local concern, the ways in which the new forms of spirituality and personal development are

instrumental and continuously instrumentalized in an economic logic that is unfavourable to individuals' security and wellbeing have been analysed elsewhere (see for example Binkley 2011; Jaramillo and Carreon 2014; Bondi 2005; Makinen 2014; Türken et al. 2015). What has received less attention are the providers of these services, who have grown in number and who are the ones whose professional lives make possible the flourishing of an entire industry. Most of these analyses have focused on the content of the services provided and inquired into the effects on the people being exposed to such scripts for subjectivity. In this paper I turn to the providers of such services and to the type of professional challenges they are facing in a context in which their activities do not have a clear professional identity. I take as a starting point Nancy Fraser (2003)'s insights into the role played by the professionalism of middle classes as an arena on which the cooperation and competition between the various agents of disciplinary mechanisms unfolds. I argue that an analysis of the struggles for professionalization of these actors would inform us about the ways in which neoliberal subjectification is at the same time strongly intertwined with a coherent national and global neoliberal grammar, and at the same time profoundly decentralized and capillary.

Z3. Psychology, work and the new capitalist therapeutic cultures in contemporary Romania

Sorin Gog

Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania

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Abstract: My research focuses on the emergence of spiritualized forms of psychotherapy and self-help psychologies that have become an important component of the booming industry of personal and spiritual growth in Romania and aims at analysing the role this industry plays in generating forms of adaptation to the vast labour-market deregulation that took place after the financial crisis of 2008/2009. By drawing on Karl Polanyi's work on the commodification of labour and

dehumanization generated by the market society I would like to explore the ways in which these processes are embedded at the level of the subject in post-socialist settings. The spiritual cultivation of new forms of subjectivities centred on entrepreneurialism of the inner self, productivity, employability and a meaningful relation to one's job have become an important element of professional development within the current labour market.

This process is reflected in a paradigmatic shift taking place in Romanian psychology and in psychotherapeutic practices that are employed in modelling a new form of subjectivity. I am

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looking at how these emergent psychotherapies are producing forms of adaptation to the new professional environments that increasingly require employees to abandon the distinction between professional and personal life. There are various professional associations such as the Romanian Association for Trans-personal Psychology or the Romanian Association for Integrative Psychotherapy that advocate the implementation a new holistic form of psychology that is capable of integrating spiritual and trans-personal elements in the activity of mental

health professionals. I am interested in analysing the way these new spiritual psychotherapies operate and how they generate a new interiority based on self-development and self-realization and on a new understanding of personal self-worth which is becoming increasingly valuable among the Romanian middle class. My research also analyses the role 'psy-disciplines' and the mass-consumption of psychological expertise (therapies, counselling, self-help literature) have in shaping a self-enhancing subjectivity that is particularly adapted to capitalist labour market.

Z4. Healing Capitalism. Forms of spiritual connection and community at a New Age Festival

Raluca Moşescu-Bumbac

MA, National School of Political and Administrative Studies,
Bucharest, Romania

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Abstract: Nature is our home / the forest is our garden /and the trees our teachers / Now is our continuous time that we like to share with friends / In love and joy, celebrating life /Art is our language, music is the rhythm, dancing is our freedom / Waha is the playground.

Attending to Victor Turner's concepts of "communitas" and "social dramas", the electronic dance music festival as cultural phenomenon represents an alternative community utopia, limited in time and space and characterized by a free spirit, an unique vibe and reconnection with the Self, the Other and the Nature, in a continuous strain between the individual and the community. This paper draws from my current thesis research based on fieldwork conducted during Waha Festival, an annual electronic dance music event which take place every summer in Covasna Mountains, Romania and clusters up to 8000 participants, Romanians and foreigners. The study focuses on new age spiritual practices enclosed in

the festival environment, in a special designed place called "Healing Area" and explores anthropologically the individual and collective subjectivities that emerge from the social need of being connected. This connectiveness is explored and enforced during transpersonal workshops and extended states of consciousness performed in the Healing Area and emphasizes the constant need of re-shaping the disconnected Self into a new improved Self, ready to be re-engaged into social networks and therefore, into society. The erosion of social milieu, as a consequence of the last three decades of Romanian transition to the market driven capitalism, urges individuals into seeking new forms of alternative methods to reiterate and re-construct the social contract, by attending these types of festivals and following a new spiritual path, completely different from what we already acknowledge as traditional and highly hierarchic established religions. These cultural new religious movements (new age movements and eco-spirituality) together with an egalitarian, collective, trustful, nonprofit, sharing-based type of community, even sporadically formed, represent forms of resistance to a strongly unequal contemporary society in which the individual feels unprotected, unsafe, exposed and disconnected towards himself/herself, other individuals and society.

