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Articles

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The Electoral Success of the Extreme Right: Is the Presence of a Minority Important?*

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Abstract: Anti-minority rhetoric as an almost universal feature of extreme-right parties is often analytically and empirically linked to their electoral success. This article tests the link between the presence of an outgroup and the vote for the extreme right in an attempt to explain the electoral success of the first openly anti-system extreme-right party to enter the Slovak parliament in 2016. A multilevel approach is used to analyse the connection between Roma presence in a municipality and extreme-right support while controlling for the individual characteristics of voters. Analysis using exit-poll data covering 161 municipalities and 20 128 voters reveals no relationship between the presence of Roma in a municipality and support for the extreme right. A partial exception seems to be observed for older voters and the university-educated, who are generally the least inclined to far-right support. Interaction effects suggest that, for these groups, Roma presence might be connected to a higher probability to cast a vote for the extreme right. However, a notably higher chance of voting for the extreme right was associated with young, male, manual labourers and people without university education.

Keywords: extreme-right, Slovakia, election, Roma, group-threat
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Introduction

The unexpected electoral success of the extreme right in the March 2016 parliamentary elections marks a new era in Slovak political discourse. Slovakia uses party-list proportional representation with one nationwide constituency to elect its members of parliament. Parties must win more than five per cent of the national vote to gain parliamentary representation. Even though the far-right People's Party—Our Slovakia (Ľudová strana—Naše Slovensko / the ĽSNS) has never polled over this barrier, it was able to receive more than eight per cent on the day

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of the 2016 election. Support for a party that uses a badly disguised racist discourse and promises, among other things, to fight 'parasites' from the (Roma) settlements was seen as the ultimate desperate choice of voters feeling threatened by Roma communities in the post-electoral media discourse. This explanation was also supported by previous research on electoral support for the extreme-right ĽSNS (which, until 2016, was marginal and obscure) in the 2012 parliamentary and 2013 local elections [Mikuš and Gurňák 2012; Spáč and Voda 2014].

In this study, we ask if the presence of Roma in a municipality can be identified as one of the driving forces of the 2016 electoral success of the extreme right. We do so by exploring the individual characteristics of voters combined with factors characterising their place of residence. We first discuss theoretical expectations and empirical findings regarding far-right party support and provide a brief introduction to the extreme right in Slovakia. Later, we introduce our methodological approach and present our findings. The concluding section summarises our main findings, the most important being that, contrary to previous studies, we do not find a clear link between voting for the extreme right and the presence of this marginalised minority in Slovakia. We also propose avenues for future research.

Minority presence as an explanation of far-right support

The Roma population in Central and Eastern Europe can in many regards serve as a typical example of an outgroup. Although present in these countries for centuries, the boundaries between the majority and the Roma are in most cases unambiguous. Roma people represent the outsider who is excluded from society. Fontanella, Villano and Di Donato [2015] suggest that this happens especially in the case of those with greater national identity and those who are more likely to show a larger prejudicial predisposition towards Roma people and also migrants. They add that Roma are 'the most discriminated even with respect to migrants' [Fontanella, Villano and Di Donato 2015: 17]. Data from the European Values Study (EVS) show that Slovak Roma are one of the least accepted minorities. For example, in the 2008 wave of the EVS, 47.1% of all respondents claimed that they would not like Roma as neighbours (compared to 16.6% of people who did not want immigrant worker neighbours and 22.3% who did not want Muslim neighbours) [EVS 2011].

It can therefore be assumed that similar predictions apply to the relationship between a vote for the extreme right and the presence of Roma in Slovakia and the presence of outgroups, typically represented by immigrants, in Western Europe. The literature suggests that the presence of a minority is often linked to a feeling of threat. Blumer's group threat theory [1958] states that if the majority population feels threatened by an outgroup, it is likely to develop prejudice towards this outgroup, independent of whether the source of this threat is real

or only perceived. He identifies four feelings and beliefs that might cause this behaviour: (1) a feeling of superiority over others; (2) a feeling of alienation from others and differences between these two groups; (3) a feeling of entitlement and ownership over certain rights and resources; (4) a feeling of fear that others will seek to claim a share of these privileges. Quillian [1995] mentions two circumstances that can potentially trigger a group threat feeling: the size of the minority group and bad economic conditions.

The expectation regarding the first factor is that, with the growth of the minority, the intensity of competition over scarce resources increases together with the potential of the minority to mobilise politically [Blalock 1967]. Previous research suggests that the prejudice of the majority is positively connected to the size of the outgroups [Quillian 1995] resulting in growing support for far-right parties. This conclusion is supported by cross-national studies [Golder 2003; Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers 2002], but similar results were also found at the municipal level. There is solid research evidence, from Belgium, Britain, the Netherlands, and Austria, for example, confirming that the vote for the far right (whether it was Vlaams Blok, the British National Party, List Pim Fortuyn, or the Freedom Party of Austria) increased with the share of immigrants in a municipality [Bowyer 2008; Halla, Wagner and Zweimüller 2017; Lubbers, Scheepers and Billiet 2000; Scheepers, Gijsberts and Coenders 2002].

On the other hand, a line of research that integrates group threat theory and the competing intergroup contact theory suggests that the relationship between the size of a minority and support for the far right can be non-linear. Social interaction between the majority and the minority may lead to the elimination of prejudice in situations where the increasing size of a minority provides an opportunity for communication between both groups [Jolly and DiGiusto 2014; Pettigrew 1998]. Contact with a small minority increases tensions between groups, while contact with a large minority activates the mechanisms theorised by the intergroup contact theory, causing tension to decrease [Appadurai 2006]. Rink, Phalet and Swyngedou [2009] studied Belgian elections between 1991 and 1999 and found that the proportion of immigrants in a municipality had a positive effect on the likelihood of voters voting for Vlaams Blok. The positive effect of the size of the outgroup had a steep initial increase. However, it levelled with the growing number of immigrants.

Unfavourable economic conditions are another factor suspected of boosting far-right support. Rising unemployment and decreasing living standards may lead to blaming the minority and may also intensify the competition over scarce resources [Quillian 1995]. Better-off social strata are reluctant to pay taxes, which are redistributed as welfare for the minority groups. Less well-off groups believe that welfare should be reserved for natives [Kitschelt and McGann 1997: 22]. As Cochrane and Nevitte [2012] claim, when citizens choose their positions on the overall impact of immigration, economic conditions may be the crucial factor: while poor economic conditions increase the appeal of the anti-immigrant rheto-

ric of far-right parties, good economic conditions predispose the voters to reject such stances. So, if far-right parties are successful in linking, for example, immigration and unemployment, this connection is more likely to turn people against immigrants in a period of high unemployment. Therefore, population segments facing economic hardship may be attracted to these parties not only, or primarily, because of their anti-immigration positions, but also as a sign of opposition to those who, in their view, are responsible for these bad conditions [Van Der Brug and Fennema 2003].

However, conclusions about economic factors influencing far-right support are not always confirmed [Bloom 2013; Amengay and Stockemer 2018]. Ivarsflaten [2005] notes that the far right may be divided with regard to economic interests, and Oesch [2008] shows that economic motives do not act as a significant factor in the decision to vote for the far right. In several cross-national studies, Golder [2003] finds that unemployment has a positive influence on far-right support only in the case of high immigration levels.

Even though Slovak far-right parties are anti-immigrant in their stances, because of the small numbers of immigrants in Slovakia the main targets of their prejudice have traditionally been the minorities living there. The Hungarian minority constitutes around 10% of the population in Slovakia, and it has been able to mobilise politically since the beginning of the existence of the Slovak Republic. This results in the permanent presence of some Hungarian minority parties in parliament (and in some cases government).[1] The Roma minority makes up around 6.5% of the Slovak population [Matlovičová et al. 2012].

In the past, both of these minorities were targets, when the most prominent extreme-right party at the time—the Slovak National Party (SNS)—based a major part of its ideology on nationalism and xenophobia. However, after a change of leadership in 2012, the SNS moved closer to the centre of the political spectrum and this shift was confirmed after the 2016 election, when the Slovak National Party became a partner of MOST-HÍD, a Hungarian-minority party, in a coalition government led by the social-democratic SMER. Because the leading nationalist party had made compromises and become more moderate, the ĽSNS took on the role as the real representative of the extreme right in Slovakia.

The People's Party—Our Slovakia is the latest newcomer in the 'club' of extreme-right political parties that have become relevant in Central Europe.[2] Its direct predecessor—Slovak Togetherness (Slovenská pospolitosť—SP)—was founded around the current leader of the ĽSNS Marian Kotleba and other former members of the Slovak neo-Nazi subculture in 2005. The SP party was dissolved

[1] The 2020 elections are the first exception to this rule as no Hungarian minority party received enough support to pass the 5% threshold to enter the Slovak parliament.

[2] It should be noted that there is an ongoing academic debate about terminology and ideological classification of the far-right party family focusing on the question to what extent these parties are either radical or extreme in their ideology. According to the standard

by the Slovak Supreme Court a year later. The court argued that its activities and anti-democratic electoral manifesto were in conflict with the Slovak constitution. After that, Kotleba, together with other members of the SP, founded the ĽSNS with a modified manifesto, thanks to which they were gradually able to convince a part of the public that they were a real political actor and a legitimate alternative [Kluknavská and Smolík 2016]. Even though members of the ĽSNS stopped marching in the streets with torches dressed in uniforms similar to those of the totalitarian Slovak state that was a puppet of the Nazis (1939–1945) as they had during the existence of the SP, parts of their manifesto remained similar. The ideology of the ĽSNS includes all three core features of the far-right parties conceptualised by Mudde [2007]: authoritarianism—the ĽSNS believes in a hierarchically ordered society, with corporatist features, its members regularly celebrating anniversaries connected to the totalitarian Slovak state; nativism—the ĽSNS holds strong xenophobic and nationalistic views and is an anti-immigrant, anti-EU, anti-NATO, and, most of all, anti-minority party, and in this the ĽSNS focuses especially on Roma and on the Hungarian minority; populism—Mudde [2004: 562] defines populism as 'an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, the pure people versus the corrupt elite' and much like in the case of other European far right parties [Taggart 2000: 73], it is one of the central features of the ĽSNS. The party promotes an anti-establishment and anti-elitist discourse and blames 'standard politicians' for corruption, fraud, embezzlement, and indifference to the needs of the 'common people'. One of the party slogans from the last electoral campaign can be loosely translated as 'We will deal with the thieves wearing ties as well as the parasites in the settlements!' [ĽSNS 2016].

Even though the ĽSNS is a parliamentary party that competed in a democratic election, based on the party's ideology and history and in line with previous studies of the Slovak far-right scene, we identify the party as extreme [e.g. Kluknavská and Smolík 2016]. The party not only shares former members and the ideology of the dissolved extreme-right Slovak Togetherness party, but also some of its MPs have faced prosecution for defamation of the nation, race, or beliefs.

Despite insufficient research on the ĽSNS, those studies that exist suggest that its past support can be related to the presence of the Slovak Roma minority in the role of an alien outgroup and scapegoat. In their anti-Roma discourse, members of the ĽSNS focus on two main aspects—crime (threat) and the welfare system (competition over resources). Roma are believed to be the perpetrators of criminal activities and the ĽSNS blames the mainstream politicians for their in-

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distinction, radical parties call for a massive reform of the system, but they do not necessarily call for the elimination of democracy. On the other hand, extreme parties are directly antagonistic to democracy. However, the dividing line between these two can be difficult to recognise, as far right parties may conceal their extremism to avoid legal action against them [Mudde 2007]. This is also the case of the ĽSNS.

ability to protect people from 'Gypsy extremism'. As one of their electoral goals, the ĽSNS promised to 'deal with the parasites in the settlements' and to 'protect people from increasing Gypsy terror' [ĽSNS 2016]. Also, the party manifesto describes the Roma as 'lazy Gypsies' abusing the social system, with the goal of removing 'the preferential treatment of (not only) Gypsy scroungers over decent people' [ĽSNS 2016; Kluknavská and Smolík 2016]. Research shows that the party's success in the 2012 parliamentary elections was linked to the presence and size of the local Roma minority [Mikuš and Gurňák 2012]. This outcome is supported by Spáč and Voda [2014], who claim that the presence of the Roma is of vital importance to the party's results. ĽSNS scores increase as the share of Roma in a municipality grows. Different types of Roma communities may also be a factor, so that areas with segregated Roma settlements create even more favourable conditions for extreme-right success. Spáč and Voda support these conclusions in their analysis of the party leader's success in the 2013 regional election, finding that: (a) a rising share of Roma in a municipality increased support for Kotleba and (b) areas with Roma neighbourhoods on the periphery and in segregated settlements generated more votes for Kotleba than areas with an unsegregated Roma population [Spáč and Voda 2015].

Based on the expectations of the group threat theory and the research presented above, our first hypothesis (H1) is: *An individual's likelihood of voting for the ĽSNS rises with the increasing share of the Roma minority in a municipality.*

Socio-demographic explanations for far-right support

Apart from the contextual variables mentioned above, certain individual characteristics are also related to far-right support. Far-right parties are more likely to be supported by men [Fontana, Sidler and Hardmeier 2006]. Age is also considered to be an important predictor. For example, Lucassen and Lubbers [2012] find a linear negative relationship between age and voting for far-right parties. On the other hand, Arzheimer and Carter [2006] suggest that not only younger voters but also pensioners are more likely to vote for the far right, the reason being that younger and older people depend more on welfare than other age groups and are therefore more likely to view immigrants as competitors over resources. Studies suggest that those who are in direct competition with minority groups are more likely to develop prejudice against them and to support radical parties. This includes groups like the unemployed [Lucassen and Lubbers 2012], low-status workers and the underprivileged [Han 2016; Ivarsflaten 2005]. On the other hand, lower support for these political forces is linked to more educated voters [Rink, Phalet and Swyngedouw 2009].

Current analyses of the Slovak case mostly support these results. Support for the ĽSNS in the 2012 parliamentary elections was stronger in areas with higher unemployment and a high share of people with low education and in areas with

lower religiosity [Spáč and Voda 2014]. In the 2013 regional elections, a stronger preference for Kotleba was linked to male voters [Mikuš, Gurňák and Máriássyová 2016]. Moreover, as Gregor [2015] shows, in those elections, the ĽSNS leader, Kotleba, was able to attract and mobilise a large group of people who consistently do not participate in elections. This finding is well in line with previous analyses on the connection between far-right support and political passivity [Schatz, Staub and Lavine 1999].

Based on these findings, our second hypothesis on individual inclinations to far-right support (H2) is: *Young (H2a), male (H2b), lower-educated (H2c), blue-collar workers (H2d), the unemployed (H2e), and non-voters (H2f) are more likely to vote for the ĽSNS.*

Data and methods

Our analysis is based on exit-poll data. The data are unique because of the extra-large sample size and the fact that this was the first poll that demonstrated a considerable level of support for the ĽSNS. The poll was conducted by a Slovak-based opinion poll agency (FOCUS) for the major Slovak private television channel Markíza during the election day. The exit-poll data include socio-demographic information on voters as well as information about their current vote and their

Table 1. Share of votes for political parties in the 2016 elections and the exit-poll estimate (%)

Political party	Official results	Exit poll – result estimate	Difference
SMER – SD	28.28	27.3	0.98
SaS	12.10	13.3	–1.20
OĽaNO – NOVA	11.02	11.2	–0.18
SNS	8.64	8.0	0.64
ĽSNS	8.04	6.8	1.24
MOST – HÍD	6.50	7.3	–0.80
SME RODINA	6.62	5.9	0.72
SIEŤ	5.60	6.7	–1.10
KDH	4.94	5.0	–0.06
SMK	4.04	3.6	0.44

Note: The exit-poll electoral results estimation uses weighted exit-poll data. Our analysis uses unweighted exit-poll data.
Source: Exit poll 2016, FOCUS and the Slovak Statistical Office.

vote in the previous elections. The exit-poll took place in 161 municipalities across Slovakia collecting answers from 20 128 voters. This election-day poll estimated the final results quite accurately. The difference between the real and the polled results can be seen in Table 1.

The empirical strategy of our study is based on analysing the connection between extreme-right support and both individual- and municipality-level variables. To respect the structure of our data, we employ hierarchical logistic regression in our analysis.

Our dependent variable in the analyses is whether the voter cast a vote for the ĽSNS. Our individual-level independent variables are gender, age, education, unemployment, type of work, participation in the 2012 parliamentary elections, and ethnicity. While information on ethnicity is provided by the exit poll, the interviewee could only choose between Slovak, Hungarian, or 'other'. The very small share of voters with 'other' ethnicity in the dataset (1.1%) suggests that not all Roma voters chose to identify as 'other'. The under-identification of Roma is also observed in the Slovak population and housing census, where a relevant share of Roma citizens reported their ethnicity as Slovak, Hungarian, or Ruthenian rather than Roma [Matlovičová et al. 2012]. If the electoral participation of the Roma is high, this could potentially conceal the connection between a vote for the extreme right and Roma presence in a municipality. However, we believe this is not the case. There is a strong negative correlation (p = -0.55) between the share of Roma and electoral participation in a municipality. Also, the non-participation of Roma can be demonstrated directly in the rare cases when electoral districts match ethnic boundaries. Such is the case of the urban ghetto Lunik IX, which is a segregated Roma settlement in Košice. The two districts at Lunik IX had 6.0% and 7.6% voter turnout in the 2016 parliamentary elections.

Individual variables are complemented by the contextual variables characterising the municipalities in which the exit poll was conducted. Information about the main independent contextual variable—the size of the Roma minority in the municipalities—is from the Atlas of Roma communities [Mušinka et al. 2014]. Fieldwork conducted for the Atlas in all the municipalities of Slovakia established the number of Roma citizens living in a municipality and the type of settlement (including information on whether it is segregated or not). The Roma minority is present in 91 of the 161 municipalities that were part of the exit poll. There are 36 municipalities with a share of Roma above 10% and seven with a Roma majority. A segregated Roma settlement was present in 18 municipalities.

Besides adding information on Roma presence as a municipality-level variable, we added the electoral results of the ĽSNS in the municipality in the last parliamentary elections and unemployment in the municipality as control variables.

To control for the possible effects of the supposedly successful and important local campaign of the ĽSNS, we also included a dummy on whether there was a campaign or any other activity by the ĽSNS in the municipality. While there is no research on the influence of campaigns on the electoral fortunes of

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the variables used in the models

	Missing	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. dev
Male (dummy variable)	2.5%	0	1	0.488	0.500
Age (7 categories)	1.8%	1	7	3.993	1.655
Education (4 categories)	2.9%	1	4	3.030	0.850
Hungarian ethnicity (dummy variable)	2.4%	0	1	0.083	0.276
Other ethnicity (dummy variable)	2.4%	0	1	0.011	0.105
Unemployed (dummy variable)	3.0%	0	1	0.038	0.192
Non-voter (dummy variable)	0.0%	0	1	0.096	0.295
Manual job (dummy variable)	3.0%	0	1	0.191	0.393
Roma present (dummy variable)	0.0%	0	1	0.694	0.461
Roma share (%)	0.0%	0	79.2	5.469	10.187
Unemployment level (%)	0.0%	2.7	73.24	14.868	7.834
ĽSNS meeting (dummy variable)	0.0%	0	1	0.275	0.447
ĽSNS other activity (dummy variable)	0.0%	0	1	0.279	0.448
ĽSNS election result in 2012 (%)	0.0%	0	5.26	1.406	0.984
Segregated settlement present (dummy variable)	0.0%	0	1	0.183	0.387

Source: Exit poll 2016, FOCUS and the Slovak Statistical Office.

the extreme right in Slovakia, after the success of the ĽSNS in the parliamentary elections, the Slovak media singled out the party's activities on the local level as one of the sources of its electoral good fortune. There is also limited research on the effects of campaigns of similar parties in other countries. However, some insight is provided by Cutts and Goodwin [2014] for the case of Britain. Their findings show that even though the British National Party (BNP) polled strongest in working-class manufacturing areas, its support was significantly higher in areas where it had run intensive local campaigns, recruited larger numbers of members, and achieved local electoral success. Also, voters contacted by the BNP

campaign were significantly more likely to vote for the party. On the other hand, electoral gains were not enhanced in areas where the English Defence League social movement had previously demonstrated.

We gathered information about ĽSNS activities from its official website and Facebook profile. Our analysis considers all actions organised by the party since 2014. We distinguish election-related activities (campaign rallies) and other events (i.e. marches, protests, and memorial events). The ĽSNS campaigned in 19 out of 161 exit-poll municipalities, and other events organised by the party were identified in 13 municipalities.

Results

Our approach relies on hierarchical logistic regression, which allows us to explain the vote for the extreme right on the basis of individual characteristics and municipality-level contextual variables. After presenting the baseline without predictors, we first add individual-level variables (Models 1 and 2 in Table 3). Later, in Models 3 and 4 (Table 3) we include alternative measures of Roma presence in a municipality. Information on model fit is provided by the log-likelihood values and the AIC information criteria. With regard to municipality-level variables, our modelling strategy was to first include only the municipality-level variables on Roma presence (Models 3 and 4) to avoid potential bias resulting from the fact that they could be connected to other municipality-level variables (e.g. unemployment level or ĽSNS activity). Moreover, we include the variable on Roma presence in our models in two alternative ways: first, as a binary variable—whether the Roma minority lives in a municipality (Model 3 in Table 3 and Models 5 and 6 in Table 4); second, as the relative size of the local Roma minority in a municipality (Model 4 in Table 3 and Models 7 and 8 in Table 4). As there proved to be no support for the connection between Roma presence and a vote for the ĽSNS in Models 3, 4, 5, and 7, we decided also to check for potential interactions between individual-level predictors and Roma presence in a municipality. These are included in Models 6 and 8 in Table 4. This also allows us to test the competition for resources assumption, according to which unemployment should matter only if there is a higher share of Roma in the municipality [see, e.g., Golder 2003].

Regarding the connection between a vote for the extreme right and the presence of Roma in a municipality, the results in Tables 3 and 4 do not confirm our first hypothesis in either of the models. The size, or even the mere presence, of the Roma minority in a municipality did not influence an individual's decision to vote for the ĽSNS. We therefore cannot confirm the hypothesis that the presence of Roma in a municipality increases an individual's likelihood of voting for the extreme right. To verify this conclusion, we also tested the prediction of Spáč and Voda [2014] that support for the ĽSNS is higher in municipalities where a segregated Roma settlement is present by including a dummy variable on segregated

settlements in Models 5 to 8 in Table 4. Yet, not even the presence of a segregated Roma settlement was a statistically significant predictor of a vote for the ĽSNS.

The interaction effects of Roma presence and individual-level variables are reported in Table 5. They are reported as significant for voters in the age categories 22–29, 50–59, and 60–69. Figure 1 provides a visualisation of the marginal effects of our model for these age categories. As can be seen, in the 22–29 age category, when there are Roma present in a municipality, voters are less likely to cast a vote for the ĽSNS. On the other hand, in the two higher age categories, which are generally the least inclined to vote for the extreme right, Roma presence seems to increase the likelihood of support for the ĽSNS. Another significant interaction is between Roma presence and university education. University-educated voters, who are generally the least supportive of the ĽSNS, seem to show stronger support if Roma are present in a municipality. However, no interactions are significant if the share of Roma is included in the model, although the interaction between the share of Roma and being unemployed comes close to the 0.05 threshold.

In general, these models provide little support for the idea that a vote for the extreme right in the 2016 Slovak parliamentary elections can be explained by the experience of living in proximity to the Roma minority (H1). What is more, we were also unable to discover a connection between Roma presence and a vote for the extreme right through analyses of the sub-samples of municipalities with a share of Roma lower than 10% (125 municipalities), 5% (103 municipalities), and 2% (85 municipalities). If there seems to be a positive connection between Roma presence and a vote for the ĽSNS, it is in the groups least likely to cast a vote for the ĽSNS—older and university-educated voters.

Based on the results presented in Tables 3 and 4, we conclude that age and gender are significant predictors of voting for the extreme right. Young voters and males were more likely to support the ĽSNS than older voters and females (H2a, H2b). Also, voters with lower education, manual workers, and people who did not participate in previous parliamentary elections were more likely to cast a vote for the extreme right (H2c, H2d, H2f). On the other hand, this likelihood decreases if the voter was of Hungarian ethnicity. We can thus partially confirm our second hypothesis, that young, male, working-class voters are more likely to vote for the extreme right. However, we do not find a relationship between support for the ĽSNS and unemployment (H2e). Even so, the interaction term of unemployment and the share of Roma in a municipality in Model 8 (Table 5) is almost significant ($p = 0.053$), suggesting a relationship opposite to the expectation indicated by the literature [Golder 2003]—the higher the share of Roma in a municipality, the less likely the unemployed were to vote for the ĽSNS.

The connection between municipality-level unemployment and a vote for the ĽSNS was not confirmed either in the analysis of the whole sample presented in Table 4 or in analyses of sub-samples of the exit-poll data, which included only municipalities with a lower share of Roma.

Table 3. Explaining the vote for the ĽSNS, hierarchical logistic regression, Models 1 to 4—first part

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p
(Intercept)	0.079		<0.001	0.202		<0.001	0.183		<0.001	0.202		<0.001
Male (DV)				1.769	0.037	<0.001	1.769	0.037	<0.001	1.769	0.037	<0.001
Age 18–21 (ref.)												
Age 22–29				0.645	–0.059	<0.001	0.644	–0.060	<0.001	0.645	–0.059	<0.001
Age 30–39				0.324	–0.125	<0.001	0.323	–0.126	<0.001	0.324	–0.125	<0.001
Age 40–49				0.216	–0.151	<0.001	0.215	–0.151	<0.001	0.216	–0.151	<0.001
Age 50–59				0.150	–0.167	<0.001	0.150	–0.168	<0.001	0.150	–0.167	<0.001
Age 60–69				0.090	–0.184	<0.001	0.090	–0.184	<0.001	0.090	–0.184	<0.001
Age 70+				0.048	–0.195	<0.001	0.048	–0.196	<0.001	0.048	–0.195	<0.001
Elementary education (ref.)												
Lower secondary				1.110	0.008	0.476	1.114	0.008	0.459	1.110	0.008	0.476
Upper secondary				1.056	0.004	0.676	1.058	0.004	0.667	1.056	0.004	0.676
University education				0.596	–0.030	<0.001	0.596	–0.030	<0.001	0.596	–0.030	<0.001
Hungarian ethnicity (DV)				0.159	–0.120	<0.001	0.155	–0.122	<0.001	0.159	–0.120	<0.001
Other ethnicity (DV)				0.535	–0.041	0.098	0.532	–0.041	0.096	0.535	–0.041	0.099
Unemployed (DV)				1.140	0.009	0.343	1.137	0.008	0.352	1.140	0.009	0.344
Non-voter (DV)				1.997	0.045	<0.001	1.993	0.045	<0.001	1.997	0.045	<0.001
Manual job (DV)				1.386	0.021	<0.001	1.388	0.021	<0.001	1.386	0.021	<0.001

Table 3. Explaining the vote for the ĽSNS, hierarchical logistic regression, Models 1 to 4—second part

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p
Municipality-level variables												
Roma present (DV)							1.185	0.011	0.107			
Roma share (%)										1.000	0.000	0.997
Random effects												
σ2	3.29			3.29			3.29			3.29		
τ00	0.37 municipality			0.23 municipality			0.22 municipality			0.23 municipality		
ICC	0.10			0.06			0.06			0.06		
N	161 municipality			161 municipality			161 municipality			161 municipality		
Observations	20128			18987			18987			18987		
Marginal R^2 / Conditional R^2	0.000 / 0.100			0.253 / 0.301			0.253 / 0.299			0.253 / 0.301		
AIC	10938.260			9095.611			9095.029			9097.611		
log-likelihood	–5467.130			–4530.805			–4529.515			–4530.805		

Note: OR = odds ratios, DV = dummy variable, AME = average marginal effect.
Source: Exit poll 2016, FOCUS and the Slovak Statistical Office.

Table 4. Explaining the vote for the ĽSNS, hierarchical logistic regression, Models 5 to 8—first part

	Model 5			Model 6			Model 7			Model 8		
	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p
(Intercept)	0.193		<0.001	0.258		<0.001	0.195		<0.001	0.201		<0.001
Male (DV)	1.772	0.037	<0.001	1.829	0.037	<0.001	1.772	0.037	<0.001	1.783	0.038	<0.001
Age 18–21 (ref.)												
Age 22–29	0.641	–0.060	<0.001	0.911	–0.058	0.583	0.641	–0.060	<0.001	0.646	–0.058	<0.001
Age 30–39	0.320	–0.126	<0.001	0.327	–0.125	<0.001	0.320	–0.126	<0.001	0.322	–0.124	<0.001
Age 40–49	0.214	–0.152	<0.001	0.202	–0.151	<0.001	0.214	–0.152	<0.001	0.216	–0.150	<0.001
Age 50–59	0.149	–0.169	<0.001	0.088	–0.168	<0.001	0.149	–0.169	<0.001	0.150	–0.167	<0.001
Age 60–69	0.089	–0.185	<0.001	0.050	–0.184	<0.001	0.089	–0.185	<0.001	0.089	–0.183	<0.001
Age 70+	0.047	–0.197	<0.001	0.026	–0.196	<0.001	0.047	–0.197	<0.001	0.048	–0.195	<0.001
Elementary education (ref.)												
Lower secondary	1.103	0.007	0.501	0.897	0.007	0.657	1.104	0.007	0.498	1.066	0.003	0.662
Upper secondary	1.042	0.003	0.752	0.761	0.003	0.207	1.043	0.003	0.748	1.006	–0.001	0.963
University education	0.588	–0.031	<0.001	0.373	–0.032	<0.001	0.588	–0.031	<0.001	0.571	–0.035	<0.001
Hungarian ethnicity (DV)	0.187	–0.109	<0.001	0.129	–0.114	0.005	0.187	–0.109	<0.001	0.219	–0.098	<0.001
Other ethnicity (DV)	0.548	–0.039	0.112	0.358	–0.043	0.329	0.548	–0.039	0.112	0.474	–0.049	0.076
Unemployed (DV)	1.137	0.008	0.353	1.333	0.008	0.222	1.136	0.008	0.355	1.173	0.011	0.249
Non-voter (DV)	1.980	0.045	<0.001	1.617	0.044	0.001	1.981	0.045	<0.001	1.979	0.044	<0.001
Manual job (DV)	1.391	0.022	<0.001	1.322	0.022	0.028	1.391	0.021	<0.001	1.387	0.022	<0.001

Table 4. Explaining the vote for the ĽSNS, hierarchical logistic regression, Models 5 to 8—second part

	Model 5			Model 6			Model 7			Model 8		
	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p	OR	AME	p
Municipality-level variables												
Roma present (DV)	1.022	0.001	0.842	0.652	0.004	0.124						
Roma share (%)							1.018	0.001	0.771	0.937	0.003	0.672
Unemployment level (%)	1.001	0.000	0.982	1.007	0.000	0.868	0.989	–0.001	0.867	0.982	–0.001	0.782
ĽSNS meeting (DV)	1.343	0.019	0.039	1.339	0.019	0.040	1.355	0.020	0.027	1.365	0.020	0.024
ĽSNS other activity (DV)	0.875	–0.009	0.405	0.870	–0.009	0.383	0.875	–0.009	0.405	0.873	–0.009	0.395
ĽSNS result in 2012 (%)	1.268	0.015	<0.001	1.269	0.015	<0.001	1.268	0.015	<0.001	1.272	0.016	<0.001
Seg. settlement (DV)	1.028	0.002	0.844	1.031	0.002	0.830	1.032	0.002	0.822	1.014	0.001	0.923
Random effects												
σ2	3.29			3.29			3.29			3.29		
τ00	0.14 municipality			0.14 municipality			0.14 municipality			0.14 municipality		
ICC	0.04			0.04			0.04			0.04		
N	161 municipality			161 municipality			161 municipality			161 municipality		
Observations	18987			18987			18987			18987		
Marginal R^2 / Conditional R^2	0.272 / 0.302			0.284 / 0.313			0.272 / 0.302			0.284 / 0.314		
AIC	9070.970			9059.106			9070.925			9082.805		
log-likelihood	–4512.485			–4491.553			–4512.463			–4503.403		

Note: OR = odds ratios, DV = dummy variable, AME = average marginal effect.
Source: Exit poll 2016, FOCUS and the Slovak Statistical Office.

Table 5. Explaining the vote for the ĽSNS, hierarchical logistic regression, interaction effects in Models 6 and 8—first part

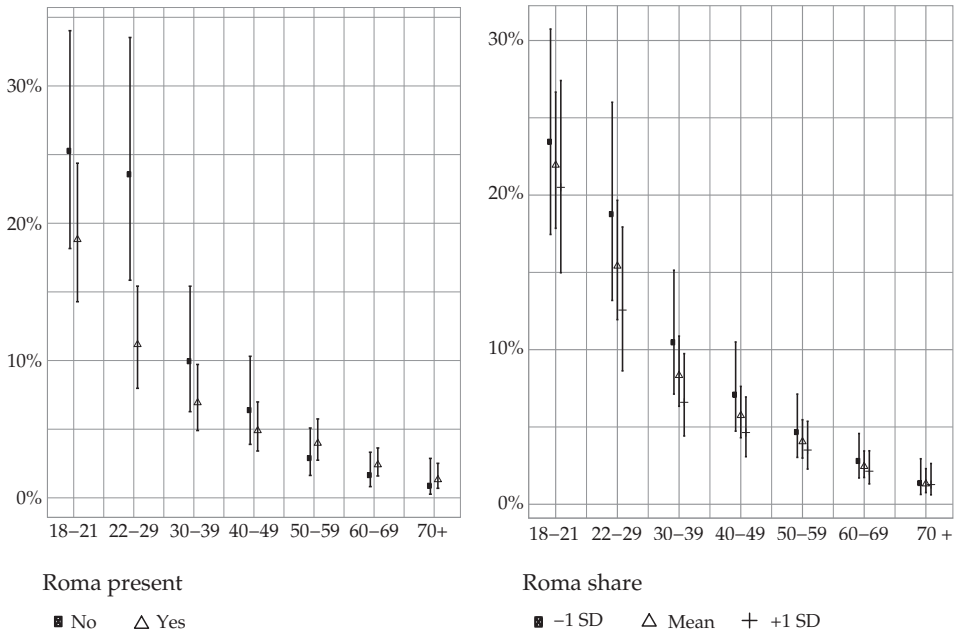
	Model 6			Model 8		
	OR	CI	p	OR	CI	p
Male × Roma present (DV)	0.950	0.739 – 1.221	0.686			
Age 18–21 × Roma present (DV) (ref.)						
Age 22–29 × Roma present (DV)	0.595	0.392 – 0.904	0.015			
Age 30–39 × Roma present (DV)	0.984	0.643 – 1.506	0.941			
Age 40–49 × Roma present (DV)	1.101	0.695 – 1.746	0.681			
Age 50–59 × Roma present (DV)	2.029	1.177 – 3.497	0.011			
Age 60–69 × Roma present (DV)	2.143	1.051 – 4.368	0.036			
Age 70 + × Roma present (DV)	2.208	0.592 – 8.243	0.238			
Elementary education × Roma present (DV) (ref.)						
Lower secondary × Roma present (DV)	1.385	0.760 – 2.525	0.288			
Upper secondary × Roma present (DV)	1.613	0.944 – 2.755	0.080			
University education × Roma present (DV)	1.932	1.040 – 3.587	0.037			
Hungarian ethnicity × Roma present (DV)	1.530	0.333 – 7.020	0.584			
Other ethnicity × Roma present (DV)	1.701	0.187 – 15.444	0.637			
Unemployed × Roma present (DV)	0.789	0.446 – 1.395	0.414			
Non-voter × Roma present (DV)	1.320	0.936 – 1.860	0.114			
Manual job × Roma present (DV)	1.084	0.795 – 1.476	0.611			

Table 5. Explaining the vote for the ĽSNS, hierarchical logistic regression, interaction effects in Models 6 and 8—second part

	Model 6			Model 8		
	OR	CI	p	OR	CI	p
Male × Roma share (%)				1.057	0.922 – 1.212	0.428
Age 18–21 × Roma share (%) (ref.)						
Age 22–29 × Roma share (%)				0.853	0.691 – 1.052	0.137
Age 30–39 × Roma share (%)				0.839	0.672 – 1.048	0.122
Age 40–49 × Roma share (%)				0.864	0.684 – 1.091	0.219
Age 50–59 × Roma share (%)				0.936	0.733 – 1.195	0.595
Age 60–69 × Roma share (%)				0.947	0.700 – 1.281	0.723
Age 70 + × Roma share (%)				1.053	0.644 – 1.720	0.838
Elementary education × Roma share (%) (ref.)						
Lower secondary × Roma share (%)				1.240	0.925 – 1.662	0.150
Upper secondary × Roma share (%)				1.255	0.960 – 1.640	0.097
University education × Roma share (%)				1.342	0.980 – 1.837	0.067
Hungarian ethnicity × Roma share (%)				0.680	0.391 – 1.183	0.172
Other ethnicity × Roma share (%)				1.336	0.912 – 1.959	0.137
Unemployed × Roma share (%)				0.748	0.557 – 1.004	0.053
Non-voter × Roma share (%)				1.030	0.855 – 1.243	0.753
Manual job × Roma share (%)				0.923	0.785 – 1.084	0.327

Note: OR = odds ratios, DV = dummy variable, CI = 95% confidence interval.
Source: Exit poll 2016, FOCUS and the Slovak Statistical Office.

Figure 1. Explaining the vote for the ĽSNS, marginal effects for Models 6 and 8



(a) vote for the ĽSNS by age groups and the presence of Roma (DV)

(b) vote for the ĽSNS by age groups and the share of Roma in a municipality

One of the two variables that were intended as measures of the ĽSNS's involvement at the local level is connected to a vote for the far right. Our results in Table 4 show that a campaign rally has some effect on the vote ($p < 0.05$), but no relationship is found between the vote and other activities, such as the protests or marches of the ĽSNS. As can be seen in Table 4, another significant municipality-level predictor of a vote for the ĽSNS is the party's 2012 electoral result. This suggests that, controlling for all other variables in the model, the party was stronger in places where it had already been successful in 2012.

It should be noted, however, that with over 20 000 responses, the statistical power of our individual-level variables is notably higher than the analysis of municipality-level variables, where we analysed 161 municipalities. Moreover, two municipality-level variables—unemployment and the share of Roma—are highly correlated. As a robustness check for potential multicollinearity, we therefore excluded municipality-level unemployment from Models 5 to 8. This omission did not change the presented results.[3]

[3] These models are available from the authors upon request.

Conclusion

Contrary to several previous studies, our analysis was unable to find a consistent connection between the presence of the Roma minority and electoral support for the extreme right. When controlling for individual-level socio-demographic variables, majority voters living in municipalities with a Roma presence were not more likely to vote for the extreme right in the 2016 Slovak parliamentary elections. Moreover, the connection was not found even in the more extreme case of municipalities with the presence of segregated Roma settlements. The analysis of models with interactions between Roma presence and the age and education of the voters suggests that Roma presence might be connected to higher support for the extreme right in the groups that are generally the least likely to support the ĽSNS (the university-educated and older respondents).

This is an important finding about the connection between extreme-right anti-minority rhetoric and its electoral success and raises the wider question about changes in the electoral base of the more successful extreme-right parties. Still, our data do not permit us to claim that anti-minority sentiment did not play a role. It is possible that some voters might have been motivated to vote for the ĽSNS even if they did not experience direct contact with the minority but still felt threatened, as is sometimes the case [Branton et al. 2011]. Our hypothesis is that, while the electoral success of the extreme right remains rather small and it currently exists as a fringe political actor, anti-minority sentiment is one of the key predictors of its success. However, if the extreme-right party can attract a substantially higher share of votes, different factors come into play as well.

The main ingredient of the ĽSNS's 2016 electoral success was possibly not its anti-Roma rhetoric. Rather, the extreme right was successful in posing as the only viable alternative to the generally mistrusted political leaders. This is demonstrated, for instance, by the fact that the party was able to mobilise a considerable share of usually passive non-voters. While we are aware that exit-poll data cannot justify the claim that the success of the ĽSNS in 2016 was due to the protest vote, we believe that this hypothesis is worth testing in the future research of electoral gains of the extreme right. A protest vote, or an expression of political distrust, is sometimes mentioned as a reason for the emergence of the far right in various countries [Rooduijn 2017]. The case of the ĽSNS and its results can be viewed as similar to the success of the True Finns Party in the 2011 Finnish parliamentary elections, Golden Dawn in Greece in the 2014 European elections, or—from the countries neighbouring Slovakia—to the successful Hungarian extreme-right party Jobbik. The socio-structural macro-level characteristics (such as unemployment or the number of immigrants), which have typically explained the popularity of the far right elsewhere, did not fit for the result of the True Finns. Their electoral gains were more of an expression of political protest throughout Finland [Westinen 2014]. Even with its authoritarian neo-Nazi stance, Golden Dawn—ideologically much closer to the ĽSNS than the True Finns—was able to capitalise on the de-legitimation of Greek political institutions and to present itself as a

socially legitimate anti-system alternative [Ellinas 2015]. Jobbik, as well, was able to take advantage of the Hungarian political situation and the crisis of traditional democratic parties [Mareš and Havlík 2016].

Strong anti-system and anti-corruption stances were presented as a central feature of the ĽSNS in its campaign, and more than 20% of the party's voters indicated the fight against corruption as the main reason for choosing the ĽSNS. With corruption having been singled out as one of the biggest problems in Slovakia by citizens for many years in various surveys [Džambazovič 2015], it seems that, much like Golden Dawn, the ĽSNS was able to overshadow its authoritarian ideology and persuade a part of the electorate that the party is the answer to some of the most gruelling problems in Slovak society.

Our results differ from previous analyses of the electoral gains of the Slovak extreme right. These were, however, not analyses of major electoral successes. The ĽSNS was a fringe party in the previous parliamentary elections, and its support could clearly be connected to an outgroup presence. In 2016, however, the ĽSNS was not only able to hold on to its previous electorate, but at the same time it succeeded in attracting a large share of non-voters and ex-voters of other political parties. We are aware that further empirical evidence for the hypothesis that the extreme right's electoral support in Slovakia has changed from being driven by anti-minority sentiment (connected to the presence of an out group) to a protest vote is needed. For now, however, the explanation of a vote for the extreme right as a desperate move of the majority frightened by experiencing a Roma presence does not seem to be the most likely.

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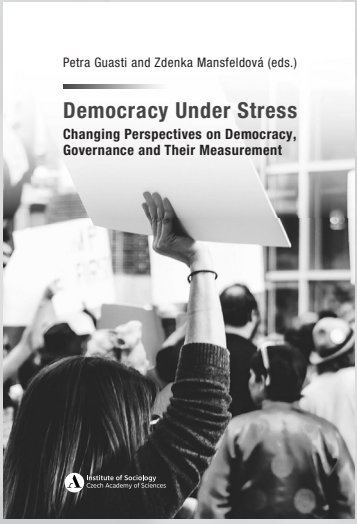
New from the Institute of Sociology
of the Czech Academy of Sciences

Democracy Under Stress. Changing Perspectives on Democracy, Governance and Their Measurement

Petra Guasti and Zdenka Mansfeldová (eds)

Democracy, defined as liberal pluralism, is under stress worldwide. Pluralistic democratic institutions such as: a free press, civil society, and the rule of law all seem to be under attack. Democracies are being hollowed out from within while preserving the fundamental facade of elections.



The strength of this book is in providing a range of perspectives on the study of democracy under stress. The authors, renowned scholars of democratic theory and democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, highlight the potential of different approaches – from comparative meta-assessment using indices and survey data, to case studies focused on understanding context and causal processes – for obtaining a better grasp of the loci of the stress.

Together, we offer the reader the opportunity to assess different conceptual frameworks and approaches, to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and to advance the study of democracy in the future. This volume is also an invitation for scholars to redirect their attention to Central and Eastern Europe, which offers an opportunity to deepen our understanding of democracy.

We see democracy in Central and Eastern Europe under stress but avoid general labels such as the crisis of democracy and deconsolidation. Instead, we argue that to understand the contemporary situation in the CEE region, we need to move beyond assessing institutional frameworks and to include citizens in our understanding and measurement of democracy.

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Institute of Sociology
Czech Academy of Sciences

Party Membership in Romania: Political Legitimacy, Party Finance and Organisational Changes

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Abstract: The article retraces the contradictions between the regulations and the practices shaping Romanian party membership in order to show why and how membership decline became an electoral-driven strategy. It contrasts high membership figures, the dynamics of legal definitions of party membership, and party routines. The results indicate that the Romanian example is an atypical case of incongruence between organisational configurations and party models of 'constitutionalisation'. The frailty of party organisations in this post-communist country depends not only on the broken linkages between state and society but also on exogenous factors, such as the anti-corruption campaign and opportunistic intraparty agreements. The study uses a qualitative content analysis of party laws, party statutes, official statements, and desk research.

Keywords: Romania, party membership, party regulation, organisation, finances

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Members of political parties were once active participants in shaping representative democracies [Kosiara-Pedersen, Scarrow and van Haute 2017: 234; Scarrow 2017: 1–2]. However, new case studies cast doubt on the consistency between the empirical evidence and normative views on party organisations [Kölln 2015; Gauja 2015]. The Romanian case is an outlier in post-communist Europe in terms of membership strength and continuity. Even after the recent reforms, which practically removed any meaning from party grassroots, parties such as the Romanian Social Democrats (PSD) continue to claim more than half a million party

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members [Hotnews 2015]. These records are far from mirroring the weakness of party organisations in other post-communist countries (i.e. the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia; see, e.g., van Biezen, Mair and Poguntke [2012: 28]). Nor does the empirical evidence match another outlier, namely the Bulgarian case [Spirova 2005]. In the latter instance, the steady decline in membership over the past decade suggests a new tendency towards party membership decline (e.g. the Bulgarian Socialist Party lost half its 210 000 members between 2009 and 2016).

At first glance, Romanian parties succeeded in balancing the reduced costs of formal party membership and increased benefits for party affiliates [Kosiara-Pedersen, Scarrow and van Haute 2017]. National-level supply factors, coupled with the 'advantages of traditional membership at a lower cost' [Kosiara-Pedersen, Scarrow and van Haute 2017: 234], could easily explain the transformation to a loose mass-party model of politics. Nevertheless, this coherent structure of formal incentives that made having high membership figures important unexpectedly ended in 2015. Under current regulation, only three members are required to register a party.

In order to understand the patterns of party membership in post-communist Romania, our main research question is: what features characterise party membership in post-communist Romania? In order to provide an answer, this study focuses exclusively on the parties that have existed since the fall of communism and that have been continuously represented in parliament. The parties that meet these criteria are: the Social Democratic Party (PSD), the National Liberal Party (PNL), and the Democratic Liberal Party (PDL). In the disaggregated data we have included the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR), the main political organisation of the Hungarian minority. Although it does not legally function as a political party, the UDMR has been continuously represented in parliament. In total, the above-mentioned parties account for more than 50% of the total party membership in Romania.

This exploratory case study contributes to the literature on political parties by questioning the conventional wisdom on the relationship between institutional reforms, party configurations, and membership decline. It argues that the Romanian case illustrates an atypical case of incongruence between the costs that parties have to assume in terms of efforts to identify and enrol supporters and the potential benefits of targeting ordinary members [Achury et al. 2018; Kosiara-Pedersen, Scarrow and van Haute 2017]. The 2015 state-originated 'downgrading' of party members seems to have been a self-preservation attempt, allowing mainstream parties to ensure they maintain hegemonic positions in the party competition. These reforms have de facto reinforced the status quo: the same (old) parties are the main beneficiaries in terms of the flow of public funding.

The article is based on a content analysis of party laws, party statutes, official statements, and desk research. With regard to party membership, we used 'objective' figures provided by parties to the Court of Bucharest, self-reported membership based on internal party documents, reports, and/or official state-

ments. The data refer to individual party membership covering almost three decades of post-communism, and as such exclude potential nuances with regard to different categories of membership. One caveat must be mentioned since we are aware of the limitation of using self-reported membership data from parties, especially in the case of suspiciously round figures. For example, in June 1998, the Barometer of Public Opinion (BOP) showed that only 3.6% of respondents were party members. However, another 22.4% refused to reply (or opted for 'I don't know'). In a similar vein, in November 1998, the BOP recorded contrasting results. Only 1.8% of the respondents openly declared being party members, while another 15.9% did not know or did respond to the question. Given this discrepancy among those acknowledging membership, party records, and the high percentage of non-responses, we agree with numerous party scholars who have stressed the fact that the reliability of mass surveys is undermined by the small population of reference, the absence of continuous measurements, and uncertainties linked to survey respondents' understanding of what party membership means [Verba et al. 1978; Mair and van Biezen 2001; van Haute and Gauja 2015].

In what follows, after a brief overview of the different theoretical explanations concerning the decline in party membership (section 1), the article provides a brief overview of the parties under scrutiny (section 2). The third section tackles the eclectic dimensions of partisan affiliation in Romania. By looking at the individual parties' trajectories, the fourth second section will reveal the constant presence of high enrolment figures within the main Romanian parliamentary parties and their mass party features, based on internal party documents and practices (the endogenous party constraints). The fifth section will lead into a general exploration of the varying meanings given to 'party membership' by exogenous factors (i.e. the legal provisions). Returning to the research question, the conclusion examines some possible interpretations.

An overview of party activism and party membership decline

In the context of rapid social, economic, and cultural change, the erosion of traditional social linkages, the rise of new forms of political participation, and the ever-closer relationship between parties and the state have simultaneously affected both parties and citizens. The deep reconfiguration of the 'parties as linkage' paradigm involved both supply- and demand-side explanations [van Haute and Gauja 2015]. While citizens have become more reluctant to join political parties and privileged apathy or new forms of participation have emerged, parties have progressively reassessed the costs and benefits of traditional membership recruitment and oriented themselves towards public institutions and elected offices [van Biezen, Mair and Poguntke 2012]. The consequences of these transformations have been directly connected to the quality of democracy, which no longer places the notion of popular control or electoral accountability at its centre [Mair 2006].

The empirical articulation of new party models redefined the expectations of the literature in terms of party membership configurations [Scarrow 2015]. Party members became less important within party organisations. Very few parties and leaders made their lack of interest in attracting members and followers openly known [Mazzoleni and Voerman 2017]. Atypical cases continue to exist. In some cases, members have remained important as message multipliers during electoral campaigns and as sources of financial revenue. New reforms aimed at party democratisation (e.g. the democratisation of the candidate selection processes) continue to endow members with more formal attributes [see, e.g., Hazan and Rahat 2010; Pilet and Cross 2014]. Nevertheless, such changes refer primarily to a mere legitimacy function with relatively little impact on the overall balance of power within the party (e.g. influence over the party expenditure structure or candidate selection). There is a consensus within the literature that party members are not what they once were. In sociological terms, party enrolment concerns only an 'outer ring of an extended political class' in which it is possible to find civil servants or other party clientele [van Biezen, Mair and Poguntke: 39]. Diminishing the costs of affiliation (e.g. online registration, lower membership, fees) and increasing the selective incentives and participatory procedures (e.g. party primaries) have become the new instruments for 'saving' party organisations [Kosiara-Pedersen, Scarrow and van Haute 2017].

The criticism raised against the party as a participatory agency connects with mass-party identifiers. Quantifiable figures on membership and financial contributions and evaluations of records on the level (intent and extent) of participation in organisation activities remained the main indicators of the backbone of party affiliation during the Golden Age of party identification. However, empirical analyses of party membership broadened and completed the organisational definition of party membership. Institutional determinants such as legislative inputs—i.e. party 'constitutionalisation' or party laws or context-dependent elements requiring new cost/benefits ratios—contributed to this change [Casal Bértoa and Spirova 2013]. A certain degree of homogenisation owing to international pressures and standards also occurred. Under the definitions adopted by international bodies, parties remain important as participatory agencies, and good party democratisation practices should support inclusive and deliberative membership structures (e.g. the Code of Venice Commission recommendations). There have only been a few attempts to explain the entire structure of incentives built up around parties (see, for example, the recent 'Project on Political Parties Database'; Poguntke et al. [2016]). If members become more involved in party organisations, this ideal should, according to current standards, exclude the mass-party model of clientelism and co-optation based on self-interested participation in party life. In a similar vein, the benefits to the party of counting high membership figures are currently contested.

While most of the literature seeks to reconcile new party layers (parties' internal adaption processes and new forms of regulations), in practice, particu-

larly in new democracies, the various layers of party membership raise additional questions regarding potential inconsistencies or even normative clashes in explanations of membership decline [Gauja 2015; Gherghina, Iancu and Soare 2018]. The optimistic view still underpins the three main and complementary functions of party members. First, members perform a symbolic function (as part of the rhetorical quest to legitimise electoral competitions). Second, members remain valuable assets within party organisations in supporting internal party democratisation—although practices often lag behind in terms of party decentralisation or deliberative routines, members are a part of the party's rules and political activities, but in some cases they also remain providers for the party. Third, members become a juridical criterion of a party's existence (as formalised by party laws and financial constraints). According to this optimistic view, the decline of party membership is only a consequence of major changes in society, multilevel governance, and the decline of party ideologies [Katz and Blyth 2005; Mair 2006]. At the same time, the changes in the symbolic and the organisational roles of party members are merely the result of a process of party adaptation (a survival strategy) to a continuously changing and challenging environment. Nevertheless, this article posits a different interpretation. Although political and socioeconomic contexts remain essential for comprehending party change, we argue that the incongruence in the evolution of different facets of party membership (namely amongst the symbolic, endogenous, and exogenous dimensions) could also contribute to a better understanding of membership decline in contemporary democracies.

Romanian parties in context: continuity and change

The literature widely agrees that post-communist party systems have suffered from profound instability and shallow ideological positions. The Romanian example is no exception in this regard. The eight general elections held after 1990 have shown a continuous variation in the effective number of parties, which have often split, merged, or—more or less radically—changed their ideologies. This state of affairs can easily be explained in the light of the challenging process of party formation in the early 1990s. Given the lack of an articulated dissident movement during Romanian communism and the limited pre-communist democratic tradition, the new parties had to invent themselves from scratch and present a new logic of legitimacy. The polarisation of the political system echoed the political tension between post(anti)-communist and ex-communist parties [Mungiu 2018; Soare and Preda 2015; Gherghina 2014]. In the early 1990s, the former laid claim to the interwar democratic legacy and dissident positions during the communist regime, while the latter (also labelled 'successor parties') mainly sought to legitimise themselves as new forces created by the revolutionary movement. After 2000, this divide rebranded into the opposition between the pro-European reformist camp (also endorsing zero-tolerance anti-corruption policies) and, on

the other side, a more nationalistic-distributive camp with a Euro-sceptic twist [Mungiu 2018].