Z5. Vernacular Resistance: anarchist praxis against capitalism and oppression in contemporary Romania

Alex Boguş

Researcher, Colectivul Autonom "Acasa", Romania

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Abstract: In this presentation I will focus on the ways in which anarchist collectives gave rise to collective practices and subjectivities that offer an intersectional critique of capitalism. The financial crisis of 2008 that sparked a wave of civil and political movements – against austerity and the socialization of losses provoked by an unregulated and ever more powerful financial market – across the world had at its center an ethos of organization that could be described either as non-hierarchical, horizontal or even anarchist. The different temporalities of capitalism across the globe meant

that for Eastern Europe, Romania included, the full impact of the crisis came in 2010-2011 when a brutal austerity plan – that saw salaries being slashed with 25% and the passing of anti-worker legislation that limited the right to strike or collective bargaining – was imposed for the state sector. The move was backed by a fierce rhetoric against lazy, bureaucratic, ineffective state workers and called for a reformed state, more minimal in design that encouraged the private sector to take over different public services. The anti-austerity and anti- government protests that erupted in the winter of 2012 also featured the creation of grass-roots horizontal groups and networks of a more trans-ideological nature, some of them becoming more radicalized eventually bringing into existence outward anarchist groups. The protests soon shifted focus and

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became more dominated by the right wing rhetoric centered around anti-communism and anti-corruption. Furthermore, by 2014 these protests openly supported the opposition coalition of center-right parties becoming more partisan and less civic in nature. Quasi-fascist proposals that called for the ban on voting for the uneducated highly polarized Romanian society. In this milieu of right-wing hegemony over the official narrative and ever-growing privatization of state assets and services, rampant inequality and huge surges of workers that flee towards western European countries there needs to be a certain wariness towards the nuances of having an anti-statist

stance. Considering the fact that the political compass is so tilted to the right for the moment that even moderately social-democratic measures seem radical nowadays one must carefully ponder about the way in which anarchism is to attract more allies in the fight against authoritarianism, nationalism, capitalism and the list of “-isms” can continue. Thus the need to conceive and organize a movement based on mutualistic, non-hierarchical and anti-fascist principles is a renewed task in a time of growing discontent towards half a century of neoliberalism, that also brings greater power for right-wing parties across the world.

Z6. Lifestyle migration in a Slovenian ecovillage: performing resistance in times of constant economic growth

Petya V. Dimitrova

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Abstract: This paper draws on a recently collected ethnographic study within a community of lifestyle migrants established in the Zajezova ecovillage in Slovenia. A common perception among inhabitants is that their life choice attests of a particular way of resisting capitalism and marketization in all spheres. In order to understand values and motivations behind this claim, I will describe the everyday life in the permacultural farm ‘Sekier’ in articulation with peoples’ practices and representations about “alternative life”. The questions are: why and how did they decide to change their lifestyle, what do people value in this alternative communal life and what have changed since they are experiencing it.

Even though few of them are aware of the meaning of the term ‘downshifting’[1], they live in accordance with it and have adopted this as an opposition to constant economic growth[2]. Their minimalistic lifestyle[3], nature awareness[4] and the concerns about sustainable development[5] of the household are the common driving forces and motivation for leaving big cities and moving to the ecovillage. The paper gives critical examination of the stated concepts. Still, such a radical change in lifestyle is followed by new challenges and problems. The rural idyll[6] appears not to be what the newcomers expected and the desire to cut off all connections with the ‘system’ soon fades away. Most of the inhabitants conclude that the clue to a peaceful and good quality life appears to be the balance between living close to nature and still taking advantage of the “positive sides of capitalism”.

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Thursday, 20 May, 12:00 (Bucharest timezone)

KEYNOTE LECTURE:

Dorothee Bohle (European University Institute, Italy)

Capitalist Transformations in East Central Europe since the Great Recession: What Do We Know? What Have We Missed?

Topic: Keynote Lecture: Dorothee Bohle (EUI, Florence)

Time: May 20, 2021 12:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/95679696540?pwd=cLU1OWtiZDV5a1VJMk1XWUMxRE90QT09>

Meeting ID: 956 7969 6540

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Thursday, 20 May, 16:00 (Bucharest timezone)

Topic: **Panel A – European Union and the Central and Eastern European Dependent Economies**

Time: May 20, 2021 04:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/98535571725>

Topic: **Panel B – Focus Ukraine: Neo-liberalism and the Collapse of the State**

Time: May 20, 2021 04:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/98044228973>

Topic: **Panel C - Focus Romania: Social Movements and 'Counter-Movements' in Times of Crisis**

Time: May 20, 2021 04:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/92353493221>

Topic: **Panel D - Critical Approaches to Educational and Social Services for Dependent Family Members in Transnational Spaces of Care and Labour**

Time: May 20, 2021 04:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/93922938431>

Thursday, 20 May, 18:00 (Bucharest timezone)

Topic: **Panel E – Varieties of Capitalism in Central and Eastern Europe**

Time: May 20, 2021 06:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/97744274669>

Topic: **Panel F – Chinese Capital Investments in Central and Eastern Europe**

Time: May 20, 2021 06:00 PM Bucharest

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Topic: **Panel G – Focus Bulgaria: Capitalist relations and class politics**