Unlike in other CEE countries, in Romanian politics the inheritors of the former Communist Party dominated the first years after the fall of communism. The National Salvation Front (FSN), created in 1990, benefited from 'huge membership, strict hierarchical structure, and unparalleled penetration at the local level' [Stan 2010: 383]. Starting in 1992, the FSN split into two main factions. The conservative wing became the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (later called the Social Democratic Party / PSD). Meanwhile, the more moderate wing became the Democratic Party (PD). Both organisations survived on the political scene, constituting, until recently, two of the main pillars of the political system. The PSD consolidated itself as the main party on the left, illustrating a success story of 'redeemed communist inheritance' [Grzymała-Busse 2002: 19-69]. The party adopted redistributive economic policies coupled with conservative social reforms (for example, in 2018, the PSD even endorsed a referendum 'for the traditional family', intended to constitutionally safeguard the definition of marriage as a union between a man and a woman). In the case of the PSD, the ideological eclecticism regularly paid off; since its creation, the PSD's parliamentary electoral success has doubled through constant victories at the grassroots' level (Table 1), and it has displayed an organisational strength similar to that of other social-democratic parties in the region [Grzymala-Busse 2002]. The PSD won landslide victories in local elections (winning a third of all mayoral positions) and regularly boasted high membership figures. Conversely, its twin organisation, the PD, did not follow the same path (Table 1). Its ongoing quest for differentiation from its original roots was conducive to a major shift in the party's identity. The PD left behind its social-democratic claims and moved towards liberal-conservative discourses in the 2000s (culminating with its alignment with the European People's Party in 2006 and a change in name in 2007—to become the Liberal Democratic Party / PDL). From an organisational perspective, the party mainly relied on leaders with a high national profile, mustering low electoral support across the counties, albeit while preserving a limited number of territorial strongholds. With the notable exception of the 2008 elections when the PDL, in government at the time, managed to double its initial score in the mayoral contests, the party routinely obtained around 15% of votes in local contests. Altered by numerous party divisions and dramatic programmatic shifts, the internal organisational arrangements witnessed successive reforms, varying from centralised patterns of decision-making in the early 1990s towards an enhanced type of low oversight (i.e. local and county organisations were allowed to develop their own rules of functioning within the national statutory frameworks). After the 2012 elections (and a significant electoral decline), in November 2014 the party merged with the National Liberal Party.

In the aftermath of the regime change, the creation of the FSN was initially balanced by the formation of numerous small (historical) parties. They reunited

in 1991 under the umbrella of an anti-communist alliance: the Democratic Convention in Romania (CDR). As in other post-communist countries [van Biezen 2003], this political conglomerate encapsulated primarily parties claiming a prewar/interwar legitimacy. The CDR was mainly structured on two main pillars: the Christian-Democratic National Peasants' Party (PNTcd) and the National Liberal Party (PNL). Their rather *ex nihilo* post-revolutionary emergence and their urban branches were conducive to fluid organisational structures, which was reflected in low scores in local elections. The PNTcd's trajectory confirmed the rapid electoral decline of the 'historical parties' across the post-communist setting. After the 2000 elections, only the liberals survived the collapse of the CDR (Table 1). With a highly ideological discourse and anaemic territorial-organisational structures, the PNL formally adjusted its internal functioning during the early 2000s. The party underwent a series of internal reforms intended to increase its organisational capacity (such as the distribution of appointed positions to the most effective local branches; see section 3). Consequently, the PNL's local performances steadily increased (reaching around 15% of votes in local competitions in 2004) but remained overshadowed by the social democrats' electoral success. After 2012, the PNL became the main party on the right side of the political spectrum, identifying with pro-Europeanist stances and anticorruption platforms. More recently, new parties or political movements (such as the creation of the Save Romania Union—USR, an anticorruption political movement) are challenging the liberals' position.

The initial divide between post-communists and ex-communists rapidly faded. Since the late 1990s, numerous governmental coalitions and electoral agreements have been put in place in both the national and local arenas. The most illustrative collaboration dates back to 2011, when two of the main traditional opponents, the liberals and the social democrats, decided to create the core of a political alliance (the Social Liberal Union—USL), which included a joint platform and shared candidacies in both the national and local elections. The success of such eclectic ideological collaborations produced a blurred articulation of the party system. The only enduring tension is a secondary political divide between nationalistic and anti-nationalistic positions [Preda and Soare 2015]. Rapidly configured after the demise of communism, this tension consists in the opposition between the representatives of the Hungarian minority and other parties presenting extremist and anti-Magyar claims—some of which have ceased to exist. The Hungarian Democratic Alliance (UDMR), which is not a party *per se* but an organisational umbrella that comprises multiple programme platforms, has played a pivotal role on the governmental scene, focusing on a single-issue dimension: ethnic minority representation. With a membership structure declining in step with the decline of the Hungarian minority demographic, the UDMR consistently obtains around 4% of the vote in mayoral elections.

Table 1. The main Romanian political parties (electoral results, governmental position, membership size)—first part

Party	Year created	General elections	Electoral results	Government party	Officially declared membership		M/V ratio
FSN/FDSN/ PDSR/PSD	1990	1990	9 089 659	1990–1992	1 000 000		0.11
		1992	3 015 708	1992–1996	60 000		0.02
		1996	2 633 860	Opposition	250 000		0.09
		2000	3 968 464	2000–2004	304 713		0.08
		2004	3 730 352	Opposition	608 161		0.16
		2008	2 279 449	2008–2009	290 116	(2007)	0.13
		2012	4 457 526	As USL 2012–2014 2014–2016	509 551	(2013)	0.11 (0.14)
		2016	3 204 864	2016–present	530 000		0.165
PNL	1990	1990	879 290	1990–1992	NA		
		1992	286 467	Opposition	NA		
		1996	3 692 321	As CDR (PNTCD 150 000)	662	(1995)	0.00 (0.04)
		2000	747 263	Opposition	120 115		0.16
		2004	3 191 546	2004–2008	73 185	(2003)	0.02 (0.08)
		2008	1 279 063	Opposition	116 134	(2007)	0.09
		2012	4 457 526	As USL, 2012–2014	131 908	(2011)	0.03 (0.14)
		2016	1 412 377	Opposition	260 000		0.18

Table 1. The main Romanian political parties (electoral results, governmental position, membership size)—second part

Party	Year created	General elections	Electoral results	Government party	Officially declared membership		M/V ratio
FSN/PD/PDL	1992	1992	1 108 500	Opposition	NA		
		1996	1 582 231	As USD 1996–1999	330 000		0.21
		2000	762 365	Opposition	135 288		0.18
		2004	3 191 546	As DA 2004–2007	148 922	(2003)	0.05 (0.08)
		2008	2 228 860	2008–2012	86 461	(2007)	0.04
		2012	1 239 318	Opposition	138 714	(2013)	0.11
UDMR	1990	1990	991 601	Opposition	NA		
		1992	811 290	Opposition	301 000		0.37
		1996	812 628	In alliance with CDR	410 000		0.50
		2000	736 863	Parliamentary support	145 000		0.20
		2004	628 125	2004–2008	400 000	(2003)	0.64
		2008	425 008	2009–2012	350 000	(2007)	0.82
		2012	388 528	Parliamentary support	160 700	(2011)	0.41
		2016	405 969	Parliamentary support	NA		

Source: Permanent Electoral Authority (http://www.roaep.ro/), MAPP data.; NA = missing data; for parties running in coalitions or electoral alliances the M/V ratio was calculated both in regard to individual party and the electoral alliance (by adding the party membership figures for all parties/electoral result of the coalition).

Party membership in Romania: high enrolment or wishful thinking?

Romanian membership data indicate a mixed landscape. From the mid-1990s onwards Romanian parties became a regional exception, with 12% of the citizens declaring a party affiliation in the World Values Survey, well above the Central and Eastern European average of 5.9% [Howard 2003: 66]. Despite constant evidence in favour of citizens' disenchantment with parties (e.g. limited trust, declining participation), in the mid-2000s Romanian party membership progressively stabilised. The decrease in the number of registered parties and electoral competitors since 2008 seems to support this claim. While 71 parties or coalitions were registered in the early 1990s, their number gradually declined to 12 in the 2012 elections. According to the M/E ratios (i.e. the number of members as a percentage of the electorate) reported by van Biezen et al. [2012: 28], membership figures put Romanian parties above the European average of 4.7 in the mid-2000s. In a similar vein, a more recent survey of party organisations showed that the average European M/E ratio recently declined to 3.13 [Poguntke et al. 2016: 668]. This suggests that, with the exception of Austria in 2011, Romanian parties declare the highest number of members at the European level. The relative anomaly of the Romanian case can be fine-tuned with a stricter methodological evaluation. If we equate party relevance to presence in parliament, the data relating to the 1990–2000 elections remain unchanged (Tables 2a and 2b). This lack of variation is due to the fact that the individual membership figures refer to a rather limited number of parties (all of them parliamentary parties): two (out of seventeen parliamentary parties) in 1990, three (out of twelve) in 1992, five (out of twelve) in 1996, and five (out of seven) in 2000. In general, the collection of data on party membership over time is complicated.

In the Romanian case, the data for the 1990s are incomplete, not only for minor parties, but also for the main competitors. Until 2003, political parties did not maintain a rigorous record of their membership figures. As a direct consequence, the limited number of parties included in the 1990–2000 computations may slightly underestimate the total number of members for this period and the different ratios. After the adoption of a new party law, all parties had to adapt their data management practices and maintain more accurate membership logs. As a result of this, the level of detail increases after 2003, when twenty parties were included in the dataset. One specific caveat must be mentioned in relation to the post-2003 figures, which are for the most part based on the official party lists of supporting signatures required by the registration procedures. These declarations refer only to a minimum threshold, with parties providing a discretionary interpretation of the upper limits of their declarations. Another important aspect concerns the discrepancy between the global figures relating to all registered parties (Table 2a) and parliamentary party membership (Table 2b): –466 738 (2012), –715 794 (2008), and –574 073 (2004). In other words, a significant number of Romanian citizens participate in electorally unsuccessful political organisations: 2.53% of the entire electorate in 2012, 3.88% in 2008, and 3.11% in 2004. From 2008

Table 2a. Romanian party membership across seven post-communist elections (1990–2014)

	1990	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012
Total party membership	1 800 000	376 000	1 212 000	923 118	2 101 482	1 649 168	1 418 057
M/E	10.46	2.30	7.04	5.22	11.39	8.93	7.70
M/V	13.13	3.01	9.26	7.99	19.55	22.78	18.43
M/P	7.76	1.65	5.36	4.14	9.40	7.48	6.49

Source: Total party membership expressed as an absolute number (M), party membership expressed as a fraction of the total electorate (M/E), of effective voters (M/V), and of the total population (M/P). Because the data are incomplete for the 2004, 2008, and 2012 electoral years, the computations took into account the data from the year before the elections. In the case of the PSD, we relied on the party's internal statistics.

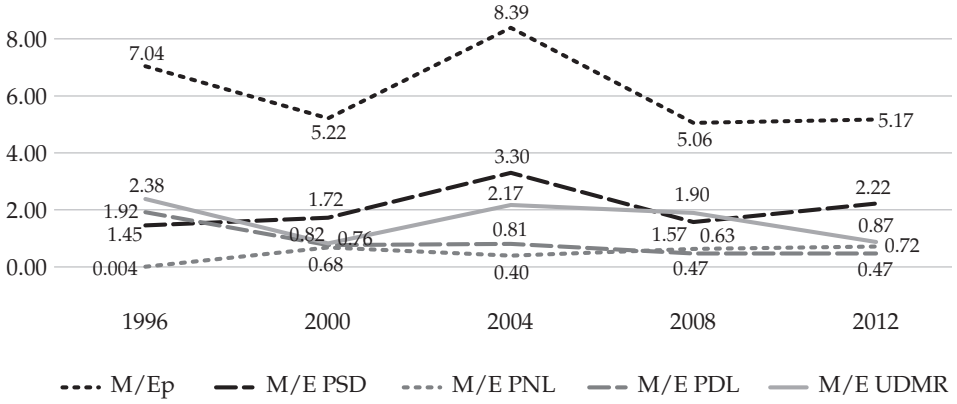
Table 2b: Parliamentary party membership across seven post-communist elections (1990–2014)

	1990	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012
Total parliamentary party membership	1 800 000	376 000	1 212 000	923 118	1 527 409	933 374	952 319
M/E	10.46	2.30	7.04	5.22	8.39	5.06	5.17
M/V	13.13	3.01	9.26	7.99	14.40	12.89	12.38
M/P	7.76	1.65	5.36	4.14	6.92	4.23	4.36

onwards, the evidence based on parliamentary parties exclusively shows that Romanian values draw closer to European averages.

Romania's high levels of party membership also remain visible in the analysis of the main parties' individual trajectories (Figure 1). Looking at the post-2003 period—the period for which more comparative data are available—the absolute values of the main party enrolment figures reflect the fluctuation described above, with an abrupt decrease between 2003 and 2007. The decline tends to flatten out more recently. Within our sample, there is large variation. The Social Democrats have fared better than the other competitors: they have succeeded in maintaining significant membership, with a major increase in recent years, based on a traditional definition of party membership (in 2016 the PSD reported 530 000 members). At the opposite end of the pole, the Liberal Democrats (PDL) and the Liberals (PNL) maintained a stable number of party loyalists. Their merg-

Figure 1. A comparison of M/E ratios: aggregate and individual party ratios (1996–2012)



er in 2014 increased their membership base to 260 000 members. In fact, the only party that has seen a decline in its membership base is the Alliance of the Hungarian Minority (UDMR), which, although it has preserved its important ability to mobilise the ethnic Hungarian population, is facing a significant demographic decline (down 14.26% in 2011 compared to the 2002 census), factionalism, and new electoral contenders. The reform of the party law did not tame political parties' interest in broad membership, at least in terms of party leaders' declarations: in 2017, according to statements by part leaders at least 2 million people were enrolled in a political party [Gîrlasiu and Duța 2017]. These optimistic ('objective') accounts should be balanced with subjective measurements of party membership (i.e. comparative surveys on political participation, such as the European Values Study, or national surveys). Further, the quality of the available 'objective' data might—ideally—increase if there are amendments to the current party law, including introducing an explicit requirement for parties to disclose their membership publicly. This, however, is not a current topic of discussion.

The symbolic dimension of party membership in Romania: parties' discourses of legitimacy

Overstating enrolment is not exceptional. Parties tend to interpret high membership figures as a sign of their popularity [Scarrow 2017: 3] and Romanian parties have a long history of legitimation through high membership figures. The main exponents of this continuous quest for self-justification through party reach are the Social Democrats. The Romanian successor party was said to have one mil-

lion members in 1990. This figure is probably an overstatement, because the FSN did not directly inherit either the PCR's membership structures or its territorial network [Pop-Eleches 2008]. With the exception of 1992–1993, after an important split and a change in the party's name to the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PDSR), when a radically different estimation of the enrolment figures was recorded, a mere 60 000 members, the PDSR (now known as the Social Democratic Party—PSD) has never fallen below the threshold of 250 000 members.

The leaders of the Social Democratic Party openly stated their mass membership-oriented party-building strategy, as a way of justifying their post-communist trajectory. This strategy generated a visible and rapid increase in members, up to almost 700 000. According to party statistics, the early 2000s represented a phase of party consolidation, with an increase from 304 713 members in 2000 to 694 654 in 2001 and 659 013 in 2002. Although party membership declined in 2007–2011, the PSD has outstanding numbers (the Social Democrats had 409 833 members in 2011 and 535 699 in 2015). More recently, the party continued with its aggressive recruitment drive. In 2017, the party's leaders declared 547 850 paying members and 811 000 persons who held a membership card. While leaders tend to overestimate enrolment figures, it should be noted that these figures correspond to the figures published by the party for direct membership votes. In the 2015 leadership contest, 435 172 people voted in the election of the party president (out of 535 699 officially registered members) [Hotnews.ro 2015]. Without specific party membership surveys, it is difficult to state who these members are or what motivates them to join the party. According to the 2011 PSD census, current PSD members are mostly male (59%), tend to be elderly, and have low to medium levels of education.

Party members are an important part of the party's narrative. From the early 1990s, the PSD tried to brand itself as the party of renewal and of the people. With deep roots in rural areas, the party often relied on electoral patronage and clientelism. In recent times, this rhetoric remains, but for different reasons. Contemporary Social Democrats continue to stress that the party is primarily dependent on membership fees and party activists in order to counter the current allegations against its leaders regarding illegal party financing and electoral and governmental corruption. In June 2018, for example, the Social Democrats displayed their organisational strength by mobilising around 180 000 people in front of the Romanian government building as a show of support for the current government. This mass mobilisation followed Victor Orbán's strategy in Hungary of countering anti-governmental protests with demonstrations of his own.

The other heir to the FSN, the Democratic Party (PD) also looked for organisational strength (330 000 members). In the mid-1990s, the PD (which became the Liberal Democratic Party or PDL in 2007) exhibited similar numbers to the PSD, its main contender, with around 330 000 members in 1996. Its grassroots base shrank to around 90 000 supporters in the early 2000s. In the years that followed, the party looked for new strategies to reinforce the membership base. The PDL developed at the same time as another party opposing the Social Democrats: the

National Liberal Party (PNL), with which it later formed an alliance. For the PNL, the process of member centralisation started in 2000, with no systematic data collected in the early 1990s. In the 2000s, the PNL membership base remained constant, with a slight increase in recent years. By the end of 2014, the alliance between the PDL and the PNL publicly declared they shared 260 000 members (PDL: 138 714 members and the PNL: 115 181 members). While there are no public records on the general profile of the PNL's or the PDL's membership, a survey of party delegates in 2007 revealed a general tendency in both parties to preserve the 'elite character' of the party: primarily men (PNL 88.5%, PDL 80.2%), active in society (PNL 93%, PDL 93.4%), aged between 40 and 59 years old (PNL 63.6%, 61.3%), and highly educated (PNL 87.8%, PDL 96%) [De Waele and Ionașcu 2008]. Both parties, which eventually merged in 2015, conducted several recruitment campaigns in the 2000s, highly mediatised, co-opting members from academia, business leaders, and prominent NGO figures. Despite these efforts, membership activism remains rather low. The party's recent attempts to mobilise members against the social democrats failed to reach significant numbers. Currently, the mobilising strength against the left-oriented government usually relies on non-affiliates from major urban areas. In 2017, at the party's congress, the party president estimated the total number of party members at 'about' 200 000.

The Hungarian minority party replicated the PD/PNL trajectory. Representing the main ethnic minority of the country, the alliance preserved the important capacity to mobilise the ethnic base as its survival strategy. The UDMR has constantly confirmed high numbers of members, ranging from around 160 000 to 400 000 (around 2% of the Romanian electorate). In order to do this, the party has tried to accommodate ideological, sociological, and regional representation within party ranks. Comprehensive qualitative data on the UDMR members is not available. If we refer to the delegates directly elected through grassroots channels to attend the 2007 party congress, the broad majority of these mid-level elites consisted of men (84%) with a university degree and professional experience as upper-level civil servants [Ionașcu 2012].

Organisational definitions of party membership: formal statutory arrangements

How did Romanian parties construct their broad appeals to members? How did they manage to combine large numbers of affiliates? What are the costs and benefits of membership? While the literature often emphasises the idea that high enrolment figures usually co-exist with low membership costs and plebiscitary membership reforms [Kosiara-Pedersen, Scarrow and van Haute 2017], Romanian party organisational arrangements seem to contradict this assessment. In fact, parties' statutory provisions reveal different models of conceiving party affiliation, which have rapidly changed from one party congress to the next. Restrictive access conditions mirrored important membership recruitment campaigns dur-

ing the 2000s. With the exception of the UDMR (whose statute already mentions Romanian citizenship, as well as a written letter of interest and acceptance of the programme and statutes as prerequisite conditions for becoming a member), all the other parliamentary parties introduced various specific requirements for potential members. The intensity of these requirements fluctuates over time. As a common element, parties fine-tuned their membership criteria with an increased emphasis on morality and integrity. In the absence of any existing analysis of why people join parties in Romania, it is only possible to take into account the party rhetoric used in enrolment campaigns. The official messages are focused on the desire to contribute to the party programme and to make a political difference. This is the case of the PSD's online enrolment page: it starts with a catchy motto—Dare to Believe in Romania—then continues with details on the party programme and, at the bottom of the page, provides a link to join the party. Similar strategies are identified among all the main parliamentary parties: they all tend to attract members in terms of broad political considerations. No major differences are identifiable within parties with regard to local branches. While there are no systematic data gathered on members' motivations for joining a political organisation, two Cevipol surveys conducted in 2007 and covering delegates to party congresses underpin idiosyncratic explanatory frames. In the case of the Liberals, the party delegates pointed first and foremost to ideological reasons (44%) and 'sympathetic accounts' towards the party (8.8%) in explaining why they had chosen the PNL. Others identified the party as 'serious' and 'important' (9.1%), while in 7.7% of cases family tradition played an important role [De Waele and Ionaşcu 2008]. The PDL members also emphasised the ideological dimension (the party's ideals and programmes), but to a lesser extent (18.62%). Instead, more delegates pointed to the importance of party characteristics, such as the quality of the party's leadership or the structure of its incentives ('good statutory provisions')—totalling 37%. Another 18% pointed to the party's role in democratising the country and combating corruption, while 17% quoted different personal reasons. Note that the media tell a rather different story, which emphasises a more pragmatic strategy of joining the party for personal career/financial considerations [De Răzvan 2016].

The volatile and fluid definitions of party membership have often differed depending on whether the party in question is in government or opposition. In 2003, the PNL explicitly aimed to strengthen local structures by implementing a rule according to which sympathisers were able to enter the party exclusively in their local branch. When in government, changes within the PNL's regulations eliminated these restrictions, which had become obstacles to broader recruitment procedures and to co-opting new supporters who had previously been members of other parties. The PDL moved in the opposite direction and introduced additional clarifications aimed at gatekeeping the recruitment process. Initially, the party's statutes indicated that a simple letter of intent sufficed in order to join the party. In 2010, while the party was in government, vague qualitative requirements were included, referring to 'people appreciated and known to be honest

and competent citizens who can contribute to the achievement of the party goals' (art. 14 (1c)). Meanwhile, a new statutory prohibition referred to persons identified as collaborators with the communist political police, those who had held paid positions within the hierarchy of the Communist Party or promoted ideas or actions of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or intolerance (art. 14 (2b, d)). These requirements were in line with the party's commitment to promote a lustration bill and a 2006 report condemning the acts of the communist regime. Following the merger of the PNL and the PDL, the new party stuck with the same ideological forms of legitimation. Recent statutory stipulations have focused on the political integrity of future members, such as not being convicted of any crime (corruption in particular), not having had any relationship with the former Securitate or having benefited from *Nomenklatura* positions during the communist regime, and not having been connected to racist or anti-Semitic statements (art. 15).

A similar open-door policy characterises the PSD's statutes. In the early 2000s, in direct relationship to its self-proclaimed revolutionary origins, the party listed a compulsory declaration endorsing the values of 'the revolution among the conditions for becoming a member'; article 7 stated that '(2) persons morally and politically compromised, including in relation to abusive actions in the service of dictatorship and totalitarianism, (3) persons convicted of acts contrary to the Romanian December 1989 Revolution ... (5) persons who promoted violence, fascist ideology, anarchism, racism, chauvinism, and any other ideas or actions of extremism or against human rights and fundamental freedoms' could not become members of the Social Democratic Party. Conversely, the 2011 party rules symbolically deleted references to the Romanian Revolution or general actions in the service of the old regime. Whereas the early 2000 statutes placed the emphasis on 'a letter of recommendation provided by a member of the PSD' (art. 5) (provision maintained in 2005), the 2011 party codes eliminated this personalised procedure of adhesion and launched a new party direction targeting intensive recruitment through online registration and bonuses. In order to cope with citizens' demands for more political integrity (and to reject allegations that the party was corrupt), the party statutes note that persons who had betrayed the country's interests or who were guilty of violent crimes could not become party members. The current statutes were clarified, and some former provisions disappeared from the text. In order to become a party member, one need only have exhibited good professional, moral, and political conduct. Thus, people who are 'morally and politically compromised' and 'people who promoted violence' are barred from becoming party members. The PSD remains a rather traditional party favouring face-to-face communication and informally continues to rely on the co-option of friends and relatives. While online enrolment is possible according to its statutory provisions, this remains an exceptional procedure targeting non-resident citizens or citizens unable to physically get in contact with a local branch of the party (art. 15(2)). On this point, it should be noted that the PSD is among the very few Romanian parties that explicitly regulates the possibility for EU citizens residing in Romania to become party members (art. 13).

The recent changes in the party regulations underscore the mainstream parties' continuous quest to shape the ideal member and prevent public scandals. At the beginning of 2000, the PSD interpreted party membership as belonging to a personalised political group or community. The PNL implemented a more pragmatic and decentralised vision of strengthening party organisation, while the PDL's extensive codifications seem to see membership as a pre-selection phase for public office. Nevertheless, these procedural choices did not entail a particular recruitment method within party organisations. For example, starting in 2002, the PNL adopted a parliamentary selection procedure that introduces a sort of 'meritocratic criterion': the central level selected the candidates in cases where local branches had had poor electoral performances; meanwhile, at the national level, local branches with better records of electoral success were allowed to select their own candidates, subject to the approval of the Permanent Delegation. In 2010, the PDL abandoned its seniority constraints and instead adopted very narrow 'meritocratic' criteria of selection (i.e. professionalism, political experience, 'anti'-corruption provisions, etc.). Similar barriers were also introduced in the selection of the national party leadership. The PDL applied candidate selection procedures based on a list-election and a competition between candidates' programmes (called 'motions') while the PNL organised national meetings with members of the National Permanent Delegation and the delegates elected by the territorial organisations, in line with algorithms decided at a central level. Currently, the PNL follows a top-down, yet inclusive, nomination procedure (because of the considerable size of the central committee operating and sanctioning the procedure). Conversely, two other parties, the UDMR and the PSD, have chosen to introduce a more open structure of selection: party primaries for the parliamentary elections. This initiative was partially applied by the PSD in 2004 and remains operational in the case of the UDMR. In its current statutes, the PSD has implemented a bottom-up procedure for selecting party leadership. The party president is selected through party primaries. Local branches of the party (ultimately sanctioned by a narrower committee) propose party representatives for public office—MPs and MEPs.

Despite the chronological and procedural differences, what seems to unite the various party organisations is a continuous quest for party reform. Such fluidity in selection processes has continuously acted as a screening device for disloyal or factionalist practices. In fact, the process of candidate selection has been tightened up by the adoption of both extensive criteria for candidacy and highly formalised recruitment procedures. The recent party statutes have instituted multiple phases in the candidate selection procedures, involving both the central party and local party organisations, while also creating mediating committees meant to temper internal conflicts. These time-consuming procedures have become increasingly formalised. The PDL, for instance, even introduced a provision according to which a person intending to run in an electoral race should announce this intention to the county organisation at least a year in advance. The intricacies of the candidate selection procedures have also yielded some small

benefits as they provide an idea of which party members are (directly or indirectly) more important. Similarly, in October 2018, the Liberals organised an internal competition for the EP elections. The internal procedures required the candidates to submit a professional and political CV and a project for future activities in the EP. While the selection was kept under the close supervision of a narrow circle—the party president and the executive committee of the party—a person was not permitted to run in the internal race without representing a euro-region and securing the endorsement of at least 50%+1 of the local party branches within that region [Hotnews 2018].

Besides some isolated experiences, parties have retained a highly centralised candidate selection process. At the same time, however, party reforms in the direction of decentralisation have had some results in terms of restructuring party elites, particularly with regard to the importance of local credentials. In a gradual way, elite recruitment procedures have begun to favour territorial linkages and the endorsement of local party organisations [Iancu 2017]. The articulation of local organisations can thus provide an alternative explanation for the persistence of relatively high enrolment figures across the territory. The institutionalisation of high-profile local politicians controlling the distribution of incentives in a territorial arena does not automatically entail the empowerment of membership. While certain key figures within the local administration, such as mayors or county councillors, continue to control their constituencies, their allegiance to the parties has been repeatedly challenged. Although national party leadership has gradually become more responsive to the demands of the grassroots, local notables engage in disloyal practices and party-switching strategies [Ganev 2012].

The exogenous definition of party membership in Romania: the perspective of the state

The organisational dimension of party membership partially confirms the connection between party organisational efforts and high enrolment figures. While some reforms favoured plebiscitary means, such as direct election of the party president in the PSD, most parties chose instead to reinforce decentralisation policies within their organisations. These changes, however, were not in line with the parties' overall efforts to draft regulations intended to encourage mass membership organisations. In the early 1990s, the legislator showed little interest in party membership. In December 1989, according to the legislation, a minimum threshold of 251 members was required in order to register a party. Subsequent regulations aimed to limit the ability of new parties to enter the party system. The 27/1996 Party Law was the first example of this. Issues connected to parties' identity, activity, and funding emerged as national norms. The text stipulated detailed schemes for party statutes and their programmes and required a list of supporting signatures of at least 10 000 members, from at least 15 of the country's

41 counties (with no fewer than 300 signatures from each county) (art. 17, (1b)). Various other provisions concerned party organisation. The general assembly of the members, the supreme decision-making body of the party at the national level (convened at least once every four years), was to be comprised of delegates elected by secret ballot at the territorial level proportionally to the overall party membership. Specific provisions protected party members—they could not be excluded from the party organisation unless they deliberately violated the party's statutes. Alongside these restrictive organisational aspects, the legislation also introduced a correlation between the number of party members and funding opportunities. Precise financial criteria were set out for parties' sources of revenue, expenditure and donation ceilings, and formulas for the distribution of state subventions according to parties' electoral results. Immediately after the 2000 national elections, the PNL backed a new party law calculated to reinforce the relevance of having a broad membership. Initially, the bill required a threshold of 50 000 members, but, after a presidential boycott and the mobilisation of various NGOs, the final text cut the initial requirements by half. The 2003 Party Law required 25 000 members, located in at least 18 administrative departments (with a minimum of 700 members per county). The highly restrictive membership provisions were also doubled by a demand for electoral performance. In a similar vein, party finance laws also referred to provisions aimed at reducing the access of marginal or extra-parliamentary parties to public subsidies and increasing state support for mainstream political actors.

For over two decades, party regulation in Romania has been considered one of the most restrictive models of party laws in the EU. Unsurprisingly, between 1992 and 2015, very few new parties successfully overcame the institutional obstacles raised by the party registration procedures. Nevertheless, without notable party decline or readjustment, by 2015, new legal provisions endorsed by all major parliamentary parties downplayed the role of party membership: it was now possible to register a political party based on the signatures of three members, without any geographical representation criteria.

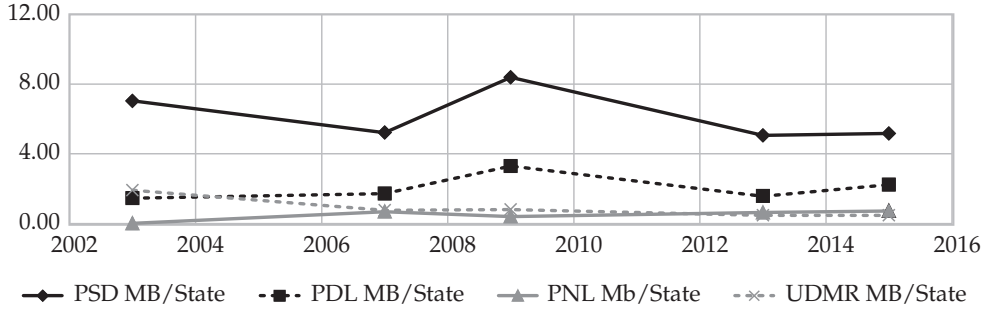
This radical amendment of the legal framework was a response, first, to contextual input in the form of protests against the grey zones in the organisation of the 2014 presidential elections. In the run-up to the 2016 electoral year, the amendment of the electoral code provided fertile ground for tackling reform of the party law. A major stimulus for change was provided by a complaint to the Constitutional Court filed by the Romanian branch of the Pirate Party in 2014, arguing that the legal requirement to file a list of 25 000 members, including their personal details (art. 19 (1,3) Act 14/2003), in order to register as a party constituted a violation of various Romanian constitutional provisions and European law. It should be noted that while similar complaints had been raised in the past without success (e.g. Constitutional Court Decisions 35/1996, 147/1998, 433/2006, 954/2010), in February 2015 the Constitutional Court accepted the complaint and argued that it was necessary to take into account changes in Romanian society,

the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, and the recommendations of the Venice Commission. In this context, increased advocacy efforts and online activism on the part of Romanian civil society openly targeted the law on political parties. One of the most commonly made arguments was that, according to the 2003 criteria, Romania had the highest required ratio of party members to citizens/voters (1 to 892 and/or 1 to 739). Beyond the obstacles to the right of association, other arguments put forward referred to the limited visibility of local interests in national politics and the need to incentivise citizens' participation in politics. In this context, the process leading to the adoption of the amendments was rapid and widely supported.

In parallel to this, parties' financial dependence on membership fees also came to an end in 2016. Previously, electoral campaigns were not subsidised by the state; parties thus depended on members as a source of revenue. The 2016 revision of the party finance law allows even small parties to receive reimbursement for electoral campaign spending. However, despite these changes, the figures available regarding party financing—although they have not been systematically collected—suggest that members continued to be a major source of support for party budgets. Since 2000, private donations and membership fees had tended to become the main sources of party finance, to the detriment of public subsidies (see Figure 2). This trend reinforced the party narratives on extensive membership recruitment. In the early 2000s, the PSD's membership revenues multiplied sixteen times, the UDMR's twelve times, and the PNL's six times. Members' subscriptions became a major source of income for the parties, representing on average almost half of their total incomes for 2003 and 2004, while, for the same period, state subsidies accounted for only a third of the total party expenditures. In 2010, membership fees represented, on average, 50% of the Social Democrats', Liberals', and Liberal Democrats' party budgets. When compared with other democracies, the difference is striking. While, on average, the percentage of party income from direct public subsidies reached an average of 57.5% in the early 2010s, in Romania in 2012 public subventions accounted for only 11% of the Social Democrats' and of the Liberals' revenues and just 5% of the Liberal Democrats' budget. The only electoral competitor that directly and systematically relies on state subventions is the UDMR (76%). The UDMR's dependence on public funding is due to the fact that the organisation is financed as an NGO under a different law regulating the representation of ethnic minorities.

The relevance of membership fees can be distinguished on two levels: relevance in non-election years and in election years. As expected, the total sum of membership fees collected in election years and in the years immediately prior to elections is greater than in non-election years. There are also strong variations across the parties. The PSD used to have the highest share of subscriptions with no major difference in terms of electoral races. The UDMR's ambiguous statutory definition of members explains the Alliance's strong dependence on other sources, such as private donations during the 2000s and more recently state sub-

Figure 2. Membership dues/state subsidies in the election years 2000–2016



sidies. Centre-right parties, such as the PNL and the PDL, have also seen an increased role being played by party members within their organisations. While in both cases members play only a minor role in party internal affairs, grassroots networks provide increased support for these parties' finances and help to mobilise and organise electoral campaigns. In both cases, subscriptions tend to be slightly higher in electoral years. During the 2000s, both parties tended to rely more on private donations than on membership dues [Ionaşcu and Soare 2012]. Given the variability in the amount of money that different categories of members must pay as a membership fee, the official records on party incomes are not illustrative of enrolment figures. Members' subscriptions depend on the level of representation—party members pay less than party leaders or party representatives in public offices. For instance, the membership fees required from a party member in 2009 were rather low: five Ron per month (one euro) in the case of the PDL, 2.5 Ron (0.50 eurocents) for the PNL, or one Ron (20 eurocents) for the Social Democrats (which remains unchanged to the present day). However, for the top leadership positions the average fees were substantially higher: around 65 euro per month for a local PDL leader or 25 euro in the case of the Liberals. There seems to be a correlation between the leaders' salaries and subscription dues: PSD MEPs are supposed to pay around 500 euro per month in membership fees.

In 2016, the entire system of party financing—more specifically, parties' reliance on broad membership structures, which in turn enabled indirect access to private donations—was supposed to come to an end. The prohibitive categories of expenses for electoral campaigns diminish a party's propensity to look for new members and to seek financial autonomy. In 2016, membership fees still accounted for 55% of the PSD's budget and 23% of that of the PNL. In addition to this, 15% of the PSD's income and more than 50% of the PNL's was dependent on donations [Slăvoiu 2018]. Reports from 2017 already illustrate an important shift in internal party policies. The PSD declared that public subsidies made up 62% of the party budget, while membership fees had declined to 32%. However, the per-

centages are misleading. Compared with 2014, public subventions for the party increased 7.5-fold in 2017 and then doubled again in 2018. In fact, the entire party finance system was transformed in 2016. Owing to a last-minute amendment to the law introduced by a Social Democrat MP, which set state subventions at a fixed percentage of GDP, state finance reached impressive records (an increase of over 300%) [Tapalagă 2018]. When this change is taken into account, it becomes clear that the mainstream parliamentary parties did not abandon members (as potential sponsors) but supplemented their contributions with a redistributive initiative based on state subventions. Mainstream parties did not break the cartel, but they found a quick way to secure their financial well-being.

Conclusion: colliding explanations of party decline?

The Romanian party system is characterised by weak party–voter linkages, high volatility, and low levels of trust in political parties. At the same time, these organisations continue their broad political engagement. The empirical dimension of our analysis provides a detailed overview of party membership in the context of an (until now) underexplored case study. In so doing, the article complements recent surveys of party organisations [Poguntke et al. 2016; van Biezen et al. 2012]. Our research also identifies additional context-driven determinants of party membership, such as the anti-corruption campaign and ad hoc intra-party agreements, confirming the thesis that multiple and idiosyncratic factors shape party grassroots in contemporary democracies [Scarrow 2017]. Romania's high enrolment figures alone are only partly exceptional if one takes into account the unexpected increase in party membership observed in some consolidated democracies (e.g. the British Labour Party).

From a theoretical perspective, the analysis confirms that party affiliation remains a context-driven concept, based on specific legislative provisions regarding party behaviour and party finance, statutory arrangements, and strategic incentives meant to facilitate and encourage the formation of active grassroots [Scarrow 2015; Achury et al. 2018]. At first glance, the different determinants of party membership may seem contradictory or to have had unintended effects. In post-communist Romania, members have been valuable assets for party organisations, a state of affairs supported not only by very restrictive legislative frameworks but also by parties' desires for legitimacy and private resources. All of the mainstream political actors seemed to nurture a preference for a modern mass-party model in which members substantially contribute to the party's definition, activities, and finances. In turn, members have developed a very utilitarian acceptance of their marginal role, since they allow parties ample room in which to operate. This model fundamentally differs from the recorded models of membership analyses in consolidated democracies, where parties mainly feature continuity and slow reconfiguration processes [Scarrow 2017]. While the importance of both symbolic and material incentive structures may have been stressed

for Western parties as well, in the Romanian case these elements were mainly related to short-term foreseeable patronage (pre-electoral or post-electoral).

When it comes to party statutes, lowering the costs of party membership and increasing the reward structure (particularly through the adoption of plebiscitary means) has favoured some forms of party organisational reach. However, the adoption of new party democratisation reforms empowering members [see, e.g., Hazan and Rahat 2010; Pilet and Cross 2014] has proved short-lived, as solutions were only introduced in the aftermath of political crises and were temporary. Conversely, because of their unchallenged position when it comes to the production of laws and regulations in Parliament (with limited inputs from civil society), Romanian parties have maintained a favourable political opportunity structure for their own development (e.g. through regular amendments to the electoral laws, changes to party and party finance laws, etc.). Such means of incrementally constitutionalising party politics are not necessarily consistent with previous and 'organic' patterns of party consolidation.

The 2015–2016 amendments to the party laws are illustrative in this regard. The new party regulations have dismantled the previous cartel-based structure of opportunities and seems to constitute a juncture point in party development. However, the available evidence and discourses are mixed. The change can be seen as an adaptation output. In the context of the decline in party membership, Romanian parties had to make an important effort to preserve their high enrolment figures within a context where those members who made a marginal contribution to party finance (those contributing were in fact party leaders) continuously challenged the leadership status quo. The 2015–2016 changes can be seen as necessary adaptations to an increasingly tough 'political market' cluttered with new competitors from outside and increased tension from within. A complementary explanation points to a (slightly) different interpretation. The 2015–2016 reforms were based on an agreement between parliamentary parties in the form of an elite-based collusion endorsing a change that was fine-tuned to the new anticorruption drive. Parliamentary parties agreed to sacrifice their organisational impetus in exchange for a tacit agreement on downplaying the electoral competition (or at least the financial battles in organising the elections).

All in all, based on the evidence provided in this article, the 2015–2016 state-originated 'downgrading' of party members can be seen as first and foremost an attempt at self-preservation, ensuring the old parties retain their hegemonic position both with regard to the financial resources provided by the state and the number of new competitors. This observation is consistent with the cartel party thesis and the strategic attempts of parliamentary parties to limit political competition and ensure their own electoral success [Katz and Mair 2009]. Our analysis shows that party strategies for enrolment are more sensitive to political and financial benefits than to the costs of maintaining broad membership rolls (e.g. symbolic costs, patronage networks, etc.). Although the most recent reforms may have an influence on long-term party arrangements (such as a decline in en-

rolment figures), in practice such provisions have constituted an opportunity for the mainstream parties to increase their incomes and reinforce the organisational status quo. Even if, in public, statements from parliamentary party leaders have often emphasised the financial 'waste' of the new party finance law, official party statements show record sums of money have been redirected towards the mainstream (parliamentary) parties.

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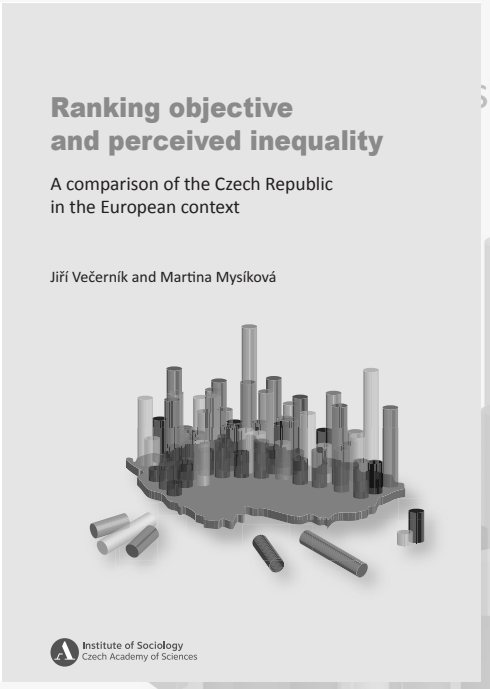
Ranking objective and perceived inequality. A comparison of the Czech Republic in the European context

Jiří Večerník a Martina Mysíková



In Czech public and professional discourse there is strong rhetoric about the rooted egalitarianism of Czech society and its extremely low socio-economic inequality. This study thus traces various objective and subjective dimensions of inequality in an attempt to examine the validity of this rhetoric. The study uses various sources of data on the levels and trends in earnings, household income, and living conditions in the Czech Republic and compares them to other European countries. It appears that although the country ranks among societies with a low level of social inequality, Czechs are not particularly 'exceptional' when it comes to objective economic equality, nor are they remarkably egalitarian in their attitudes.

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Individual Experiences of Surveillance: Attitudes Towards Camera Surveillance in Slovakia*

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Abstract: After the fall of the communist regime, Slovakia saw the introduction and subsequent rapid growth of camera surveillance, particularly around the turn of the millennium. These developments occurred in a specific political, cultural, and historical context, which affects perceptions of and reactions to surveillance by individual citizens. The post-communist context is characterised by relatively low levels of resistance to the introduction of various technological surveillance mechanisms, including the rapid introduction of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) in public spaces. However, individuals who are under surveillance (surveilled subjects) are not passive. They are aware of the surveillance and its mechanisms, they interact with the surveillance devices, and they self-manage their digital image in various surveillance contexts. Using semi-structured qualitative interviews this article examines experiences of and individual attitudes towards the camera surveillance of Slovak citizens against the wider backdrop of the characteristics of post-communist surveillance culture. It is based on an analysis of individual stories of attitudes towards and personal experiences with CCTV in private, semi-private, and public places. The analysis of individual-level interactions reveals that citizens are aware of the presence of cameras and react to them in various ways, ranging from compliance and various strategies of negotiation with surveillance systems right up to some forms of resistance.

Keywords: surveillance, camera system, CCTV, surveilled subject, Slovakia
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Introduction

The urban landscape of Slovak towns and municipalities has changed with the increased use of CCTV cameras, especially since the turn of the millennium. Public camera systems are used by the municipal police for the purposes of crime control and risk management with the intention of eliminating undesirable be-

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haviour from public spaces. They also affect socio-spatial practices in the city [Coleman 2004]. Being monitored influences the choices individuals make when moving through and living in private and public spaces.

Being subjected to a surveillance mechanism is a specific individual experience. Despite the fact that the experience of surveillance often appears benign and unobtrusive and is therefore becoming increasingly normalised [Murakami Wood and Webster 2009], the attitudes and experiences of individuals vary. These individual experiences are affected by the intensity of surveillance [Gilliom 2006] as well as the subjectivity of the surveilled individual [Ball 2009; Ball et al. 2009].

Moreover, interactions with surveillance are context-specific, relating to the surveillance 'imaginaries' and 'practices' that form the surveillance culture of a specific cultural space [Lyon 2014]. These imaginaries and practices of contemporary technological surveillance are generated by social practices, which are influenced by the imaginaries and practices of surveillance in the past. The attitudes of citizens towards surveillance are influenced by the cultural and political context of their given country.

The purpose of this article is to provide some insight into individual experiences with camera surveillance. It analyses individual reactions to camera surveillance in a post-communist context, focusing on Slovakia. Understanding the micro-level context of the functioning of surveillance is vital for discussions of the legitimacy of surveillance—its legality and popular acceptance—as well as the rapid expansion of technological surveillance in the crime-fighting field, especially in countries, like Slovakia, where there is a low level of trust in institutions and the legal system [Friedewald et al. 2015: 75].

The advancement of camera surveillance changed the landscape of urban areas in Slovak municipalities. This growth occurred without any major public discussions, and it is unclear what attitudes regular citizens held towards camera surveillance before its implementation. This research is based on semi-structured interviews with Slovak citizens who were asked about the mechanisms of camera surveillance and their attitudes and experiences with this surveillance in various life contexts. This article briefly discusses the general characteristics of mass surveillance before examining general attitudes towards surveillance in post-communist surveillance culture, which affects the individual experiences of the surveilled subjects. It then presents a theoretical discussion of the surveilled subject and the results of the empirical research.

New surveillance and its mass character

The processes of globalisation, commercialisation, and digitisation in the contemporary world have created a system in which it is increasingly difficult to evade technologies for data collection, storage, and social sorting [Andrejevic 2012]. Modern information technologies with surveillance capabilities have become

embedded in our daily lives and are present in the majority of social settings, ranging from private to public ones. Surveillance can be defined as 'any collection and processing of personal data, whether identifiable or not, for the purposes of influencing or managing those whose data have been garnered' [Lyon 2001: 2]. It has become ubiquitous in both the online and physical worlds, and it affects a large variety of actors, including states, organisations, smaller social groups, such as the family, and particular individuals [Marx 2016: 22]. The agents of surveillance range from states and their institutions (such as the tax office and intelligence agencies) to multinational corporations (mostly technological firms such as Google and Facebook) and individuals (parents monitoring their children).

The main characteristic of contemporary technology-mediated surveillance is its mass character. Unlike personalised surveillance, which targets people who have been identified for surveillance for a specific reason[1] [Clarke 1988: 499], mass surveillance is involuntary, non-discriminatory, routinised, and often automated. It collects data from any individual that has contact with the surveillance mechanism. These data are often available in real time, but they can also be stored for a long period of time and subsequently accessed and analysed by various third parties [Marx 2002: 15]. Camera surveillance falls in the category of mass surveillance, since it targets all the individuals who move within the range and physical capabilities of the camera.

The introduction of surveillance has social impacts that are dependent on pre-existing social relations, political practices, and cultural specifics. One of the prominent social costs or effects of surveillance is 'social sorting', which is the result of the functioning of any surveillance system that 'obtains personal and group data in order to classify people and populations according to varying criteria, to determine who should be targeted for special treatment, suspicion, eligibility, inclusion, access, and so on' [Lyon 2002: 20]. These systems thus create different categories of person. These categories are not the result of a specific value-neutral operation; they are persistent stereotypes, which are embedded in a society and may therefore lead to the marginalisation of certain groups that are exposed to different surveillance systems using much more invasive monitoring and control. Monahan [2010: 97] argues that in this regard, surveillance 'operates as a mechanism for societal differentiation; it assists with discerning or actively constructing differences among populations and then regulating those populations according to their assigned status'.

Social sorting is an inherent feature of any surveillance mechanism, ranging from targeting individuals based on physical characteristics, such as race by CCTV operators [see Norris and Armstrong 1999], to airport controls [see Gilliom and Monahan 2013] and increased surveillance in response to negative economic conditions [see Gilliom 2001]. Closely linked to social sorting is 'profiling', which

[1] Communist citizens had an experience with personalised surveillance whereby technologies were used to spy on specific individuals who were of interest to the security forces.

attempts to pre-empt future unfavourable or problematic conduct based on existing profiles or classifications of individuals or groups [Clarke 1993]. It is based on the risk minimisation principle of new surveillance.

Attitudes towards surveillance in the post-communist context

The existing academic literature suggests that the public in the post-communist region takes a rather favourable view of technological surveillance such as CCTV [Los 2002; 2010; Svenonius, Björklund and Waszkiewicz 2014]. The rise of surveillance in post-communist Europe—both its technological proliferation and citizens' support for surveillance—is the result of the transformation of fear of the state into a fear of crime after the fall of the communist regimes. According to Los, during the transition period, once the 'preoccupation with keeping out of the state's sight (and wrath) had subsided, the fear of being victimized by random crime rose conspicuously' [Los 2002: 169].

This turn from fearing autocratic surveillance to accepting the new surveillance is a result of the maintenance of a 'culture of fear and suspicion'. This culture was created and preserved by the communist secret police as a tool of the regime to maintain power, and that culture survived. The fear of the state was replaced by a fear of crime as the state grew weaker and lost its crime-control capabilities, and in response to small- and large-scale corruption, the privatisation of security by former secret police personnel, the re-definition of threats, and the new visibility of crime (e.g. the mass media's shift in focus towards 'bad news') [Los 2002].[2] The earlier 'good news' media, which had prevented the publication of some information, such as environmental hazards, alcoholism, traffic accidents, corruption, and crime, had helped reassure the public that it was safe. After the regime change, the shift to bad news made crime and risk much more visible and introduced new discourses and idioms of moral outrage and victimhood.[3] These developments were traumatising citizens, and this was manifested as a disorientation and normative chaos that led to a rise in uncertainty and insecurity [Sztompka 2008: 140].

[2] This shift towards 'bad news' has a racial element when it is in relation to the Roma population. They have been overrepresented as perpetrators of crime, especially in the tabloid media. For a more complex analysis of the media framing of Roma populations, see Kroon et al. [2016].

[3] Research on the effects of the media regarding the fear of crime has presented a wide range of sometimes contradictory results. A review of existing research was done by Heath and Gilbert [1996]. Their main finding was that the effects were not simple and straightforward; they depended both on the characteristics of the message conveyed by the media as well as on the audience. In summarised form, the finding was that media messages do not affect all of the people all of the time, but some of the messages do affect some of the people some of the time. The shift from 'good' to 'bad' news after the fall of communism

The combination of a bypassing of modernist processes and a move towards post-industrial surveillance ensured that the new surveillance would bear the stamp of communist control and the above-mentioned maintenance of a culture of suspicion and division [Los 2010]. This led to citizens' somewhat unconditional acceptance of the new technology-intensive surveillance mechanisms introduced in post-communist countries by law enforcement and intelligence agencies. As opposed to human surveillance,[4] which was associated with the previous regime, technological surveillance is predominantly accepted by the general population [Svenonius, Björklund and Waszkiewicz 2014]. This acceptance is manifested as a lack of opposition to its expansion from the public, civil society, and political forces. Additionally, leaks of sensitive documents about highly visible public personas—something Larson refers to as 'wild eavesdropping'—obtained through wiretapping, bugging, or secret recording have been normalised in the region of Central and Eastern Europe to provide 'proxy justice or accountability' when institutional mechanisms fail to do so [Larson 2017].

Human surveillance was associated with the functioning of communist state security agencies and the subsequent controversies surrounding secret police files and the lustration process in Central and Eastern European countries. Debates about lustration in most post-communist countries of the region led nevertheless to the creation of some sort of lustration mechanism, which condemned the practices of the communist secret police, albeit with a different timing and in a distinctive form [Williams, Szczerbiak and Fowler 2005]. The perception of human and personal surveillance therefore remains negative.

Svenonius et al. [2014: 108] argue that contemporary surveillance mechanisms in the post-communist context are 'more often than not seen as appropriate responses to a particular security problem, and discussions concern rather how to finance more surveillance than its historicity and ethics'. Therefore, the population accepts the use of surveillance for the purposes of fighting crime and preventing it. Opposition to human surveillance is manifested in the increasing use and acceptance of technological solutions such as wiretapping, data retention, and CCTV. Experiences from Poland suggest that video surveillance is marketed as an act of modernisation [Björklund and Svenonious 2013].

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brought about a considerably more drastic change in the message conveyed by the media when it came to crime, crisis, and uncertainty. Therefore, it can be assumed that the effects on the fear of crime were more severe than in Western countries, where the change was either more gradual or not captured in the design of studies at all.

[4] A type of surveillance that does not have a mass character and is personal and individualised, relating to a specific individual or individuals of interest. During the period of the communist regime, this type of surveillance was conducted by the secret police and their collaborators. It sometimes made use of technologies such as telephone interceptions and photography, but it did not have a mass character.

The argument of modernisation was identified by the Urban Eye project in Hungary. During the transformation period, public demands to combat crime increased and CCTV was perceived as the modern Western world's 'silver bullet' for eradicating crime [Hempel and Toepfer 2004: 32]. Therefore, support for technological surveillance there is not only perceived as a means to a specific goal (in this case, the provision of security) but also as a way of overcoming the pre-modern communist past and of 'catching up' with developed democracies.

Camera surveillance in Slovakia

Closed-circuit television cameras are becoming increasingly common in public places across Slovak municipalities. The movement of individuals in the streets and squares as well as other public and commercial areas is being constantly monitored and recorded in an increasing number of areas. The reasons for this development include the relatively easy availability of new technologies and the conviction private owners and local municipal police have that the introduction of CCTV in public spaces helps prevent and solve criminal activity and delinquency. This can be characterised as a turn towards a situation-directed type of prevention, which focuses on specific contexts rather than specific individuals [Björklund 2012: 55–56]. This is in line with the turn towards risk management [Beck 2011] as well as the belief that individual places can be classified in various crime-risk zones based on a rational cost-benefit calculation and that appropriate measures can be taken to decrease crime. What matters is no longer the individual but rather the situation.

The birth of public camera systems in Slovakia dates back to 1999 with the installation of the first cameras in Bratislava. In the first half of the 2000s, the number of cameras in Slovakia was fairly limited (fewer than ten cameras in larger settlements). The exception was Bratislava, which had thirty-eight public cameras by 2004. The biggest growth in camera systems can be seen in recent years [Kovanič 2017]. Other Slovak towns experienced rapid growth, although the actual number of cameras is still relatively small. However, the picture is completely different when private cameras are taken into account. Although there is no official information on their number, information from retailers suggests that in 2015 there was a three-hundred percent annual rise in sales in Slovakia and the Czech Republic.[5] This recent growth can be explained by the support for and co-funding of crime-fighting schemes from the government. Citizens' attitudes towards the proliferation of cameras in public places are an understudied phenomenon, and therefore attention shall turn to the surveilled subject.