Time: May 20, 2021 06:00 PM Bucharest

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Topic: **Panel H – Capitalist Transformations and Labour Migration from Central and Eastern Europe**

Time: May 20, 2021 06:00 PM Bucharest

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Friday, 21 May, 10:00 (Bucharest timezone)

Topic: Panel i – Labor Markets Reforms and Unions in Central and Eastern Europe Time: May 21, 2021 10:00 AM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/91489026065	Topic: Panel J - Focus Hungary: Collapsing Solidarity Time: May 21, 2021 10:00 AM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/98163922457
Topic: Panel K – Capitalist Transformations and Racialized Inequalities Time: May 21, 2021 10:00 AM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/95824313916	Topic: Panel L - Case studies from Central and Eastern Europe: Populism and Post-socialist Rural Development Time: May 21, 2021 10:00 AM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/97955714285

Friday, 21 May, 12:00 (Bucharest timezone)

Topic: Panel M – The Decline of Leftist Politics: Populist Industrial and Welfare Policies Time: May 21, 2021 12:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/99595607789	Topic: Panel N – Economic growth and Debt in Central and Eastern Europe Time: May 21, 2021 12:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/95495535008
Topic: Panel O - Uneven Urban Development, Subordinated Housing Financialization and Racialized Inequalities in The European Semi-Peripheries Time: May 21, 2021 12:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/97363777094	Topic: Panel P - Work Relations and Gendered Division of Labour in Central and Eastern Europe Time: May 21, 2021 12:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/96995784846

Friday, 21 May, 14:00 (Bucharest timezone)

Documentary screening: **Olha's Italian Diary + Q&A with director Olena Fedyuk**

Director and research: **Olena Fedyuk**

DoP: Eszter Csepeli, Sound: Zoltan Kovacs, Editor: Victor Onysko

Length: 52'

Topic: Documentary Screening: **Olha's Italian Diary + Q&A with director Olena Fedyuk**

Time: May 21, 2021 02:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/99458989913?pwd=YkdYNGRYOEh5UVdxMkFhRXBRWHZWdz09>

Meeting ID: 994 5898 9913

Passcode: 2021

Friday, 21 May, 16:00 (Bucharest timezone)

Topic: Panel Q - (Book symposium) From the crisis of liberalism to the rise of illiberalism in Hungary: Perspectives from political economy Time: May 21, 2021 04:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/94653646468	Topic: Panel R – (Roundtable Discussion) Capitalist transformations and emerging food movements in Central and Eastern Europe Time: May 21, 2021 04:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/92292009873
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ZOOM LINKS SYNOPSIS

Friday, 21 May, 18:00 (Bucharest timezone)

KEYNOTE LECTURE:

Costas Lapavitsas (SOAS University of London, UK)

Subordinate Financialisation: Its Relevance for Central and Eastern Europe

Topic: Keynote Lecture: Costas Lapavitsas (SOAS University of London, UK)

Time: May 21, 2021 06:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/93178075997?pwd=dG1sV0RKQzVQQUdSL21pdzdvdGdtQT09>

Meeting ID: 931 7807 5997

Passcode: 2021

Saturday, 22 May, 10:00 (Bucharest timezone)

Topic: Panel S - The Afterlife of Nature Extraction Structures following 1989 in Romania Time: May 22, 2021 10:00 AM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/95065565945	Topic: Panel T - Institutionalizing Anticommunism. Representations of Capitalism in Romanian Film and Literature Time: May 22, 2021 10:00 AM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/91057371129
Topic: Panel U – Creative industries and the Capitalist Commodification of Art Time: May 22, 2021 10:00 AM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/98958537809	Topic: Panel V - Case Studies from Romania: Inequalities and Political Activism Time: May 22, 2021 10:00 AM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/96529690803

Saturday, 22 May, 12:00 (Bucharest timezone)

KEYNOTE LECTURE:

Jonathan Hopkin (London School of Economics, UK)

Great Transformations in 21st Century European Periphery: The View from Southern Europe

Topic: Keynote Lecture: Jonathan Hopkin (London School of Economics, UK)

Time: May 22, 2021 12:00 PM Bucharest

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94037565117?pwd=QkQzN3gxMmMvQ09FYnA2Y3ZGeFRzUT09>

Meeting ID: 940 3756 5117

Passcode: 2021

Saturday, 22 May, 14:00 (Bucharest timezone)

Topic: Panel W - The Commodification of Labour and the Global Supply Chains in CEE countries Time: May 22, 2021 02:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/97274028497	Topic: Panel X - Anthropological Perspectives on Capitalist Relations in Central and Eastern Europe Time: May 22, 2021 02:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/95069291747
Topic: Panel Y - The Capitalism's New Clothes: Critical Theories in Central and Eastern Europe Time: May 22, 2021 02:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/95005277741	Topic: Panel Z - Neo-Liberal Subjectivities in Central and Eastern Europe: Genealogies of Appropriation and Forms of Resistances Time: May 22, 2021 02:00 PM Bucharest Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/91676281809