[5] See (in Slovak language): http://www.retailmagazin.sk/aktualne-vpravo/764-rastie-online-predaj-bezpecnostnych-kamier.

Individual interactions with surveillance

Existing research into the experiences of surveilled subjects is almost exclusively reduced to the experience 'of oppression, coercion, ambivalence, or ignorance' [Ball 2009: 640]. However, surveilled individuals are both objects of surveillance and 'acting subjects' [Klauser and Albrechtslund 2014: 284]. Acting subjects interact with the surveillance device, self-manage their image, and are able to resist the 'surveillance gaze'—a reduced visualised representation of reality [Koskela 2000: 250–251].

Furthermore, the capacity to interact depends on a subject's surveillance capital. Surveillance capital refers to 'how surveillance subjects utilize the everyday forms of tacit knowledge and cultural know-how that is acquired through first-hand experience of power relations to challenge the very same power relations' [McCahill and Finn 2014: 4]. Knowledge, experience, and awareness of surveillance are all factors that structure the dynamics of struggles over surveillance. They allow individuals to either contest and resist a surveillance practice or take advantage of it.

A similar argument has been proposed by Ball [2009]. What is exposed by an individual under surveillance depends both on the invasiveness of the data collection mechanism and on the 'subject's prior knowledge of the data collection process, and, by inference, its consequences' [ibid.: 647]. How an individual reacts to surveillance is dependent upon social, cultural, and surveillance capital. Research on surveillance at Toronto's Pearson International Airport has shown that individuals under surveillance are concerned with both the outcome of the surveillance and the process as well as how it meets the criteria of procedural justice [Saulnier 2017].

Struggles over camera surveillance in Slovakia

Slovak citizens' experiences with surveillance were studied with the aid of semi-structured interviews. The analysis in this article is based on the results of forty-seven semi-structured interviews conducted between March 2013 and January 2014 in the IRISS project[6] and seven interviews conducted by the present author for the SOURCE project between March and May 2015. The sampling method used for the choice of interviews was non-probability convenience sampling. However, the choice of respondents sought to attain a certain degree of sample variability, especially when it came to gender, age, and social situation (the education and occupation of the respondent). An overview can be found in the following table:

[6] Some interviews in the IRISS project were conducted by other Slovak participants in the project: Erik Láštic, Martin Maňuch, and Anna Šovčíková.

Table 1. Characteristics of the respondents interviewed

Age	No.	Gender	No.	Education*	No.
18–24	19	Female	27	Primary	2
25–40	29	Male	28	Secondary	11
40–60	4			University BA	12
over 60	2			University MA, PhD	21

Note: * education not available for eight respondents.

The respondents were well balanced in terms of gender, but with respect to age there were more younger respondents. There were only six respondents over forty years of age. In terms of education levels, the sample skewed towards respondents with a university education. Only two respondents reported having primary education as their highest achieved level.

The chosen sampling procedure created several limitations for the analysis. It did not allow for any generalisations of the attitudes and experiences for the wider public, and any analysis based on socio-economic characteristics would only offer limited added value. Additionally, all the interviews were conducted with respondents residing in Bratislava, making the results regionally specific. However, some of the respondents who were not originally from Bratislava also mentioned their experiences from other Slovak regions. The middle-class background of the respondents represented a limit in terms of the variety of surveillance they experience, and it influences their expectations of the normality of the behaviour that camera surveillance aims to shape. On the other hand, the qualitative nature of the data provides insight into the patterns of thinking about and experiencing CCTV surveillance and its rationalisation strategies.

The analytical framework

Lyon emphasises that 'the persons surveilled are not merely subject to surveillance but subjects of surveillance' [Lyon 2007: 159]. This means that individuals, if they are aware of surveillance mechanisms, do not remain passive. They engage with surveillance and react to it; they have certain expectations and sometimes fears. Lyon further identifies three possible types of engagement with surveillance mechanisms. The first one is compliance. When the system is deemed to be legitimate and necessary, it produces an agreement with the surveillance mechanism. Compliance is affected to a large extent by the knowledge of surveillance: to what extent one knows what kind of data is being gathered, where it is stored and transferred, for how long, and so on. Compliance can also be associated with ignorance, which is simply not caring about surveillance at all [ibid.].

The second possible reaction is negotiation. This means that compliance is questioned either in relation to the space where surveillance mechanisms are gathering the data (sense of space) or in the type of data that are being collected (sense of control). A surveillance mechanism is not dismissed as illegitimate as such, but some sort of negotiation does take place. The last reaction is resistance. This means that some sort of action is taken in order not to be the subject of surveillance [ibid.: 163–169). Resistance to surveillance can take many forms. It is either organised resistance, which aims to remove or regulate surveillance on a larger scale, or it can take the form of individual everyday resistance.

Marx [2003: 374–384] identifies eleven tactics of everyday struggles over surveillance. He categorises them as 'discovery moves, avoidance moves, piggybacking moves, switching moves, distorting moves, blocking moves, masking moves, breaking moves, refusal moves, cooperative moves, and counter-surveillance moves'. Avoidance moves refer to changes in the location or time of an activity so as not to be under surveillance.[7] Piggybacking and switching involve tactics of masking oneself to surveillance or switching places with an individual of interest. Distorting moves attempt to confuse the surveillance mechanism by manipulating the data that the given system gathers. Blocking and masking moves aim to prevent the surveillance mechanism from being able to obtain the information. Breaking involves rendering the surveillance device inoperable. Refusal moves refer to the decision not to participate in a surveillance mechanism that requires consent. Cooperative moves entail working with sympathetic agents within the surveillance apparatus. Counter-surveillance is a tactic that makes use of other types of surveillance in order to shift the balance of power in the relationship between the surveilled and the watcher.

The acceptance of surveillance without reservations

As noted above, the first public CCTV cameras only came into use in Slovakia at the beginning of the 21st century. Moreover, public cameras comprise only one portion of all the cameras that monitor public and semi-public spaces. Cameras have become an integral part of the urban landscape. The habituation of citizens to the presence of these devices has led to the normalisation of CCTV surveillance and its acceptance. This attitude is epitomised in the opinion quoted here:

> I think that using CCTV cameras is positive, especially if the police watch the feeds live and then they can take action if they see that something unlawful is going on. I don't really see any negative sides. I am not worried about the fact that I can be on the record. (Interview ID 35, male, 49 years, entrepreneur)

[7] Avoidance moves also involve the 'displacement of crime' [Eck 1993], whereby criminal activities shift to a different location after the installation of a new CCTV camera on a certain street.

Compliance with surveillance is characterised by two features: trust in the effectiveness of the surveillance technology and the 'nothing to hide, nothing to fear' mentality. Cameras are perceived as a legitimate law enforcement tool that is able to provide more security without any additional social costs. This is especially true for public cameras operated by the municipal police, which with a live camera feed should be able to intervene when necessary. However, empirical studies from Western countries question the effectiveness of public camera schemes on the reduction of crime and their preventive effects [Cameron et al. 2008; Ditton and Short 1999; Gill and Springs 2005; Wells, Allard and Wilson 2006], with some exceptions when it comes to vehicle and property crimes [Piza et al. 2019]. Trust in camera systems is therefore irrational, based on the positive image ascribed to cameras by politicians and security entrepreneurs and on its symbolic value as a discursive object, which is deployed in public debates as a reaction to perceptions of crime [Norris 2012: 40].

This is combined with the 'nothing to hide, nothing to fear' narrative, in which an accepting citizen claims that, seeing herself as a law-abiding citizen, there is nothing problematic about being the subject of a 'surveillance gaze'. The social effects of surveillance, such as 'social sorting' (categorising personal data into specific categories with the aim of controlling and managing individuals and societies) [Lyon 2003: 2], are not considered since its effects are often invisible at first sight. This mentality leads to the general 'banality' of camera surveillance, a qualitative characteristic of the ordinariness and ultimate goodness of this measure [Goold, Loader and Thumala 2013: 983–984]. Surveillance has been internalised and has become a banal part of everyday life in the public sphere.

The acceptance of camera surveillance is reinforced by a specific personal experience and its perception, in which the camera gaze is appropriated for protection and feelings of safety. A respondent from eastern Slovakia living in a town with a Roma settlement believes that the installation of cameras in the town centre brought more security:

> I don't have any problem with these cameras; I think it is good that they are there. In the past, there were not any cameras, and it would happen that you got mugged or assaulted. But now they are there, and it is a bit better. Therefore, I think that they helped. I would like to see more cameras in places where Roma live … I feel threatened by them. (Interview ID 2, female, 22 years, student)

The support for CCTV surveillance is the result of a perception of a real and direct threat, and it becomes a projection screen for the resolution of fears and feelings of unsafety. The respondent's real-life perception is that the streets where she walks became safer after the installation of cameras. This, however, does not mean that crime rates in the town, and on the monitored streets for that matter, have decreased. The installation of cameras brings with it the problem of crime displacement: the movement of crime from monitored to unmonitored public

areas [Johnson, Guerette and Bowers 2012]. Nevertheless, in this case the surveillance mechanism is instrumentalised by the citizens, and that leads to its acceptance.

This instrumentalisation of camera surveillance and demands for more cameras for the purpose of crime-fighting is guided by racially informed moral panic about the Roma, which are stereotypically viewed as perpetrators of crime and as individuals who behave in indecent ways. According to Fiske, surveillance is a mechanism of imposing norms upon those 'who have been othered into the abnormal' category and are often the objects of increased surveillance [1998: 81]. In the case of Slovakia, this otherness category of abnormality is often connected to the Roma minority, who are considered unfit to live and function with normal society by a large number of Slovaks.[8]

Compliance with camera surveillance is also connected with the protection of personal property. Trusting in the panoptic effects of cameras, individuals make use of them to decrease their own fear of crime or fear of getting their property stolen:

> I notice the cameras because of my car … I park my car where I work. Therefore, I try to park the car in a place where I can be seen on the camera. (Interview ID 50, female, 32 years, reception manager)

Conversely, the trust in its panoptic effects works both ways. The same respondent was the culprit of a car accident, hitting a parked car when parking her own car in the town centre:

> I was thinking about whether I should run away or leave a note for the owner. Then I looked around and saw that there was a camera that has footage of me hitting the other car. So I decided to leave a note for the driver. (ibid.)

Acceptance means that the respondent believes that the camera schemes are both legitimate and effective. This results in the modification of behaviour when under the gaze of the camera and expectations that other people would do the same.

Acceptance is also connected with the expected behaviour of others when under surveillance. The belief in the panoptic effects of camera surveillance is linked to expectations of 'normality' and of what is considered a normal appearance and normal behaviour. One respondent discusses her neighbour, who rejected the introduction of cameras in their apartment building:

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[8] The results of the survey conducted by the Institute of Public Affairs in June 2019 showed that 60.8% of young Slovaks between the ages of 15 and 19 would not want Roma as their neighbours. The full results can be found at: http://www.ivo.sk/8561/sk/aktuality/obcianske-spolunazivanie-ocami-tinedzerov-sprava-zo-sociologickeho-vyskumu.

> She said that she did not want to be on camera; she did not want anyone looking at her. But she has two daughters who always used to bring in these boyfriends who are pricks and came in drunk, puked all over the building, and argued all the time. Once they smashed the front doors. These kinds of people are against cameras. If you are a normal person, you consider the camera a help. Cameras ensure that people do what they are supposed to do and don't do what they shouldn't do. (Interview ID 39, female, 53 years, manager)

To the 'accepting citizen', objections to camera surveillance are considered to have ulterior motives. They are presented as 'not normal'. A normal citizen who has 'nothing to hide' also has 'nothing to fear' from surveillance, which is believed to enforce normality and prevent undesirable behaviour. If somebody refuses to consent to the disciplinary ritual, then she has something to hide.

Surveillance, but not at any cost

Surveillance is not always supported at any cost. A 'negotiating citizen' who on the surface has a 'nothing to hide, nothing to fear' mentality has limits to what invasion of privacy she will accept. These limits relate to three situations: the place where the surveillance takes place, the purpose for which the surveillance is carried out, and the extent to which the surveillance is controlled by the state. An example of the sense of place is the distinction between the private and the public sphere:

> Personally, I don't care; let's put them everywhere! We can talk about privacy in our houses, but it is different outside. When we are on the streets, we are controlled by other people and we lose our privacy automatically anyway. (Interview ID 24, male, 24 years, shop assistant)

There is a clear identification of places where cameras are perceived to be legitimate and where their legitimacy is questioned. There is the realm of the public space, where respondents have different privacy expectations than in their private realms (their homes, where they have a right 'to be left alone'). The sense of place where monitoring should not take place extends to semi-public places such as public transport (trains and public buses were mentioned in the interviews) and certain parts of shopping malls (such as in the proximity of changing rooms).

The privacy doctrine suggests that there is a difference between the private and public realms. In the public realm, a certain 'degree of access and participation by the others must be accepted' [Silva-Tarouca Larsen 2011: 12]. However, the divide between these two realms is not straightforward and has a normative aspect. Nevertheless, this does not mean that privacy has no value in the public space. In that environment, citizens have a reasonable right to public anonymity and to remain 'nameless' in the face of other actors, such as the government

and its institutions [Slobogin 2002: 238–239]. Its protection is therefore desirable since camera monitoring has its ethical implications. Maintaining the dignity and autonomy of the individual is linked to the ability to make decisions concerning herself, her body, and her data, and to protection against unwanted scrutiny and judgement [ibid.: 185].

The acceptance of surveillance is also dependent on its declared purpose and the trust of the individual in the possibilities of meeting that purpose. The declared purpose of public camera systems is to prevent criminal behaviour and to provide a new tool with which to solve crime. As already discussed, the effectiveness of camera systems in meeting those aims is contested by empirical studies. Similar doubts about effectiveness are a characteristic of the 'negotiating citizen':

> I am really indifferent about the use of CCTV cameras. I can't really recall any arguments that would persuade me that it is great to have, nor the ones that would suggest that it is negative and evil. It might help catch some criminals after the deed, but I am not sure whether it can really help stop a crime while it's happening. I haven't seen any data, so I can't really say. (Interview ID 43, female, 26 years, NGO employee)

These accounts suggest that acceptance is dependent on the belief that cameras work and are effective. The problem of effectiveness is closely linked to the problem of transparency or a sense of control. The interviewees hinted at a lack of awareness of the positions of cameras, a lack of knowledge of the procedures concerning recordings (such as their storage and the transfer of information to other law enforcement agencies), the non-existence of public discourse on the effectiveness of their use, and the non-existence of schemes of effectiveness evaluation by the municipal police.

Murakami Wood and Webster argue that it is more important for law enforcement authorities to show that they are 'doing something' against crime and thus that they have something to show to the public. The 'stage-set security' or 'security theatre' 'gives us symbols of safety in a society in which everything is seen as a potential source of risk and where fear dominates. It assuages our fear of the dangerous other and society as a space of negative possibilities in a risk society' [Murakami Wood and Webster 2009: 263]. This applies to various activities: from full-body scanners at the airport to the ever-increasing numbers of CCTV cameras in our cities.

The effectiveness issue is corroborated by the personal experience of certain respondents who are aware of the presence of cameras in certain locations, and who have witnessed illegal conduct but did not see the desired reaction from the police. This is illustrated in the following story:

> I know exactly where the cameras are, but I don't think that they are very effective, because I used to work in a bar. There were often fights on the streets, but the police never came even though it was right under the camera. (Interview ID 54, female, 23 years, student)

When the effectiveness of the system is doubted, there is a decrease in trust and support for camera surveillance. Cameras should not be perceived as an end in themselves. They are not a panacea. The effective functioning of public camera systems is dependent on the attentiveness of its operators and timely reactions from the municipal police to the ongoing criminality. In this sense, the support for camera surveillance is closely linked to the credibility and trustworthiness of the police and their ability to make use of the technology and react accordingly and promptly. Even though surveillance is normalised, the 'negotiating citizen' questions its place, purpose, and transparency.

Refusing surveillance

Camera surveillance is not considered to be just a positive mechanism, even by people who have 'nothing to hide' and consider themselves law-abiding citizens. For them, being under constant surveillance leads to feelings of uneasiness. The 'objecting citizen' refuses camera monitoring on the grounds of it being an invasion of autonomy and a presumption of guilt:

> I don't find the use of CCTVs in public that positive. I do not feel that it helps prevent criminality. I think that criminality is actually on the decline, but the cameras are still widely used. And I don't think that this decrease is related to the use of cameras. I consider CCTV to be some kind of presumption of guilt. Everybody is suspicious. (Interview ID 22, male, 27 years, PhD student)

Combined with the violation of personal autonomy, this criticism also questions the effectiveness of surveillance, most importantly in emphasising the 'displacement of crime'. This refers to crime relocating itself to places that are not under constant surveillance. Maximum security could only be achieved if there were cameras everywhere, which is not a desirable scenario in the eyes of 'objecting citizens'.

Individuals who object to camera surveillance engage in some of the tactics of everyday struggle against surveillance. The most frequently mentioned tactics fall into the category of avoidance movements, whereby individuals either refrain from certain behaviour or avoid places where they are conscious of being under surveillance:

> In my hometown, my friend showed me all the cameras in the city, some of which were hidden. In the main street, when I am in a pub and need to go out for a cigarette, I am very aware of whether CCTV is present there. In that case, I will look for an ashtray. If there isn't one around, I'll not smoke rather than be caught throwing my cigarette butt on the ground. (Interview ID 8, female, 22 years, HR firm employee)

Respondents recognise the panoptic effects of camera surveillance, which leads to their management of the digital self, such as the inhibition of behaviour of not smoking in front of a camera if there is no ashtray outside even when the original plan was to go outside for a cigarette.

The 'objecting citizen' is aware of surveillance and its possibly negative effects. Increasing technological advancement has brought the introduction of more sophisticated cameras, which have the ability to turn and zoom and to provide high-quality recordings. More profound knowledge about camera surveillance and its technical aspects appears to result in more questions and objections.

Conclusion

The culture of surveillance refers to the manner in which surveillance is 'imagined, and experienced, and about how mundane activities ... are affected by and affect surveillance' [Lyon 2018: 2]. The experience of living within post-communist surveillance culture is not straightforward; it is the result of a twofold legacy that manifests itself on the societal level. Pop-Eleches and Tucker [2017] identify living through communism and living in a post-communist country as two different experiences that have shaped the attitudes of citizens in these countries. Low levels of social capital and interpersonal trust persisted in the post-communist period and did not fundamentally increase through the process of democratization [Uslaner and Badescu 2003]. The reduction of the deficient social capital continued even more with a combination of increased elite corruption, lethal violence, and increasing social inequality [Karstedt 2003]. This created a specific situation for interactions with surveillance, and specifically camera surveillance, which is installed for specific crime-fighting purposes.

For the purposes of security, technological surveillance is desired for the purposes of fighting and deterring crime [Svenonius, Björklund and Waszkiewicz 2014] as well as supplementing relatively low interpersonal trust [Szrubka 2013]. However, as the analysis of the attitudes and experiences of Slovak citizens showed, it does not translate into unconditional support for camera surveillance. Citizens are not just passive objects of surveillance; their attitudes depend on their surveillance capital [McCahill and Finn 2014] and specific individual knowledge, attitudes, and experiences with cameras. The experience of the surveilled subject is an experience of exposure and interaction [Ball 2009].

Despite its inherent limitations, stemming from the methodological design of the research and inability to make generalisations from it for all of society, this article creates a typology of interactions with camera surveillance and their rationalisations. 'Accepting citizens' comply and are normalised to be accepting of surveillance, which is perceived in a positive light as a tool for the normalisation of the behaviour of others. Accepting citizens trust in the effectiveness of cameras, and they perceive them as a technological fix to a specific security problem,

as theorised by the post-communist surveillance culture literature. The demand for more cameras for the purposes of fighting crime is connected to demands to normalise the behaviour of others, which is most visible in the perception of the Roma minority as perpetrators of crime and is connected to racist stereotypes of indecency.

The other two categories diverge from these expectations. 'Negotiating citizens' have objections to where the cameras are installed, what purpose they serve, and how they are controlled. 'Objecting citizens' reject camera surveillance on the grounds that it is an invasion of personal autonomy and is ineffective in its stated purpose of deterring crime. Both objections and negotiations come from an interplay of a variety of attitudes, thought processes, and personal experiences. The prevalence of the individual types of citizens within the general population remains to be researched further by means of representative quantitative research.

Nevertheless, within post-communist surveillance culture, citizens also demand effectiveness, transparency, and knowledge about surveillance practices, even if they are not voiced explicitly in the public sphere. The individual processes of interacting with the camera systems are more complex, and policies aimed at combating crime with technology should therefore address this complexity, provide more transparency, and create effective evaluation schemes. Both transparency and accountability are required in order to keep the balance between surveillance and democracy [Haggerty and Samatas 2010] and to guarantee the sustainability of individual rights and liberties.

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Climate Change and the Transition Movement in Eastern Europe: The Case of Czech Permaculture*

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Abstract: This paper focuses on a grassroots community movement addressing climate change: the transnational Transition (Towns) movement. While this movement has mainly spread to Anglophone countries, it is almost entirely absent from Eastern Europe and the Czech Republic in particular. The aim of this paper is to explain why the Transition movement—a grassroots community initiative—has not been successfully adopted in the post-socialist Czech Republic, and why the issue of climate change has not become an important frame for the local permaculture movement which introduced the idea of Transition to the country. The paper presents an analysis of ideological frames and framing processes of the local movement. Reasons identified for the movement's absence from the Czech Republic include the fact that it was largely overshadowed by the broader post-socialist transformation in Eastern Europe, that there was little public awareness of climate change and no real culture of community organising in the post-socialist period, and that a strong climate scepticism was promoted by Czech political elites. Other reasons relate to the ideological frames of the local permaculture movement, which is centred more on prognostic and mobilising frames, combined with a positive agenda and an emphasis on practical activities, and revolves around individualised strategies and frames in which permaculture and a nature religion (Anastasian spirituality) are linked to the concept of a 'family homestead'. The research draws on in-depth interviews with permaculture practitioners, media analysis, the study of documents, and participant observation.

Keywords: climate change, social movements, Transition, community, permaculture

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Introduction

Scholars and politicians have been discussing climate change as a serious environmental and social problem since the late 1980s. The academic consensus is that global climate change is a fact given the evidence of the increasing temperature of the atmosphere and oceans, the widespread melting of ice, and rising sea levels. Global warming is mostly caused by greenhouse gases being released in increasing volumes into the atmosphere as a result of the burning of fossil fuels. According to climate scientists, there is clear evidence of the human impact on the climate. Some of the consequences of global climate change include an extreme rise in temperatures and drought accompanied by flooding, which in some regions has caused malnutrition, starvation, death, migration, and poverty [IPCC 2018]. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), it is necessary to limit warming to 1.5°C and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon dioxide emissions have nevertheless continued to increase year on year [IPCC 2018].

Although IPCC scholars, state politicians, corporations, and transnational organisations are the main players in negotiating climate change, various social movements have also become involved in this issue and since 2006 have come to form a new transnational movement focused on climate change [Dietz and Garrells 2014]. The climate movement has never been a homogeneous one, with a single collective identity to unite behind and a shared ideology or strategy [Caniglia, Brulle and Szasz 2015: 243]. There have always been multiple streams within the movement: first, there is the moderate branch of the movement, which sees the solution to global warming as lying within the existing social order; and second, there is the radical wing, whose approach to climate change is part of a systemic critique of capitalism and neoliberalism [Dietz and Garrells 2014; Cassegard et al. 2017]. There is also a wing made up of non-protest movements that focus on practical changes that emerge from the bottom up, such as grassroots community initiatives and lifestyle movements, the most visible example being the Transition (Towns) movement.

Climate change and the related activism have become a topical issue in the Czech media, especially since the extremely hot summer of 2018, the publication of the IPCC report, and the climate protest initiated by Swedish teen activist Greta Thunberg. However, there is a lack of research on climate activism in Czech scholarship. When this paper was begun in autumn 2018, there were not many movements yet dealing with climate change; but by the time the text was being revised in spring 2019, numerous initiatives, groups, and protest organisations had emerged. These processes, however, have not yet been addressed in academic research.

Work has been done on the radical environmental movement in general [Novák 2017], on the climate-sceptic countermovement [Vidomus 2018], on various aspects of environmental movements, mostly from the perspective of social-

movement organisations (such as Greenpeace, the Green Party, Nesehnutí, etc.), and on protest events and tactics [Binka 2010; Císař 2011; Fagan 2004; Maslowski 2009]. Novák [2017] is currently working on research concerning the climate justice movement led by the Czech group Limity jsme my (which in English calls itself 'Limits Are Us'), which organises climate camps and protests against coal-mining companies. But there has been no work on non-protest climate movements. This paper focuses on the Transition movement in the Czech Republic.

A look at the Transition Network map[1] showing Transition initiatives and hubs in countries around the world reveals that there are many in Western Europe, but in the East the map is almost empty and there are only a few scattered initiatives. The majority of initiatives were active in anglophone countries at the beginning of the movement [Bailey, Hopkins and Wilson 2010], and nowadays four Western European countries (Italy, France, Great Britain, and Germany) are home to about forty-eight percent of all the initiatives within the Transition network [Feola and Him 2016].

Why have there been so few Eastern European Transition initiatives? And why has no community movement focused on climate change emerged in the Czech Republic?

This paper describes the Transition movement internationally and its spread into the Czech Republic through the permaculture movement. It outlines theoretical approaches to the study of non-protest social movements—i.e. grassroots community initiatives and lifestyle movements—and then turns to the view of climate change and community-organising in post-socialist countries and the Czech Republic in particular. The core of the paper involves an analysis of the ideological frames and framing processes of the local permaculture movement and an explanation of which frames are successful in mobilising people.

This paper seeks to explain: (1) why the Transition movement, which is based on grassroots community initiatives, has not been successful in the Czech Republic, and (2) why the climate change issue has not become an important frame for the local permaculture movement.

Climate change and community activism: the Transition (Towns) movement

Originating in Great Britain in 2006, the Transition movement focuses on supporting local responses to the risks related to climate change and peak oil and promotes ideas such as resilient communities, sustainability, relocalisation, and self-reliance. The movement's founder, permaculture teacher Rob Hopkins [2008], argues in *The Transition Handbook* that society is heavily reliant on oil and global chains of food production and this leaves communities in a highly vulner-

[1] https://transitionnetwork.org/transition-near-me/.

able position if there were to occur any sudden shocks, fuel scarcities, or market instabilities and in the face of climate change effects. For this reason, he proposes that people build resilient communities by learning new skills and engaging in local cooperation and become increasingly reliant on local resources. Hopkins considers local communities the most significant agents of change [Hopkins 2008: 69]. The movement's actors promote energy descent planning and food localism, and they use activities centred on local food (for example, farmers' markets, permaculture projects, and community-supported agriculture) as strategies to reconnect people with nature and as an access point for attracting more participants. Transition initiatives use consensus decision-making and participatory democratic processes [Quilley 2015; Barr and Wright 2012]. Rooted in permaculture, a movement with an optimistic focus on action aimed at sustainability and personal responsibility that prioritises practice over theory [Ferguson and Lovell 2013; Lockyer and Veteto 2013], the Transition project has spread quickly across Europe and North America and is organised as a transnational movement by the Transition Network in forty-three countries through more than eleven hundred local Transition initiatives [Feola and Him 2016].

The idea of Transition spread to the Czech Republic through the permaculture movement, which has been active locally since the 1990s and has links to the West through personal ties and contacts. The Permakultura CS association organised a conference on the subject of Transition Towns in November 2014, which I attended. It was a two-day event with talks on the psychology of transition, Transition initiatives in Slovakia, discussions on permaculture's relation to the Transition movement, a presentation of community-supported agriculture (CSA), and panel discussions with members of some Czech eco-communities. In the event advertisement the 'Transition Movement' (an unknown concept locally) was defined as the transformation of society towards sustainability, self-reliance, and community activities. After the event, a booklet containing the papers presented by the conference participants was published and is still available for reading.[2]

Denisa Tomášková, a principal proponent of the Transition movement in the Czech Republic, and a permaculture teacher with a background in international education and experience in permaculture, presented her experience with founding a local Transition initiative in Boskovice in 2008, a small town in the South Moravian region. She later told me:

> 'I followed the model; I bought the Transition handbook and tried to do it. We had several meetings, repeatedly. We had discussions and also activities. We planted trees and plants. People gathered at the community centre, and we organised activities with children. But the initiative ceased to exist after I moved for family reasons to another town.'

[2] *Transition: Změna k lepšímu. Sborník příspěvků ze setkání na Toulcově dvoře 2014*. Prague: Permakultura CS.

No other initiative has originated in Czech society. Even though there has not been a public debate on communities transitioning towards sustainability and the issue of climate change in the Czech Republic, the theoretical work of Rob Hopkins is not unknown in Czech academia. Fraňková [2015], who studied the theory of localisation and local economy, quotes Hopkins' *Transition Handbook* as one of six significant books by authors who address localisation. Fraňková gives five examples of some localisation initiatives in the Czech Republic, mostly in the Brno region: LETS (local exchange trading system), CSA, social enterprises, car sharing, and a self-reliant community initiative. She does not, however, link these practical examples to any theoretical concepts, including that of the Transition movement.

In Czechia, we cannot speak of the Transition movement per se—I will try to explain what the local interpretation of term transition is—so I will instead study the permaculture movement that brought the idea of Transition to the Czech Republic and its relation to climate change.

Theories on social movements, community initiatives, and lifestyle movements

Several theoretical approaches to studying social movements in general have been developed: (a) the American paradigm of political opportunities and resources, (b) the European tradition of new social movements, and (c) theories of social movements in relation to globalisation and global social movements that proliferated at the end of the millennium (e.g. della Porta and Tarrow [2005], Guidry, Kennedy and Zald [2000], McDonald [2006]). The latter approach reflected a new wave of movements that primarily manifested themselves as enormous protest events organised around the summits of global actors such as the IMF or the WTO. However, as Mario Diani argues, less attention has been paid to the influence of global issues on civic organising at the local level [Diani 2005]. According to him, '[s]ocial movements have always developed in a creative tension between the local and the national (now also increasingly the transnational) sphere.' [Diani and Rambaldo 2007: 766]

The theoretical approach to the study of global protest events leaves out at least two things: First, it omits the localist strategies of global movements. Ayres and Bosia [2011] point out that protest summitry and large-scale mobilisations have overshadowed localism as an alter-globalisation strategy and that several global movements focus on local everyday activities and micro-resistance against neoliberal globalisation, as exemplified by the global food sovereignty movement Vía Campesina. Starr [2010], who has published on the alter-globalisation movement, recently also addressed 'local food' initiatives and studied them as a social movement with polycentric networks of various organisations. Despite acting locally, these grassroots initiatives associate with transnational networks of movements, including groups in both the Global North and the Global South.

Second, all of the main social movement paradigms focus on public protest and social movement organisations, but they overlook movements that are less formal, focused on community initiatives or lifestyle activism, not engaged in public protests, and interested in positive change and practical activities. Community initiatives and lifestyle movements try to deal in practical ways with various aspects of the mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

A new wave of community-based sustainable initiatives has arisen that are promoting change towards sustainability.

> These projects often have global environmental concerns at their heart, and express both an urgency for action (especially on climate change) and a belief that the local or small-scale offers the potential for this action to have a more substantial impact ... Many of the participants in these initiatives are disappointed by government's lack of action on climate change. [Middlemiss 2018: 173]

They promote bottom-up participation instead. There are numerous recent examples of grassroots community initiatives addressing the reduction of ecological and carbon footprints collectively: Transition towns, community gardens, community energy projects, CSA, local organic food systems, low-carbon eco-housing, community composting programmes, local currencies, and permaculture projects, etc. [Seyfang 2011].

Community participation is understood as a significant way to achieve low-carbon practices and the carbon reduction transition [Middlemiss and Parrish 2010]. The communities involved do not have to be place-based; there are also communities centred on interests or practices – for example, the CSA, an instrument of the food sovereignty movement, which is a global network of peasants, farmers, and consumers. According to Sage [2014], growing food and organising events around food can induce civic engagement and help enhance social capital by sharing seeds, recipes, techniques, and experiences.

Other forms of non-protest movements that are focused on social change are represented by the lifestyle movements that were defined by Haenfler, Johnson and Jones [2012], who in their work seek to bridge the concepts of social movement and lifestyle. Lifestyle movements (LMs) are social entities that 'consciously and actively promote a lifestyle, or way of life, as their primary means to foster social change' [Haenfler, Johnson and Jones 2012: 2]. Examples of LMs are localvores, voluntary simplifiers, people who adopt the 'green life', etc., who want to change the world by creating a coherent lifestyle and identity. LMs 'are explicitly social change-oriented, often extra institutional, and persist over time—but are more individualistic rather than collective, personal rather than social, and tend to emphasise cultural targets rather than the state' [ibid.: 3]. Within lifestyle movements action occurs individually, in an everyday private setting, through cultural practices and goals. LMs have a diffuse structure of informal social networks and events, movement authorities, shared media, and lifestyle

movement organisations, such as NGOs, civic organisations, and small businesses. In relation to climate change, LMs focus on mitigation and living low-carbon lifestyles—for example, by practising veganism and a car-free lifestyle, eating local food, growing one's own food organically, and engaging in do-it-yourself practices and self-reliance.

The idea that it is possible to have an impact on climate change and the environment through one's everyday activities is part of the concept of environmental citizenship [Dobson 2007]. It is based on the recognition that every action, including private decisions, has public environmental effects because in our lives we consume natural resources and produce waste. Dobson suggests calculating the environmental impact of different actors (individuals, companies, organisations) on the basis of their ecological footprint, which is defined as the environmental space an actor occupies. The concept of environmental citizenship calls for a combination of activities in both the public sphere (protests, acts, demands) and the private sphere (consumption of food, energy, clothing, etc.).

Methods of data collection and analysis

In my research into the permaculture movement I used a combination of methods: ethnography, the study of media, in-depth interviews, and media analysis. I conducted participant observation at sustainable demonstration sites, at public events organised by the movements, and at festivals, conferences, courses, open-garden days, and various meetings, and I carried out informal interviews throughout the course of my fieldwork. I studied print and media materials produced by the movement, such as websites, magazines, interviews, video-recorded talks, and books written by the movement's leaders, and I conducted twelve in-depth interviews with 'the movement's intellectuals' (permaculture teachers, organisers, and active practitioners), who were selected on the basis of ethnography and the study of movement literature and websites.

I conducted a qualitative media analysis to examine how permaculture and related movements are represented in alternative media (*Pravý domácí časopis* / The Real Homemade Journal) and used ethnographic content analysis to collect and analyse the qualitative data [Altheide 1996]. I created a protocol of analysed units using the programme MaxQDA.

In order to examine the movement's ideological frameworks, values, and mobilisation strategies, I drew on the concept of social movement frames developed by Snow and Benford [1988; Benford and Snow 2000]. Framing is an active, dynamic phenomenon that involves the agency of organisations and movement activists and contention over the construction of reality. The framing process gives rise to 'collective action frames' that simplify and condense aspects of the world in order to mobilise supporters. 'Collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns

of a social movement organization.' [Benford and Snow 2000: 614] Frames help make events meaningful and are used to organise experience in action. Movement leaders are important actors in producing meaning for supporters. Snow and Benford [1988] developed a social movement model consisting of three main ideological frames: (1) diagnosis of a problematic event or aspect of society; (2) prognosis—a suggested solution to the problem and a clarification of what is to be done, including goals, strategies, and tactics; and (3) mobilisation—motivating participants to support the action.

The absence of the Transition movement and a climate change frame in Eastern Europe and the Czech Republic

There are several reasons why the idea of a grassroots community movement that would tackle climate change and peak oil—Transition—has not spread to the Czech Republic. One is a reason more generally applicable to Eastern Europe, and the others are local and limited to the Czech Republic: the different notion of transition in Eastern Europe, the Czech climate scepticism expressed by political elites, and the absence of community organising in the country

Eastern Europe and the Transition movement

With respect to Eastern Europe, an explanation as to why the permaculture concept of transitioning to a low-carbon society has not been taken up outside Western Europe is provided by Fox [2013], who studied rural peasants in Romania after accession to the European Union. There are two very different notions of 'transition' in the East and the West. In post-socialist discourse, transition meant the *transformation* of society as a whole out of the state-socialist past into a modern, civilised, Western capitalist future. On the other hand, the British permaculture movement had a different vision and was seeking a transition to a resilient and sustainable society, before which lie the challenges of climate change and peak oil. This vision is very different from the socialist one and difficult for Eastern Europeans to identify with.[3]

[3] A similar situation happened, for instance, in South Africa in the 1990s, where transition meant a transition to democracy, not a transition towards sustainability [Swilling and Annecke 2012]. 'Whereas the European discussion is largely about *low-carbon transition* as an alternative to preserving the status quo, in many other parts of the world that are exploited for their resources the alternative to transition may well be collapse.' [ibid.: xvii] Swilling and Annecke stress the importance of 'just transitions' and addressing inequalities both between states and within them.

Hana Klenovská [2011], in her master's thesis on the Transition movement in the United Kingdom, mentions three Transition initiatives in Eastern Europe: in Latvia, Poland, and Hungary. When she asked activists in those three countries what were the major challenges to founding local initiatives, they said that the problem was that there was very little public awareness of climate change and peak oil and a lack of literature on these issues in 2010. The language barrier may have been the reason why the Transition initiatives spread first and mostly to anglophone countries. People in Eastern Europe did not know about these problems, and they did not feel the need for change. Another difficulty, Klenovská argues, was that between 2008 and 2011 society's main focus was on the economic crisis and unemployment. Eastern Europeans, furthermore, saw themselves as having a lower standard of living and level of consumption, and not as causal agents of overconsumption. The themes of energy and climate change were understood as a luxury. Other aspects of post-socialist countries Klenovská mentioned as significant include the still weak state of civil society, the absence of a 'culture of community' in towns or neighbourhoods, and the growth of individualism. After decades of state socialism, a resistance arose to communitarian ideals such as togetherness and the common good. On the other hand, there are numerous positive resources conducive to a possible transition in Eastern Europe: there seems to be greater resilience in the population, resulting from a strong tradition of self-help, do-it-yourself, and self-reliance and the practical skills possessed by older generations, and facilitated by a well-developed system of public transport and local food production [Klenovská 2011].

This argument is supported by the research of Petr Jehlička, who has studied the self-provisioning of food in Eastern Europe. He has shown that household self-provisioning is more widespread in post-socialist countries than in the West because it was a common practice under the state-socialist regime. Jehlička, Kostelecký, and Smith [2013] show that food self-provisioning is still practised by a significant proportion of the Czech population across all social groups, and, rather than being motivated by economic needs, it serves as a hobby and a way of accessing fresh food. Vávra, Daněk, and Jehlička [2018] argue that regular gardeners contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, even though their motivation for food self-provisioning is not an environmental one.

There are, however, people in the Czech Republic who have a post-materialist orientation in life and who are interested in environmental issues, quality of life, and alternatives to consumer lifestyles. These people have been studied by Hana Librová [1994, 2003; Librová et al. 2016], who frames their activities through the concepts of voluntary simplicity, ecological luxury, and the generational transmission of simplicity. Librová et al. [2016: 264] and her students Kala, Galčanová, and Pelikán [2017] argue that Czechs who practise the environmentally-friendly lifestyle of voluntary simplicity do so intuitively, and they found that the participants in their research ('the colourful') could not be identified with any movement. The argument that these people do not identify with any movement

is based on a research sample from 1992, before transnational movements had spread to Czechoslovakia. That movement emerged in the Czech Republic later in the 1990s, but Librová based her subsequent research on the original sample.

Czech climate scepticism

The issue of climate change is not only an issue in the realm of (natural) science, as approaches to it have also been strongly shaped by culture, political contestation, and contrasting worldviews [Hoffman 2017]. The Czech Republic has been specific in that strong climate scepticism has been observed among its political elites and right-wing think-tanks and has been expressed foremost by former president Václav Klaus [Vidomus 2018]. These individuals and groups have in a public and organised manner consistently questioned the importance of climate change and its anthropogenic origin. Climate scepticism was strongest in the years 2007–2008[4] and it was led by think-tanks that brought in important sceptics from abroad to speak on the issue in the Czech Republic. The sceptics presented their arguments as expertise, which created the impression that climate science is the subject of controversy and differing opinions, and this then led to the postponement of any political activity on climate change. 'The expertization (not necessarily professionalization) is thus an efficient strategy of deproblematization of the phenomenon that environmental movements and climatologists find significant.' [Vidomus 2018: 384] Public opinion on the issue of global warming was influenced by the Czech president and related sceptics questioning the existence of climate change. A quantitative sociological study (European Social Survey Round 8) showed that most Czech people are not interested in the issue of climate change (53%), 44% are not afraid of climate change, and 60% do not feel personally responsible for climate change [Plecitá 2017].

More detailed research by Krajhanzl, Chabada, and Svobodová [2018] found that 29% of the Czech citizenry deny the existence of climate change, while 52% think that climate change is happening and 19% do not know. Even people who are aware of the risks connected to climate change are not concerned about its impact on their life and their environs. Czech people place the responsibility for dealing with climate change primarily on the state, industrial corporations, and global players such as the European Union, while assigning the least responsibility to individuals. Czechs are very sceptical of what impact their individual behaviour could have on mitigating climate change. Only a minority of Czech citizens claimed to have changed their consumption behaviour, and 64% of people do not take climate change into consideration when making consumer choices.

[4] Climate movements and the Transition movement also emerged and started to grow in Western Europe also emerged around this same time.

Meanwhile, an even smaller share of the population engages in any political activities focused on climate issues: 13% of Czechs reported doing voluntary activities, 10% said they had given financial support to climate protection, and 9% claimed to have signed a petition [Krajhanzl, Chabada and Svobodová 2018].

Political participation and community organising in the Czech Republic

Another reason climate change is not an issue in the Czech Republic is the weak level of political participation and lack of a communitarian approach in the country. Linek et al. [2017], in a study of citizenship and political participation in the Czech Republic after 1989, found, in agreement with international research, that post-socialist citizens have less interest in politics than their Western counterparts and do not participate in political activities, whether that means political parties or civil society organisations. Czechs have a much lower rate of non-electoral civic participation than what is observed among citizens in Western democracies, even though the Czech rate of participation is the highest among the post-socialist countries [Linek et al. 2017: 202].

Environmental movements, Císař [2013] notes, have for the most part been especially transactional in their activism, which in Eastern Europe and the CR in particular predominantly takes the form of small advocacy organisations with no membership base that are funded by external agencies and European Union programmes. Grassroots movements are less significant in this region, and those that have become visible are radical or oriented around protest and direct action.

Community organising is not a practice that has been typically observed in the Czechia. Frič and Vávra [2012], who studied Czech communities in the context of voluntary activities, argue that the Czech Republic is still quite far from being 'a society of communities'. While a strong tradition of Czech cooperative movements emerged in the 19th century, these civic activities were severely restricted under the communist regime and associations of citizens were limited to mass organisations centrally controlled by the regime. Most of the civic NGOs that arose after 1989 are sports, recreational, and hobby organisations. Although there are about a hundred thousand such associations, Czechs are not very good neighbours. They are inclined to paternalism, and they like to rely on the state to take care of them. The local political culture is characterised by a social and not group-based collectivism. The many years of socialist atomisation of civic society led to a culture of separation, where the individual is perceived as existing outside the bonds of any community [Frič and Vávra 2012], and the word 'community' itself is almost entirely absent from everyday communication. The Czech public do not understand the terminology of communitarianism, a philosophical ideology that sounds too much like communism for it to be able to enjoy any popularity among Czechs. There is no ambition to build a society of communities the way there is in the United States or Great Britain [Frič and Vávra 2012].

The Transition and permaculture movements in the Czech Republic

The idea of Transition was brought to the Czech Republic by the permaculture movement. Permaculture is based on a design system developed by Mollison and Holmgren [1978] in 1970s Australia to sustain the diversity and resilience of ecosystems while integrating people and their needs into the local landscape. Permaculture puts emphasis on practice over theory [Ferguson and Lovell 2013] and can be understood as a methodological tool kit for individuals, communities, and ecovillages [Veteto and Lockyer 2008].

Permaculture spread to the Czech (and Slovak) Republic in the mid-1990s, when some British teachers came and taught the first permaculture courses. The first students of those courses founded the Czechoslovak association Permakultura CS. Since then, the association has organised permaculture courses, including the internationally recognised 72-hour Permaculture Design Course (PDC), and they have created a network of permaculture demonstration sites with thirty-five projects. I visited or met people from places such as Pozemská zahrada, U Jiříka, Těšíkovská bydlina, Zahrada na kopci, Farm Jagava, and others). The Permakultura CS association has published books (*Encyclopaedia of Self-reliance for the 21st Century,* edited by Eva Hauserová, the association's chairperson) and booklets in a series titled *The Key to Self-reliance*, and in the past it also had its own magazine—*The Keyhole*. The association organises annual two-day conferences on topics related to permaculture (permaculture design, permaculture farms, etc.) and runs a website with information about permaculture, events, publications, etc. Permakultura CS also serves as an arbiter of the movement's values, as it certifies demonstration permaculture sites and each year awards a diploma to selected projects.

The association's work is also based on networking. It promotes many other issues, movements, and organisations related to permaculture and supports eco-communities and community-supported agriculture schemes.[5] Permakultura CS also promotes community-garden activities, such as Kompot and Kuchyňka, two community gardens located in and near Prague. Some of these garden projects are directly organised by members of Permakultura CS, such as Garden Bohumila in the Prague district of Kolovraty or the Garden Without Fences in Žamberk.

[5] It is difficult to call the eco-communities in the Czech Republic a movement as they are scattered and form rather small groups of friends or families who want to live communally in rural areas (for example, Mrkev, Těšíkovská bydlina, Ekozámeček Stroupeček, Sklenářka). Some projects have already ceased to exist, while others strive to continue. By my estimation, in the autumn of 2018 there were at most ten eco-communities in the country with approximately two hundred inhabitants in total.

CSA activities are supported by the food sovereignty movement, represented by NGOs such as the Association of Local Food Initiatives, CSA associations, or Cooland, who focus on the right to healthy food produced in a sustainable way. The first impulse to start Czech CSA initiatives came in 2009 from France. Since then, the concept has continued to spread, and in 2018 there were about thirty communities with roughly six hundred members.

Today, Permakultura CS has about seventy members and about 1,500 followers. It has an affiliated association, the Academy of Permaculture, and both organisations are dominated by women—the core organisers are mostly middle-aged or senior women, some living with children, some without. As well as these two female-led organisations, there are also some teachers who operate independently. The most influential practitioner of permaculture in the Czech Republic is Jaroslav Svoboda, famous for his book *Ecogardens*, which many exponents of this practice quoted as their 'bible'. He is a charismatic figure who has managed to attract many people to permaculture, and he has organised his own courses since 2005, even though he is not internationally certified through the PDC to teach permaculture. He has approximately three thousand followers. He was the only permaculture leader who refused to give me an interview, but I was able to attend some of his courses (Permaculture in the City in 2014 and Planting a Tree Spiral in 2015). I also analysed his extensive website, Ekozahrady.cz, interviews that have been conducted with him, and articles he has published in the media (on the national radio services and in, for example, the magazine *Regena*).

Svoboda owns about nineteen hectares of fields in the northern part of the Czech Republic, where he has planted thousands of trees, grows a vegetable garden, and lives in a 'natural' home with his partner. Together they work on his vision of creating a paradise on Earth. In his teaching and writings, he has linked permaculture to spirituality and, in particular, to Anastasian spirituality. Anastasians are a Russian environmental and spiritual movement that wants to create a new alternative society by building 'family homesteads'—local, self-sufficient, one-hectare lots [Pranskevičiute 2015]. Anastasians are the fastest-growing ecovillage movement in contemporary Russia and the movement has now spread to the West. It was inspired by the teachings of Anastasia, a fictional character in the novels of Vladimir Megre. Jaroslav Svoboda, who created a Czech version of these 'family homesteads', has managed to attract many people to attend his courses, where they learn how to build family homesteads from scratch on a plain field.

The ideological frames and values of the permaculture movement

According to Snow and Benford [1988; Benford and Snow 2000], analysing the main ideological frames of a movements starts with defining the problem the movement is concerned with and what the movement aims to change. While for the transnational Transition movement it is climate change and peak oil, this frame is largely absent from the Czech permaculture movement. Even though many of the movement's activities are practically oriented towards mitigating or adapting to climate change, global warming as such is not mentioned.

For the Czech permaculture movement, the issue of climate change is relevant in reports brought back from international 'convergences', but not in the Czech movement. The only exception is an article by a permaculture lector Marek Kvapil, who studied philosophy and sociology and who writes about the conse-

quences of climate change for the local climate, agriculture, and the adaptability of various crops.[6] After a very hot and dry summer in 2018, another permaculture teacher, Denisa Tomášková, reacted by offering a practical course on water management and protecting gardens against drought.

Asked directly about the global context of permaculture activities, the Czech permaculture teachers I interviewed replied that while the global situation is important, they feel it counterproductive to scare people with negative facts. They then quickly switched to talking about local situations, either in a village or a private garden, and how to design the particular site in a sustainable way. One female permaculture teacher told me:

> People expect from us recipes and instructions for cultivation, combinations of plants, and they attend the course with the understanding that they will learn there. In PDC, we find that people want to compost and plant beds and they do not want to listen to the global situation of the world's environment and resources.

The permaculture teachers also said that Czech people see the Transition and the climate change issue as 'something foreign and prescribed from above, and that they do not want to adopt some recipe from Great Britain'. (E. H., a permaculture leader, female, senior) The idea of permaculture (and the related issues and frames), however, also did not originate in the Czech Republic. Another permaculture teacher talked about the local Czech situation: 'Compared to England, people here under socialism were accustomed to a DIY approach, making, mending, growing food in their mini gardens. So, we are not that nervous about climate change. In Britain, there are people who aren't even able to plant a seed. Here people have gardens, have chickens, have contact with that.' (D. T., a permaculture teacher, female, middle age)

In permaculture circles climate change is understood more in terms of its negativity and how that is communicated to us by the media:

> We hear about the problems of the contemporary world all the time: biodiversity loss, erosion, climate change, unemployment, migrants, health problems—you can probably name a lot of other pieces of scattered information that the media throws at us. What can a person do with such a flood of negativity? We can give up and stick our heads in the sand, or we can do something meaningful. For me permaculture is a source of this kind of meaningful activity. (I. M., a permaculture teacher, female, middle age)[7]

[6] Kvapil, M. 2014. 'Permakulturní zahradničení v době klimatické změny.' (Permaculture gardening in the age of climate change) Retrieved 10 April 2016 (http://www.potravinovezahrady.cz/permakulturni-zahradniceni-v-dobe-klimaticke-zmeny/).

[7] Mertová, I. 2016. 'Zemřel Bill Mollison, zakladatel permakultury' (Bill Mollison, the founder of permaculture, has died) Retrieved 2 June 2018 (https://www.permakulturacs.cz/article/91/zemrel-bill-mollison-zakladatel-permakultury).

This quote demonstrates both the movement's disinterest in politics, with climate change being perceived as a part of high politics rather than an everyday problem, and the practical and DIY orientation of the permaculture movement, with very little focus on critiquing larger issues and those responsible for them. In other words, permaculture's diagnostic frames are weak. There are aspects of the critique and diagnostic frames that can be found in prognostic framings, making these two types of frames sometimes difficult to separate. For example, when the movement's leaders criticise consumerism, the unsustainability of industrial agriculture, low-quality food full of chemicals, and subsequent lifestyle diseases, they contrast these with their own visions of a clean environment, healthy and quality food, biodiversity, improved wellbeing, and so on.

The themes and goals of the permaculture movement are healthy soil/land, healthy food, sustainable food production (either via sustainable agriculture or subsistent homesteading), healthy and sustainable lifestyles, and community building (in the organisational and women-led branch of the permaculture movement).

In the analysis, I uncovered three main values or principles and divided them into separate blocks: (1) sustainability and a turn towards nature; (2) self-reliance and autonomy; and (3) a change of consciousness (or spirituality). This first value is a strong relationship with nature, encompassing a desire to be natural and an effort to improve the environment. It is related to a desire to care for the Earth, but also to more self-interested values—being healthy, living in harmony with nature. This value is expressed in the act of growing one's own food (or sourcing it from local organic farmers), moving out of the city, living in close contact with nature in naturally built houses made of renewable materials, and so forth. It can also be framed as espousing sustainability and living lightly on the Earth.

Permaculture has sustainability in its name: permanent (agri)culture. Originally, it dealt with sustainable, permanent agriculture and homesteading, but later applied its principles to other spheres of human life. Permaculture has three ethical principles: Earth care, people care, and fair share. The principles of permaculture design include, for instance, using renewable energy, systemic thinking, collaborating with nature, seeing a problem as a solution, producing no waste, and using and valuing diversity.

> A permaculture garden is inspired by nature. This means that, when creating it, we try to imitate the natural ecosystem, its structure, function, and the relations between its elements. (M. K., a permaculture teacher, male, in his 30s)

The second value is represented by the freedom and autonomy of individuals, freedom from the influence of state institutions and corporations, and self-reliance. It is about independence, responsibility for the self, and a belief in creativity and in the agency of the individual to change society by changing one's lifestyle. This value is manifested as self-provisioning, or avoiding corporations when buying food, and in subsistence homesteading, seed-saving, do-it-yourself

activities, creating an 'island system'—a house with an independent energy system—and so on.

The term self-reliance is very popular in Czech permaculture and related initiatives. It figures in the names to related associations (Academy of Self-reliance), publications (*Encyclopaedia of Self-reliance*), and courses and educational activities (Course of Self-reliance), and it has been the thematic focus of some festivals (Allfestival in Litoměřice 2016). Self-reliance may be motivated by worries about the future and alienation:

> People are scared of both some catastrophe and worsening conditions, and they really want to learn things that would enable them to live in harsher conditions. And they are fed up with the sense of alienation involved in using things when they don't know how they are made. (E. H., a permaculture leader, female, senior)

In the permaculture of post-socialist Czech society, self-reliance is mostly framed in relation to the individual; it is not understood as the self-reliance of whole communities.

A change of consciousness represents a reflective approach to life and an interest in the roots of social issues. The particular form of spirituality is not an imperative part of permaculture. Czech permaculturalists are inclined towards various forms of spirituality (from atheist to Catholic or Buddhist), but the Anastasian natural spirituality has predominated. The teachings of Svoboda, the independent permaculturalist, are imbued with spirituality and transcendence:

> Working with a seedbed transforms into a sacred ceremony, sowing the seed into an initiation of new creation, and the fertilising of the soil expresses an elemental desire for life. The harvest is a joyous celebration of abundance, composting waste is a transformation of death into a new and stronger life. The gardener, who feels his divine position in the midst of the rotating Universe, knows that all substance is just an energy that he is creating with his own mind.[8]

Framing processes: diffusion, resonance, and the transformation of frames

The frames that spread to the Czech Republic from abroad after 1989 included: the idea of permaculture, which originated in Australia; the concept of family homesteads from Russia; and eco-communities, the models for the Czech versions of this idea being Findhorn in Scotland, Sieben Linden in Germany, and

[8] Svoboda, J. 2015. 'Úvod do vědomého pěstování zeleniny v živé zahradě, uprostřed vesmíru.' (An introduction to the conscious cultivation of vegetables in a living garden, in the middle of the universe') Retrieved 1 May 2016 (http://ekozahrady.com/zelenina_uvod.htm).

Zaježová in Slovakia. The frames are foreign but have been diffused to the local level, where the form they take may be quite different from the original ones. The success of the movement´s frames is dependent on their resonance within the local culture. Resonance refers to how effective they are and the size of their mobilisation potential [Benford and Snow 2000].

Resonance is related to credibility, which depends on frame consistency, meaning how well the values, claims, and activities of the movement correspond to each other. If there is a discrepancy, the movement is not as credible, the frames resonate less, and mobilisation is more difficult [Benford and Snow 2000]. For instance, one of the main values is sustainability, but by migrating to rural areas people become dependent on cars, which are not a sustainable means of transportation. This dependency also contradicts the value of self-reliance because of the dependency on oil. So, individuals (or families) who prefer a sustainable lifestyle without a car and are against car pollution will have difficulty accepting the idea of moving to a rural area.

The credibility of a frame depends also on the correspondence between the framing and events in the outer world. When there is more evidence, the framing is more credible. The movements try to show that the change they promote is possible. For permaculture, correspondence exists at the diagnostic level: nature is being destroyed, we eat unhealthy food from the supermarket—these are things that everyone has encountered. Prognostic and motivational framing is also related to things that exist in the real world. The movements' leaders present examples of good practices and point out that change is possible and real. They give examples from their own life (how they built a natural home, how they grow vegetables and plant trees, etc.), and they collect information and promote demonstration sites—houses and gardens that function according to permaculture principles, and examples of successful projects and eco-communities abroad.

The credibility of a frame is also influenced by the perceived credibility of the leaders: who in order to enjoy credibility must have built a reputation for themselves, prove themselves as experts, and must be knowledgeable. The leaders of the permaculture movement tend to use their official education less in their self-narratives, with some of them even distancing themselves from it. They instead present their alternative education in the sphere of permaculture as more important. Their credibility is, however, mostly based on their authenticity and practical experience—take, for instance, this description of a permaculture leader:

> Since the mid-1990s, she has been living permaculture. She sets up gardens and community networks. She picks wild and cultured plants. She makes ayurvedic balms and preserves old and rare varieties of seeds. As an employee and volunteer, she has worked in many NGOs, and as a volunteer she has lived on many farms around Europe. She is a founding mother of numerous specific projects; for instance, Mrkev, an organic vegan farm and association, and the Garden of the Good, a public demonstration garden. She loves Ayurveda and teaches it and permaculture under

> the label Permayoga. She has almost no free weekends because she is giving talks, lectures, teaching, and passing on what she knows, likes, and is meaningful to her. (magazine *Pravý domácí časopis* /The Real Homemade Journal, 6/2015: 4)

The movement's credibility receives a further boost when celebrities are invited to take part in book launches or talks (for instance, the famous Czech actors Jaroslav Dušek and Simona Babčáková are known for their support for alternative projects).

Besides credibility, the salience of the frames is another important factor that influences a frame's resonance. Salience is related to meanings of how ideas are important in the lives of those the mobilisation is aimed at. Salience depends on the commensurability of experience, on how compatible the frames are with one's personal experience, or whether they are too abstract and remote from life. The experience of local people with self-provisioning, self-help building, and other DIY activities was strong under socialism. However, homesteading and farming in rural areas was rare because of the collectivisation of land implemented by the communist regime. Furthermore, the transnational movements introduced the new idea of sustainability and have reframed DIY activities as organic, sustainable, and ecological.

Salience depends on narrative fidelity, which refers to how well frames resonate with great cultural narratives and ideologies. In the Czech Republic, the ideas of freedom and individualism introduced by the leader of the 'family homestead' concept were the ones that resonated most. Also, the definition of a family homestead represents a transformation of a local frame. Svoboda defines the homestead not as a traditional village house or a farm suited for animal breeding. Rather, in his view it should be a 'great paradisal natural oasis', a space created on a former farmland, a fenced one-hectare area in which you plant trees, and, later, maybe a natural house (or a trailer). On a radio programme, Svoboda stated, 'I personally do not see the homesteading of past centuries as a model, because it involved too much labour. That seems pointless to me. The hard work was focused on growing food for feeding animals and handing over most of the crop to the gentry.'[9]

Svoboda believes that everyone should buy at least a one-hectare plot of land, and he claims it should be the right of every Czech citizen to own a hectare of land. The premise of his idea is that it is possible to be completely self-sufficient with one hectare of land, and he does not count, for instance, the increased environmental footprint of people having to get around in cars if they live in a rural area. The current ecological footprint of the Czech population is 5.36 global hectares per person (while the available bio capacity is only 2.47) [Vačkář 2019]

[9] Interview with permaculturalist J. Svoboda on Czech Radio 2, 17 May 2016. (https://dvojka.rozhlas.cz/zakladem-permakultury-je-aby-se-vegetace-starala-sama-o-sebe-7482188).

because of imported goods and industry. So, his vision of environmental citizenship is based much more on rights than responsibilities.

Svoboda has also transformed the local frame of voluntary simplicity[10] and replaced it with the rhetoric of individualism and self-interest.

> The main aim is to ensure the prosperity of humans so that they do not have to impose a false modesty on themselves and deny their own needs … The best thing about permaculture design is that it does not force people to do something because it is good for the natural environment. That would not really work. If you look around, you understand that the pursuit of self-interest is primordially encoded within human nature. … Protecting and improving the environment is a bonus, a pleasant and inseparable side effect.[11]

This individualistic frame has proved to be a successful mobilising strategy.

Svoboda was successful in two framing processes: (1) frame bridging—he bridged the frames of the quasi-scientific permaculture approach with those of Russian natural spirituality and other influences (channelling and human design); and (2) frame amplification—he amplified the frames of permaculture through the use of positive vocabulary and concepts such as joy, natural abundance, prosperity, love, creativity, and harmony. For him, in conformity with the views of the Anastasians, the family homestead is primarily a 'space of love'. He promotes the view that we are all the creators of our own paradise on Earth, and we should follow our vision of a life in harmony with nature.

However, the concept of a family homestead with a one-hectare area is an issue of frame disputes, both within the permaculture movement and from the perspective of other movements. For instance, the leader of the food sovereignty movement sees it as a very selfish idea: 'It is escapism and separation from society, and I take a negative view of this. It is a way backwards. It might be good for an individual, but not for a society, and I want change for the whole of society.'

Conclusion

There are several reasons why the concept of a grassroots community movement tackling climate change and peak oil—Transition—has not taken hold in the Czech Republic. While there are some reasons that apply more generally to Eastern Europe as a whole, others are specifically Czech, and others are inherent to Czech permaculture.

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[10] Voluntary simplicity was the main research frame used by Librová [1994, 2003] and her students to study environmentally-friendly lifestyles.

[11] Svoboda, J. 2009. *Kompletní návod k vytvoření ekozahrady a rodového statku*. (A complete guide to creating an eco-garden and family homestead), 10–11.

The overall situation in Eastern Europe, with its grand transformation from socialism to capitalism and democracy, has overshadowed the new concept of a Transition to a sustainable future, which was developed in the Western countries. In the transformation years Eastern Europeans also had little awareness of climate change issues. The absence of a culture of community-organising and the low level of non-electoral political participation in this region had a further impact on the local level, and in the case of the Czech Republic and in the environmental sphere these activities were then further stunted by the strong climate scepticism on the part of its political elites, foremost among them the former president Václav Klaus.

There are also other reasons that are more inherent to the permaculture movement. The frame analysis here showed that the movement is oriented towards practical change, and that they incentivise action rather than complicated theoretical frames, such as climate change. A critique of the system or particular institutions is missing to some degree; permaculture proposes solutions and practical guidelines for everyday life. The framing is usually positive with efforts to motivate people in a good way and not frighten them with negative messages. Prognostic and motivational framing dominate over diagnostical, and it has resonated in the Czech Republic because of a local culture of DIY activities and self-provisioning.

The permaculture movement has used frames of sustainability, self-reliance, and spirituality as the main values and ideas guiding their activities. The frame most successful in having a mobilisation effect—in terms of adherent numbers—has been the 'family homestead' frame related to individualism and natural spirituality, using positive and transcendental vocabulary and attracting people with ideas of freedom, abundance, joy, and love. This frame rejects voluntary modesty and rather promotes the pursuit of self-interests. It is aimed at individuals and has resulted in individual action in private settings, not in collective efforts and building communities. The other branch of permaculture, women-led and organisational in form, supports community projects (eco-communities, community gardens, and community supported agriculture), but it would be an exaggeration to speak of a larger community movement or community activism in the Czech Republic. Eco-communities are of small importance and are not very numerous; the number of community gardens and CSA is growing, but these are communities oriented around interests in leisure or consumption, and they are not for the most part political or civic initiatives aimed at contributing to public debates on climate change and sustainability. Therefore, in general, I would prefer to call Czech permaculture a lifestyle movement focused on individual practices and lifestyles instead of a community movement. Czech permaculturalists fulfil their environmental citizenship in the private sphere, and much less so in the public sphere by engaging in organising activities with others.

The conclusions of this paper may contribute to the ongoing debate on how to communicate about climate change with the public and how to mobilise people into action. The way to attract members of the Czech population seems to rest

on the use of positive vocabulary and not frightening them with catastrophic scenarios. Moreover, a stress on practical activities resonates among Czechs; therefore, a focus on adaptation strategies (for example, how to retain water, fertilise the soil, or support local farmers) might be successful. It is important to resonate with local values and experiences. Voluntary simplicity, even though it is crucial to reducing the carbon footprint, is not a term with any mobilising force; thus, I believe that mobilisation on climate change mitigation will be more difficult, as people do not want to limit their consumption. It seems that the value of modesty needs to be communicated by means of other terms, be it minimalism, energy descent, health, self-reliance, or the future of our children.

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A Self-determined Profession? Perceived Work Conditions and the Satisfaction Paradox among Czech Academic Faculty*

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Abstract: While the Czech academic profession faces a range of challenges and problems, quantitative surveys indicate a relatively high level of high job satisfaction among academic faculty. This article addresses this 'satisfaction paradox' by exploring the perceived work conditions of Czech academics based on their own reports. The data for this study included academics' (N = 1202) qualitative responses to open-ended questions regarding the main problems and benefits of their current academic work and workplace. Content analysis was used to categorise the respondents' answers. Academics reported heavy workloads (26.5% of participants), a lack of financial resources (26.3%), poor-quality leadership (23.7%), excessive administration (16.3%), and job insecurity (10.9%) as the most problematic aspects of their workplaces. In contrast, academics reported that good social relationships in the workplace (46.3%), autonomy of academic work (41.8%), personal fulfilment (28.9%), and work/contact with students (25.3%) were the aspects of their workplaces they valued most. These positive features appear to be prevalent, as most (80%) academics reported overall satisfaction with their work. The authors draw on job demands–resources theory to suggest that the relatively high level of satisfaction is due to (still) high levels of key job resources that support the intrinsic motivation of academics despite an environment that can be considered suboptimal in some aspects. They also point to inequalities in job demands and job resources between subgroups of academics and highlight key systemic issues that should be addressed to improve the work conditions at Czech public higher education institutions.

Keywords: quality of work life, academic staff, job satisfaction, higher education, public universities, job demands, job resources
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Introduction

In recent decades, academics in public universities worldwide have had to accommodate changes in their work environment driven by increasing massification, internationalisation, and an emphasis on the profitability of higher education (HE) [Bentley et al. 2013; Teichler et al. 2013]. These changes have been conceptualised as emerging 'academic capitalism' [Slaughter and Leslie 1997], the rise of the 'world-class university' [Shattock 2017], or 'accelerating academic time' [Vostal 2016], all of which point to similar processes within HE governance that impact HE workplaces and individual academics. In the context of these trends, academics and academic institutions have been increasingly expected to act as entrepreneurs competing for monies from external grants and contracts, endowment funds, industry partnerships, tuition fees, and other revenue-generating activities [Slaughter and Leslie 1997]. Relatedly, HE systems increasingly emphasise the international prestige of HE institutions, represented by position in university rankings, which increases competition between institutions for outstanding academic talent able to attract external funding and deliver the desired 'excellent' outcomes [Shattock 2017]. All these changes result in a loss of 'temporal autonomy' for academics as well as HE institutions and lead to the overall acceleration of academic work, regardless of the impacts such acceleration has on the quality of work outcomes or the well-being of academics [Vostal 2016].

These processes have taken place globally, albeit at different paces in various countries. In some countries, such as the UK, the USA, and Australia, this transformation of public universities started decades ago and has been related to numerous changes in how academic employees experience their work environment, including a deterioration of the social climate, work autonomy, and overall job satisfaction and a considerable increase in workload and job stress [Gillespie et al. 2001; Fredman and Doughney 2012; Kinman and Jones 2008; Tytherleigh et al. 2005; Vostal 2015; Shin and Jung 2014]. However, increased workload and the acceleration of academic work may be less detrimental when both academics and HE institutions retain enough autonomy and flexibility to react to these changes. In some countries, academics have maintained a high level of individual autonomy and positive professional identity and generally report a high level of satisfaction with their academic work despite these changes [Bentley et al. 2013; Teichler et al. 2013].

In accordance with these global trends, Czech public universities have also undergone a substantial transformation in the past 30 years, from extreme state control during the communist era to a 'professor-oriented' system characterised by considerable autonomy for universities [Dobbins and Knill 2009; File et al. 2009; Pesik and Gounko 2011; Prudky et al. 2010; Melichar and Pabian 2007] and individual academics [Matějů and Fischer 2009; Zábrodská et al. 2016]. Recently, however, Czech public universities have undergone further transformation aimed at strengthening their position in the global market [Dvořáčková et al. 2014; File et al. 2009; Pesik and Gounko 2011], which appears to mirror to some degree

the changes that took place in developed countries decades ago [Molesworth et al. 2010]. These changes have included, for example, the massification of Czech HE [Prudký et al. 2010], an increasing emphasis on 'excellence' in research [Sima 2013], and the introduction of research assessments based on quantifiable metrics [Linková and Stöckelová 2012; Linková 2014; Good et al. 2015]. There has also been a shift in government funding, from institutional to performance-based external funding [Jonkers and Zacharewitz 2016], accompanied by higher demands for efficiency and public accountability [Linková 2014]. At the same time, despite these changes, a governance system based primarily on academic self-government has been preserved [Pabian, Hündlová and Provázková 2011].

Although these changes have partially originated in the academic community and are aimed at improving the overall performance of the HE system, they have also had some controversial effects. First, it has been argued that these changes have led to a growing workload among Czech academics as a result of the increased emphasis on high-quality research [Sima 2013] and its rigorous evaluation [Linková and Stöckelová 2012; Linková 2014] and increasing competition for relatively scarce financial resources [Dvořáčková et al. 2014; Matějů and Fischer 2009], which has been accompanied by a continual rise in the student/teacher ratio [Prudký et al. 2010]. Czech academics have already long been dissatisfied with their remuneration [Paulik 1995; Tollingerova 1999; Mateju and Vitásková 2005; Matějů and Fischer 2009; Zábrodská et al. 2016] and report being relatively unhappy with academic leadership [Matějů and Fischer 2009; Zábrodská et al. 2016]. However, Czech academics also have considerable prestige in Czech society [Czech Sociological Institute 2013], and they have consistently reported numerous positive characteristics of their academic workplaces, including high levels of academic freedom and autonomy [Tollingerova 1999; Matějů and Vitásková 2005; Melichar and Pabian 2007; Zábrodská et al. 2016] and a positive social climate with a relatively low incidence of hostile behaviour [Zábrodská et al. 2016; Zábrodská and Květon 2012, 2013].

Aims of the study

In our previous article based on a quantitative survey [Zábrodská et al. 2016], we presented a fairly positive picture of Czech academic workplaces that contrasts with the findings of some other studies that focused on a more systemic perspective [e.g. Linková and Stöckelová 2012; Linková 2014; Vohlídalová 2018]. Although the academics participating in this study also reported negative features, including relative dissatisfaction with pay, mixed evaluations of leadership, and pressure to produce, the positive image prevailed, as the participants expressed high levels of job satisfaction and work engagement, relatively low levels of stress, and a number of positive aspects of their academic workplaces, including high individual autonomy and perceived quality of work, role clarity, and a strong social community. These results received some critical comments [Vostal 2017; Chylíková 2017;

Dale 2017], which—apart from methodological issues—raised two overarching questions: 'Why do Czech academics report such a high level of satisfaction with their jobs?' and 'Are there not more problems in Czech academic workplaces?'

In this paper, we try to address both these concerns by providing somewhat different perspectives on Czech academic workplaces than those we offered in the questionnaire study. Rather than using a 'top-down' approach based on the responses to the predetermined questionnaire scales as our data, we implement a 'bottom-up' approach based on the comments the Czech academics provided that described the positive and negative aspects of their work environment. We interpret these comments within the framework of job demands-resources theory (JD-R) [Bakker and Demerouti 2014, see further] to generate an explanation of the 'satisfaction paradox' we observed, that is, why Czech academics predominantly report satisfaction with their work despite the numerous problems they see in their workplaces. We also explore how different groups of academics vary in how they experience job demands and access job resources. The main research question that directs our study is: 'What are the key job resources and job demands in Czech public university workplaces from the perspective of academic employees?'

To conceptualise the results of the study and understand the processes by which the academic work environment may affect the occupational well-being of academic employees, we implemented the framework of the JD-R theory, which is currently one of the key models used to explain the relationships between work environment and occupational well-being [Bakker and Demerouti 2014; Mudrak et al. 2018; Zábrodská et al. 2018]. JD-R theory predicts that the work environment affects employees differently through what are described as 'dual processes'. Specifically, increased job demands (i.e. job aspects that require sustained effort and are associated with physiological and psychological costs) have been found to lead to higher experienced stress through a 'health impairment process' related to exerted effort and energy. By contrast, job resources (i.e. factors functional in achieving work goals, reducing job demands, or stimulating personal growth) lead to higher work engagement and job satisfaction through a 'motivational process' that involves fulfilling the basic psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence [Bakker and Demerouti 2014; Mudrak et al. 2018]. In the context of the academic workplace, the key job resources have been conceptualised as, for example, organisational and social support, growth and career advancement opportunities, autonomy, role clarity, and performance feedback, while job demands include work overload, work-home interference, and job insecurity [Bakker et al. 2005; Boyd et al. 2011; Mudrak et al. 2018; Rothmann and Jordaan 2006; Zábrodská et al. 2018].

We implemented the JD-R framework in our previous quantitative analyses of the survey data to propose a complex model of academics' well-being [for details, see Mudrak et al. 2018] and to examine predictors of academics' burnout [see Zábrodská et al. 2018]. In the following analysis of qualitative comments, we aim to further explicate the paradox discussed in our previous studies, namely,

why Czech academics appear to be satisfied in an environment that is, arguably, rife with problems [see Vostal 2017]. Building from JD-R theory, we suggest that this phenomenon is due to the (still) high levels of key job resources that support the intrinsic motivation[1] of academics and provide conditions in which job satisfaction can flourish despite an environment that can be considered suboptimal in some aspects. At the same time, we point to inequalities relating to which subgroups of academics experience job demands and access job resources, and we highlight key issues that should be addressed in order to improve the work conditions at Czech public HE institutions.

Research design

Data collection

The data used in the study were collected in November 2014 using an electronic questionnaire. In the data collection process, we approached almost all (20 000) Czech academics through their contact data, which are publicly available on university websites. A detailed description of the data collection process has been provided elsewhere [Zábrodská et al. 2016].

Respondents

In total, 2229 academics fully completed the questionnaire, and of these 1202 answered at least one of the open-ended questions. Specifically, 1072 participants included comments on positive aspects of their workplaces, and 1146 participants described negative aspects of their workplaces. The demographic characteristics of the sample of academics who answered at least one open-ended question are described in Table 1.

Methods and data analysis

The electronic questionnaire that participants were provided with was made up of two parts. The first, quantitative section of the questionnaire included a wide

[1] We use the distinction between intrinsic x extrinsic motivators throughout our analysis. We herein refer to the conceptualisation provided by the self-determination theory [Gagné and Deci 2005] that was further implemented by the JD-R theory used in our analysis. As the key distinction, intrinsically motivated behaviour is 'self-determined' in the sense that it originates from within an individual and his or her 'basic needs' of autonomy, relatedness, and competence. In contrast, extrinsically motivated behaviour is controlled by external forces, such as rewards and punishments, or social norms and expectations.

Table 1. Demographic and employment characteristics of the sample (in %, N = 1202)

Gender	Men	Women				
	55.6	44.3				
Age	≤ 29 y.	30–39 y.	40–49 y.	50–59 y.	60–69 y.	≥ 70 y.
	13	42.7	16.1	15.6	10	2.7
Position	PhD/ Postdoc	Lecturer	Researcher	Assistant professor	Associate professor	Professor
	24.1	3.2	9.2	46.0	16.5	8.3
Leadership position	University level	Faculty level	Department level	Research team level	None	
	.9	4.7	12.8	16.5	65.1	
Discipline	Humanities/ social sci.	Natural sciences	Technical sciences	Other		
	44.1	28.7	22.7	4.5		
Overall job satisfaction	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied		
	17.4	62.4	18.7	1.5		

range of well-established scales measuring various aspects of the work environment and occupational well-being. The second, qualitative section included two open-ended questions that asked the participating academics to describe the positive and negative characteristics of their academic workplace (see below). A detailed description of the quantitative part of the questionnaire, including a presentation of the key findings, has been provided elsewhere [Zábrodská et al. 2016, 2018; Mudrak et al. 2018]. In this study, we used the results of the quantitative questionnaire to analyse participants' overall job satisfaction and group differences in job satisfaction. Specifically, we divided the respondents into three groups ('very satisfied', 'satisfied', and 'unsatisfied'[2]) based on their self-evaluation of general job satisfaction ('How pleased are you with your job as a whole, everything taken into consideration?'). We then conducted a Chi-square test to assess the distribution of participants from different demographic categories (gender, discipline, position, leadership) in these three 'satisfaction' groups (see Table 2). Next, we conducted a multinomial logistic regression to assess the relative effect of these demographic variables on general job satisfaction (see Table 2). In the next step of the analysis, we compared the relative prevalence of the themes that arose from the open-ended questions (see below) between the differ-

[2] The 'unsatisfied' group comprised participants who rated their general job satisfaction as 'unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied'.

ent 'satisfaction' groups and, on this basis, explored the key issues connected to job satisfaction among our participants.

The qualitative section of the questionnaire represents the principal source of data for the current research. In this part of the questionnaire, we presented the participants with the following questions: (1) What are the three main problems that you currently have in your academic work or workplace? (2) What three main aspects of your academic work or workplace do you value most? Each of these open-ended questions was accompanied by a text box in which the participants were asked to provide their responses. The length of the answers varied from short comments to extensive detailed descriptions of the academic workplace. The text data generated by the participants were processed by means of a content analysis [Stemler 2001; Elo and Kyngas 2008]. Content analysis is 'a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding' [Stemler 2001:176]. In our analysis, we used emergent [Stemler 2001] or inductive coding [Elo and Kyngas 2008], that is to say that we did not approach the coding with predetermined categories; rather, our coding categories were constructed within the process of analysis. We based the coding on the context units, which means that inclusion in a category was based on an underlying idea of the statement, and one statement could be included in several categories. For example, the statement 'Because of the low financial compensation that doesn't even cover my mortgage, I have to have two full-time jobs simultaneously' was coded into the categories: 'High work demands' and 'Insufficient finances'.

The coding process followed several steps. (1) During an initial review of the data, we identified the main categories that were apparent in the data. All the categories that contained more than 5% of the answers (see Table 3 and Table 5) were incorporated into the initial coding scheme. (2) We then applied this coding scheme to the data and categorised each answer on the basis of the coding scheme. Each answer was included in a category when it contained a meaning that was directly related to the main theme or developed the theme in a more specific way. (3) When we encountered a less frequent theme that was not included in the initial coding scheme, we added the theme to the coding scheme as a new category. This approach was employed particularly in the case of problematic aspects of academic workplaces that were perceived with greater diversity by the participating academics. For example, when coding the problematic aspects of academic workplaces, we created 23 additional categories that contained less than 1% of the answers.

As the main outcome of this analysis, we present the relative frequency of the emerging themes and explore in detail the content of these themes. Furthermore, to explore the inequalities present in Czech academic workplaces, we used Chi-square tests to assess the relative distributions of the themes emerging from the content analysis in the basic demographic categories: gender, discipline, and position (see Tables 4 and 6).

Limitations

We believe that there are some unique benefits to using qualitative descriptions from a large number of academics as data, such as in-depth insights and a high level of generalisability. However, this approach has some limitations that should be pointed out. First, our sample is not entirely representative, although the differences from the population statistics were not dramatic [cf. Czech Statistical Office 2015]. Additionally, we aim to provide a descriptive overview of the key job resources/demands in Czech academic workplaces. In this context, we discuss some of the main problems and possible solutions to these problems, but each of these main themes deserves closer attention. Furthermore, the content analysis is to some degree guided by the subjective decisions of the researchers, although it is firmly grounded in the data. Finally, the descriptions of the workplaces represent the subjective perspectives of the participants. We have endeavoured to triangulate our findings with the results of other studies; nevertheless, our results should not be approached as an objective representation of reality but as an insight into how academics perceive their work conditions, which might be somewhat different from the perspective of other actors within the HE system.

Results and discussion

In the following section, we present and discuss the outcome of our analyses. First, we present the quantitative analyses, including the distribution of participants into the 'satisfaction' groups, the overall proportion of academics who contributed to particular themes, and the distribution of the themes based on different demographic groups. Second, we present in more detail the qualitative analyses focusing on the content of the main themes, including the main benefits of academic work as perceived by the participating academics (see Tables 3 and 4), followed by the main problems that the participating academics perceived in the context of their work (see Tables 5 and 6). Overall, the results suggest an interesting paradox that was also noted in a critical review of our previous work [cf. Zábrodská et al. 2016; Vostal 2017]. As we show below, the academics in our study perceived a number of problems in their workplaces, including work overload, a lack of financial resources, low-quality leadership, and excessive administration, among others. However, they also reported a high level of overall satisfaction with their jobs, as 80% of participants reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their academic job.

The level of job satisfaction varied between different demographic groups; we observed significant between-group differences in job satisfaction regarding gender, discipline, and academic and leadership position (see Table 2). The effects of all the demographic variables included remained significant even after controlling for other demographic variables in a multinomial logistic regression model ($\chi^2 = 74.741$, df = 12, $p < 0.001$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.075$, Cox and Snell $R^2 =$

Table 2. Distribution of job satisfaction between groups (in %, N = 1202)

	Not-satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Chi-square test			Multinomial logistic regression		
Whole sample	20.2	62.4	17.4	χ^2	df	p	χ^2	df	p
Men	20.8	59.0	*20.2*	9.715	2	.008	8.648	2	.013
Women	19.5	*66.6*	13.9						
H/S Sci.	20.4	64.7	14.9	16.057	4	.003	11.443	4	.022
Natural Sci.	17.4	59.4	*23.2*						
Technical Sci.	*23.8*	63.4	12.8						
Without PhD	28.7	58.1	13.2	43.806	4	.000	21.054	4	.000
PhD	19.9	65.0	15.1						
Habilitation	11.5	62.5	*26.0*						
Non-leaders	*24.3*	61.5	14.2	31.839	2	.000	11.587	2	.03
Leaders	12.6	64.0	*23.3*						

0.063; see Table 2). This analysis suggests that job satisfaction was most strongly related to academic position: for example, 29% of participants without a PhD reported being unsatisfied, as opposed to 11.5% of participants with habilitation. Similar albeit weaker differences were observed in other demographic categories. Even so, a large majority of academics across different demographic groups reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs. A possible explanation for this 'satisfaction paradox' may be provided by JD-R theory [e.g. Bakker and Demerouti 2014; Bakker et al. 2005, 2007; Boyd et al. 2011; Mudrak et al. 2018], which hypothesises distinctive processes through which the work environment affects occupational well-being, arguing that job resources (i.e. the motivating aspects of a job) have a comparatively greater effect on work engagement and job satisfaction than job demands (i.e. the stressful aspects of a job).

In this context, it appears that Czech academic workplaces provide high levels of key job resources that are crucial for the satisfaction of academic employees, even to a degree that buffers the impact of the negative aspects of the workplaces. The participating academics were relatively consistent in their perspective of the positive aspects of their work, as almost all mentioned one of the four most frequent themes: good relationships in the workplace (46.3%), autonomy of academic work (41.8%), personal fulfilment (28.9%), and opportunities to work with students (25.3%). All these job resources closely align with the definition of the 'motivation process' in JD-R theory, which is hypothesised to be driven by the satisfaction of 'basic human needs', including relatedness, autonomy, and competence [Bakker and Demerouti 2014; Gagné and Deci 2005]. Therefore, based on these findings, we argue that the high level of job satisfaction among our participants can be generally attributed to the fact that they perceive their work as having a high intrinsic value and as personally meaningful, which is facilitated by the key characteristics of the academic work environment that support the actualisation of this intrinsic value. This value is also further corroborated by the observed differences between the satisfaction groups, in which the frequency of the themes related to good relationships, high-quality leadership, and personal fulfilment significantly differed between the satisfied and the unsatisfied groups.

In this way, we may see academic work as predominantly 'self-determined' in the sense that, in our participants' descriptions, the intrinsic aspects of academic work (i.e. doing the work out of interest, enjoyment, identity, or self-development) distinctly override its extrinsic aspects (i.e. working for external reasons, such as money, prestige, or promotion). Intrinsically motivated employees engage in their jobs because they enjoy the content of the work and identify with its core value rather than the material benefits it conveys (which were viewed critically by a large proportion of our participants) [Gagné and Deci 2005]. In this context, we may argue that the ongoing transformation of Czech HE policies should not affect the key job resources within Czech academia (such as the high degree of autonomy among academics, the positive social community, and the

Table 3. Positive aspects of Czech academics' workplaces (in % of all responding participants, N = 1072)

Content category	in %				
	Whole sample	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	p
Good relationships in the workplace	46.3	39.4	46.4	53.4	.021
Autonomy	41.8				
Personal fulfilment	28.9	21.2	28.1	36.3	.004
Opportunities to work with students	25.3				
Achieved results/quality of work	15.2				
Good leadership	10.9	6.4	11.4	14.0	.043
Good work conditions	10.5				
Personal development	8.5				
Travel/international collaboration	6.7				
Prestige of the work/workplace	5.4				
Financial rewards	5.4				
Collaboration with practice	4.5				
Social relevance	4.1	2.0	3.7	7.8	.01

* Note: For the sake of clarity, this and the following tables include only differences significant at $p < .05$ level and do not include categories that were mentioned by less than 3 % of the participants.

Table 4. Main problems in Czech academic workplaces (in % of all responding participants, N = 1146)*

Content category	in %				
	Whole sample	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	*p*
Heavy workload/pressure to produce	26.5				
Lack of financial resources	26.3	36.1	25.1	18.2	.000
Poor-quality leadership	23.7	37.8	23.2	6.8	.000
Excessive administration	16.3	10.9	16.8	21.4	.013
Job insecurity	10.9				
Unsatisfactory collaboration/relationships	10.4	14.7	9.9	6.8	.022
Low research support	10.0				
Unclear/unsuitable criteria for work evaluation	9.3				
Unjust rewards	7.5				
Mediocre students	6.8	4.6	6.6	10.5	.05
Low-quality teaching	6.4	10.5	4.9	6.8	.009
Insufficient material support	5.5				
Low prospects for growth	5.1	8.4	4.9	1.6	.005
Low quality of co-workers/subordinates	5.1				
Work-family conflict	4.7				
Loss of motivation	4.6	8.4	3.6	3.6	.008
Increasing qualification/quality of work	3.1	0.8	2.9	6.8	.002
Developing the workplace/discipline	2.8	.8	2.2	7.3	.000
Nothing	1.7	0.0	1.1	6.2	.000

Table 5. Positive aspects of Czech academics' workplaces (in % of all responding participants, N = 1072): between-group differences

Content category		Gender			Discipline				Position			
	Whole sample	Men	Women	p	Humanities/ Social	Natural	Technical	p	Without PhD.	PhD.	Habilitation	p
Good relationships in the workplace	46.3											
Autonomy	41.8											
Personal fulfilment	28.9	25.5	31.8	.013	26.4	35.1	22.6	.003				
Opportunities to work with students	25.3				29.5	19.2	24.7	.005				
Achieved results/ quality of work	15.2				10.5	19.5	17.9	.001	12.0	12.4	23.4	.000
Good leadership	10.9	9.2	13.1	.029								
Good work conditions	10.5				7.9	11.9	14.5	.017				
Personal development	8.5	5.4	12.4	.000					10.1	9.5	5.0	.045
Travel/international collaboration	6.7											
Prestige of the work/workplace	5.4											
Financial rewards	5.4											
Collaboration with practice	4.5	5.7	2.9	.021								
Social relevance	4.1											

Table 6. Main problems in Czech academic workplaces (in % of all responding participants, N = 1146): between-group differences—first part

Content category		Gender			Discipline				Position			
	Whole sample	Men	Women	p	Humanities/ Social	Natural	Technical	p	Without PhD	PhD	Habilitation	p
Heavy workload/ pressure to produce	26.5	22.5	32.5	.000					30.0	29.3	18.1	.001
Lack of financial resources	26.3								31.2	25.1	23.0	0.47
Low-quality leadership	23.7											
Excessive administration	16.3	19.0	12.9	.006	13.0	21.7	17.8	.004	9.7	12.1	30.6	.000
Job insecurity	10.9	8.4	14.3	.001					17.8	10.5	4.6	.000
Unsatisfactory collaboration/ relationships	10.4											
Low research support	10.0											

Table 6. Main problems in Czech academic workplaces (in % of all responding participants, N = 1146): between-group differences—second part

Content category		Gender			Discipline				Position			
	Whole sample	Men	Women	p	Humanities/ Social	Natural	Technical	p	Without PhD	PhD	Habilitation	p
Unclear/unsuitable criteria for work evaluation	9.3				12.0	6.8	6.8	.013	4.1	12.1	9.9	.000
Unjust rewards	7.5								5.3	9.6	6.2	.046
Mediocre students	6.8								2.5	6.3	12.2	.000
Low-quality teaching	6.4											
Insufficient material support	5.5								4.7	4.4	8.2	.051
Low prospects for growth	5.1								6.9	5.6	2.3	.026
Low quality of co-workers/ subordinates	5.1											
Work-family conflict	4.7	2.5	7.6	.000					4.1	7.1	1.3	.001
Loss of motivation	4.6											
Increasing qualification/ quality of work	3.1								5.6	5.9	1.3	.006
Developing the workplace/ discipline	2.8	3.7	1.6	.000					.06	2.9	4.9	.005
Nothing	1.7											

possibility of developing personal interests, engaging with students on a personal basis, and producing work of subjective quality), as these job resources appear to be the main reasons that Czech academics at public universities engage in their academic work.

However, we could also argue that the changes in HE policies that have been recently implemented [e.g. Dvořáčková et al. 2014; Good et al. 2015; Government of the Czech Republic 2015; Linková and Stöckelová 2012; Linková 2014; Prudký et al. 2010; Sima 2013] might already be affecting these job resources. For example, these changes have introduced the following into the Czech HE system: greater control over academics through a quantitative system of research evaluation, support for competition among academics for limited external funding and a de-emphasis on the intrinsic value of academic work by increasing the focus on the 'usefulness' and applicability of research. It may be argued that these effects are counterbalanced by increased productivity in the Czech HE system [Good et al. 2015]. It appears, however, that after implementing these changes, there has been only a temporary increase in productivity, and academics have also increasingly adopted some unproductive research strategies, such as pursuing evaluation points, emphasising short-term goals, and publishing in predatory journals and citation cartels [Good et al. 2015; Linková and Stöckelová 2012].

Therefore, overall job satisfaction and the positive evaluation of some aspects of the current Czech HE system should not cloud the fact that the participating academics also perceived numerous problems in their academic workplaces. References to workers' high intrinsic motivation are sometimes used to justify poor work conditions [Kim et al. 2019] but should not prevent these problems from being addressed. A majority of participating academics referenced at least one of the five main problems (see Table 5): high workload (26.5%), lack of financial resources (26.3%), low-quality leadership (23.7%), excessive administration (16.3%), and job insecurity (10.9%). When we assessed the relative distribution of the main reported problems in the satisfaction groups, lack of financial resources and low-quality leadership were especially overrepresented in the unsatisfied group.

To obtain a better insight into the conditions at Czech academic workplaces, we considered it useful to examine the group differences in the relative prevalence of the reported benefits and problems according to gender, position, and discipline. Above all, there were a number of differences related to position, especially in the reported problems. For example, participants without habilitation reported high workload, lack of finances, and job insecurity significantly more frequently, whereas participants with habilitation reported excessive administration as the most frequent concern. Regarding gender, women more frequently experienced excessive workload, higher job insecurity, and work-family conflict. There were relatively few notable differences regarding discipline. These findings support conclusions of other studies conducted in Czech as well as international HE contexts [e.g. Bazeley 2003; Cidlinská 2019; Cidlinská and Vohlídalová

2015, 2017; Linková and Červinková 2013; Mason and Goulden 2002] that point at similar inequalities based on gender and seniority [for detailed reviews see Mudrák et al. 2019a, 2019b].

Perceived benefits of academic work: relationships, autonomy, and personal fulfilment

In the following part, we explore the main themes introduced above in more detail. First, we focus on what the participants perceived as the main benefits of their work (see Tables 3 and 5). Overall, the study participants reported good relationships with their co-workers as the main positive aspect of their workplace; this benefit was reported by 46.3% of the participants. In this context, the participants referred to a positive social community and productive collaboration by using phrases such as 'friendly atmosphere', 'good relationships', 'collaboration', 'collegiality', and 'teamwork'. Typical statements were: 'My colleagues and I understand each other; we share the same values' (assistant professor, man, social sciences) and '[There are] great people motivated to work with others and a friendly atmosphere between colleagues' (assistant professor, man, humanities). Some participants emphasised not only the positive social atmosphere but also the work outcomes of their colleagues with terms such as 'teamwork', 'hardworking', 'collaborative', '[have] expertise', and 'demanding'. This theme was significantly more frequently reported by satisfied and very satisfied participants, whereas some unsatisfied academics mentioned positive relationships with (some) colleagues as the only positive characteristic of their workplace, or they praised their colleagues for their ability to withstand difficult material conditions. Representative comments include: 'That some people still try to endure it and do something' (associate professor, man, medical sciences) and 'The team members are exceptional personalities with awards in their fields. I appreciate that they work in the department because it is basically voluntary work' (assistant professor, woman, social sciences).

The participants reported autonomy[3] as the second key positive aspect of their academic workplace, with 41.8% of participants evenly distributed along all demographic categories referring to this theme. The respondents appreciated the time flexibility of academic work (such as flexible working hours and independence regarding one's physical presence in the workplace) and the influence they have over the content of their work (including teaching and research), which they were able to adjust according to their personal interests, preferences, and needs. Some relevant responses included: 'I can research what I want, and I can teach what I enjoy. We don't have fixed working hours' (assistant professor, woman, technical sciences); 'It is crucial to have the work done, but you do not have to be

[3] In the HE context, it is important to distinguish between the autonomy of academic institutions and the individual autonomy of academics. Here, we refer only to the latter.

there' (assistant professor, woman, natural sciences); and 'I can steer my career the way I want, and I was able gradually to decide about the content of my work. Now it's an ideal mix' (assistant professor, woman, technical sciences). At the same time, some of the participants, especially in the unsatisfied group, referred to the high degree of autonomy as a potential disadvantage because, without fixed work hours, they spent more time at work: 'I am working from dawn to dusk, so [the flexible working hours] may be not such an advantage after all' (assistant professor, man, technical sciences). In addition, some academics mentioned autonomy as a benefit in a more problematic sense because it allowed them to hold other jobs to earn reasonable living wages: 'More or less, the work allows me to do whatever I want, even have my own business; otherwise, I would not be able to make ends meet' (assistant professor, man, humanities).

A large number of participants (28.3%), significantly more of whom were from the satisfied and very satisfied groups, referred to the positive aspects of work, which we categorised under the umbrella term of personal fulfilment. These participants appreciated the opportunity to engage in academic work that allowed them to follow their personal interests through teaching and research: 'I can fully focus on researching [specific topic], working with large electronic corpuses of published texts, and continuing to work on [name of the publication]' (associate professor, man, humanities). The respondents also described their academic work as interesting, personally fulfilling, and meaningful, as having a real-world impact and applications, and as providing them with an opportunity to be creative and innovative and supporting their personal development: 'It is creative work with practical outcomes and a positive impact on individuals and society' (PhD student, woman, humanities) and 'I had read about the pioneers in my field in grammar school, and I've been lucky enough to work in this field, witness its development, and pass it along to students' (assistant professor, man, natural sciences). However, some of the participants from the unsatisfied group who referred to their intrinsic motivation as a positive aspect of their work also noted changing work conditions that have limited their work engagement: 'I can still pursue the things that I am interested in, but unfortunately, it is possible less and less' (assistant professor, man, natural sciences) and 'I enjoy the content of my work, but the external conditions are depressing' (postdoc, woman, natural sciences).

In relation to the previous category, 25.3% of participating academics (most often from the humanities/social sciences and least often from the natural sciences) specifically mentioned working with students as a positive aspect of their academic work. The participants described various benefits of their engagement in teaching: it gave them a sense of purpose by positively influencing the lives of young people and allowing academics to pass on their expertise: 'Research and teaching go great together; you figure out something, and you can show it off to some real people, not just in articles' (assistant professor, man, humanities). The academics felt that working with students gave their academic work a real-world

impact and contributed to their professional development: 'I am helping future professionals in their development, and because of this collaboration, I develop as well, professionally but also as a human being' (assistant professor, woman, humanities) and 'Our graduates are in high demand, and they bring a lot of benefits to the industry; we have many positive references from businesses' (assistant professor, man, technical sciences). The participants felt working with motivated or promising students to be especially beneficial, as this positively influenced their own motivation: participants noted 'encouragement from the good results of promising students' (assistant professor, man, humanities) or 'excitement of selected students' (associate professor, woman, social sciences).

All these findings are in line with other studies documenting that academics generally have access to these key job resources, including positive relationships at work [Zábrodská et al. 2016; Zábrodská and Květon 2012, 2013], high levels of autonomy [Tollingerová 1999; Matějů and Vitásková 2005; Melichar and Pabian 2007; Zábrodská et al. 2016], and personal fulfilment [Lindholm 2004; Petersen 2011]. In addition, our results suggest that academics not only have access to these job resources but also actually perceive them as the main reasons why they perform academic work. This is, again, corroborated by the results of other studies conducted in HE contexts that illustrate the importance of positive relationships, autonomy, and a sense of meaningfulness for the occupational well-being and productivity of academic workers [Bentley et al. 2013; Becker et al. 2018; Mudrak et al. 2018; Shin and Jung 2014], especially in work conditions that also entail a high level of job demands [Bakker et al. 2005].

Perceived problems of academic work: workload, finances, and leadership

The participants also, however, cited a number of work and workplace problems (see Tables 4 and 6). While the job resources that were referred to may indeed help to buffer the negative impact of the systemic problems participants reported, these issues should nevertheless be addressed in policy and practice in order to maintain and possibly improve the quality of the work environment at Czech HE institutions.

A heavy workload and the pressure to produce

The largest proportion of participating academics (26.5%) referred to the high pressure on them to produce and their inability to keep up with their work as the most pressing job demands, with women and academics in lower positions referring significantly more frequently to this theme. Compared with the past, academics are currently expected to complete more challenging and often conflicting work tasks, such as rapidly publishing innovative research, providing high-quality teaching for large classes, and combining scholarly excellence with

managerial and entrepreneurial skills. We can also observe substantial changes in the Czech academic work environment, including a growing emphasis on quantitative metrics to measure academic performance [Linková and Stöckelová 2012; Linková 2014; Vohlídalová 2018], excellent research [Sima 2013], competition for external financing [Linková 2014; Vohlídalová 2018], and a growing number of students [Prudký et al. 2010].

Most of these concerns were reflected in our participants' responses. In general, the high work demands stemmed from several sources: some respondents, especially in junior academic positions, pointed to low funding and their having to combine several academic jobs, which led to pressure from supervisors and an inability to meet expected outcomes. An example of these respondents' comments included: 'Because of the low financial compensation that doesn't even cover my mortgage, I have to have two full-time jobs simultaneously, which results in a lack of time for my research. Because of this situation, my boss increasingly pressures me to produce more publications, and this makes it difficult to harmonise the demands of work with my personal life' (assistant professor, woman, humanities). As we discuss below, low salaries are a recurring concern among Czech academics [Matějů and Vitásková 2005; Matějů and Fisher 2009; Vohlídalová 2018] that has forced some to work multiple jobs to survive financially and often propels academics (especially in junior positions) towards a decision to leave academic careers [Cidlinská and Vohlídalová 2015, 2017].

Another recurring sub-theme was related to problems combining multiple academic responsibilities. The academics held negative views of the structure of their work, which required them to be, in a sense, 'a jack of all trades', constantly dividing their time and energy among tasks such as teaching, research, supervision, networking, the search for financial resources, administrative duties, and application/practice, often in an unstructured way that did not allow them to disconnect from work and or did not account for overtime work: 'With the state pressuring universities to become research institutions, it is difficult to combine teaching, research, project management, publishing, a large amount of administration, and internships. It all leads to overload on academics, stress, and exhaustion' (associate professor, woman, humanities). Furthermore, the participants felt that they had some responsibilities that 'had to be done' but were not acknowledged, as the primary emphasis was on research output and the corresponding points received in performance assessments rather than, for example, on the quality of teaching.

As one respondent commented: 'I exert too much energy at work that is not visible and cannot be put into performance charts; therefore, the management doesn't take it into account. I care about the quality of teaching and working with students, but the chair demands quantity in research and articles (often regardless of their quality). I am not happy at all with such an approach; such work does not fulfil me. I find it unacceptable, and I'm intensively looking for a change so that I can feel that the energy I exert at work has been appreciated

and beneficial for others' (assistant professor, woman, humanities). In this way, the organisational structure of academic work may be seen as the 'dark side' of the high level of autonomy workers enjoy, as they are not provided with a clear and viable work structure or goals and are left to deal with conflicting work tasks themselves. From this perspective, we may argue that a high level of autonomy and corresponding lack of direction may for some workers represent more of a 'demand' than a 'resource'.

A heavy administrative workload was an especially prominent theme common to a large proportion of the participants (16.3%). Academics with habilitation, in particular, were concerned about combining multiple academic responsibilities with a large volume of paperwork (30.6%). These respondents felt that excessive paperwork consumed their research time or inhibited their creativity; they talked about 'tied hands' and 'adherence to meaningless rules' or complained that 'everything has to fit in a box'. These concerns were most frequently related to the application for and administration of grant projects. Some academics felt overburdened by the constant search for grants, the impossibility of extending successful grant projects, and the need to participate in several projects simultaneously. Other problems were related to inflexible budgets, administrative difficulties making purchases, a lack of personnel for routine administrative tasks, frequent reporting, and 'meaningless' evaluations that consumed research time. Relevant comments included the following: 'Needless paperwork and harassment with formalities in general. Everyone knows that it's just filling out forms' (professor, man, natural sciences); 'Lately, I have had to deal with an excessive number of forms that are meaningless. If you lead two, three projects, you practically become a bureaucrat. And a scientist working as a bureaucrat is something terrible. Instead of science, you do a lot of bureaucratic nonsense' (assistant professor, man, technical sciences). An important reason for this growing administrative burden may be the Czech HE system's increasing focus on accountability and the quantitative evaluation of academics [Linková 2014].

Based on the participants' descriptions, we may argue that excessive workloads could be somewhat reduced by the more effective organisation of academic work. Changes aimed at making more effective use of academics' time and energy include a more balanced evaluation of different aspects of academic work; teaching appears to be particularly undervalued despite the subjective importance of teaching in academia and the growing number of students [Prudký et al. 2010]. More explicit support for greater specialisation among academics towards teaching or research might also be beneficial. The current Czech system of academic promotion emphasises a relatively high level of performance in all areas of academic work [File et al. 2009], and allowing for greater specialisation could improve the quality of both research and teaching and diminish the excessive workload that stems from multiple academic responsibilities. It appears that some department chairs have been implementing this strategy in their departments, although they perceived it more as resistance to the current system [Machovcová,

Zábrodská and Mudrák 2019]. Additionally, the greater involvement of salaried PhD students in teaching and research could reduce the heavy workload of core faculty and simultaneously improve the quality of PhD studies [Česká asociace doktorandů a doktorandek 2017]. Finally, the more effective organisation of grant administration could appreciably contribute to a more manageable workload for academics. This change might include simplification of grant application and administration systems or the provision of more effective administrative support, which could even be cost-effective, as the time of highly specialised academics would then be less consumed by administrative duties, which they are often neither interested in nor qualified for. This situation applies especially to senior academics, who experienced the heavy administrative load as the most pressing concern that might negatively affect other key areas of their work, including academic and research leadership and supervision.

Lack of financial resources

Another major problem of academic workplaces from the perspective of academic employees is financial and economic concerns, which permeate various aspects of academic work. Along with the lack of quality leadership, financial concerns were mentioned significantly more frequently by unsatisfied academics (36.1%), which illustrates the importance of this issue for the occupational well-being of academic workers. Financial problems appear to be especially pressing for early-career academics, who reported it as the most frequent problem (31.2%). The issue of inadequate salaries has emerged as a problem in virtually all studies on Czech academic workplaces that included this variable [Paulik 1995; Tollingerová 1999; Matějů and Vitásková 2005; Matějů and Fischer 2009; Vohlídalová, 2018; Zábrodská et al. 2016] and has been considered one of the key systemic problems affecting the career development of Czech academics [Cidlinská and Vohlídalová 2015, 2017] as well as the overall competitiveness of Czech HE [Koucký 2013]. Financial aspects were also present in other frequently mentioned themes, such as insufficient financial resources for conducting research, unjust criteria for the evaluation and the distribution of available financial resources, and job insecurity stemming from short-term contracts or external financing that does not allow academics to engage in long-term planning regarding their activities.

The unsatisfied/early-career participants frequently framed this theme in terms of 'economic survival'. These respondents cited existential problems stemming from their low salaries, such as dependence on uncertain external funding, the need to combine more than one job to earn sufficient income, the need to work on multiple projects simultaneously, overwork, lack of time, and difficulties in their personal lives. The respondents perceived little possibility of increasing their salary in the future, and some even expected further decreases. They reported their salaries as being below national or professional averages and often compared their incomes to those of low-income jobs, such as the salaries of

supermarket cashiers, manual workers, and students: '[The problem has been] finances, above all. I would never think that a well-educated person with a PhD in a technical discipline would have a lower salary than a cashier or an elementary school teacher. I am shocked, and at present, I consider the years of study wasted time' (assistant professor, woman, technical sciences) and 'A very low salary at [name of the university] (associate professors make only 22 800 CZK), and the salaries haven't increased in seven years! It's a mockery. People have no motivation to work for this kind of money. Talented people have been leaving or have other jobs, including me' (associate professor, man, technical sciences).

In this context, we can relate the financial concerns also to job insecurity, which represented a pressing concern for 10.9% of the participating academics, with women and academics without PhDs citing this problem significantly more frequently. Above all, these participants considered the practice of periodic renewal of short-term contracts and grant-based employment as the main cause of their job insecurity. In particular, early career academics reported that it was difficult for them to make long-term plans, as they did not know whether their contracts would be extended or whether they would be able to obtain an academic position: 'An uncertain future outlook—my position has been grant-based, I cannot be a postdoc forever, and it is unlikely that I will get a permanent position at my current workplace' (postdoc, woman, natural sciences). However, job insecurity related not only to the respondents' academic positions as such but also to their salary level. Some of the academics perceived that they could not be certain whether their grant-based salary would remain the same or whether their salary would substantially decrease if their grants were not extended: 'If we don't have external financing, the contract goes down to fifty percent, and we get only the base salary. This will happen to me at the beginning of the next year; my salary will go down by two-thirds because the project proposals submitted weren't accepted.' (assistant professor, woman, social sciences).

Other respondents, often those in senior academic positions, stated that insufficient financial resources affected their workplace or university in general rather than the respondents as individuals. The main concern of these participants was not their personal economic survival but the quality of their work. These respondents mentioned a lack of funding for quality research and teaching as well as institutional and disciplinary development, including insufficient resources for the salaries of academic employees, students, and postdocs, and the uncertainty of grant-based financing: 'Ever decreasing institutional budgets, especially for salaries, and grant-based financing, which has become increasingly difficult to get; it is necessary to have at least a three-year outlook on finances; currently, there is considerable uncertainty and no long-term perspective' (professor, man, natural sciences); and 'The main problem is searching for financial resources so that it will be possible to focus on work. It is like the work is my hobby, and therefore, I have to earn money to be allowed to do it' (assistant professor, man, technical sciences).

The lack of sufficient funding in Czech HE has been a long-term concern of leaders within the academic community, and improvements in the current situation largely depend on political factors [Česká konference rektorů 2017]. However, some aspects related to the distribution of existing resources could be addressed to mitigate the impact of limited budgets on academics. These changes might include establishing explicit rules for distributing remuneration, the use of balanced evaluations for various academic tasks, and the provision of long-term contracts to key academic employees. At the same time, it is important that the implementation of these changes be based on a wider consensus in the academic community, which might improve the quality of the Czech HE system without compromising the system's positive aspects. Despite concerns about funding, the majority of academics appear to be satisfied with their academic job [Zábrodská et al. 2016; Vohlídalová 2018], as it provides them with other job resources that support their job satisfaction. A question remains, however, regarding whether this situation is sustainable in the long-term, especially if the ongoing transformation of Czech universities erodes some of the other key job resources and if the underfinancing of Czech public universities further negatively affects the international competitiveness of Czech HE [Koucký 2013].

Low-quality leadership

From the perspective of the participating academics, the quality of the leadership appears to be another systemic problem in Czech public HE that significantly contributed to the academics' dissatisfaction. Low-quality leadership was mentioned by 23.7% of respondents as the third major problem of Czech academic workplaces. This theme was the source of the largest difference between the very satisfied (6.8%) and the unsatisfied group (37.8%). The main concerns with leadership can be subsumed under two general themes: leadership was considered poor either because it was withdrawn or lacking altogether or because it was overly authoritative and domineering. Withdrawn leaders were described as having poor managerial skills, as lacking vision and motivation and communication skills, as being unsupportive and uninterested, and as failing to provide feedback and rewards for good work: 'The leadership in our department is incompetent and does not belong to the 21st century. The department chair has been unable to provide adequate motivation, fair rewards based on performance, suitable work organization, or long-term planning' (assistant professor, man, natural sciences); '[The leadership shows] genuine inability to lead people and coordinate their work' (associate professor, man, humanities); and 'The chair lacks managerial skills; he is drowning in trivia, and as a result, the workplace has no direction' (lecturer, man, humanities).

By contrast, some respondents complained instead about overly authoritative leadership, which they often felt was motivated by selfish reasons rather than by concerns about the quality of the work or the well-being of academic employees. For example, the respondents described leaders who were overly controlling

or had unreasonable expectations, leaders who were overly protective of the status quo, and leaders who engaged in bullying or distributed rewards on the basis of nepotism and clientelism rather than actual performance. Relevant comments included the following: 'All the problems are related to the unlimited power of the department chair, who abuses this power. The rewards for publication outcomes are not defined, which means that all the money coming from the publications disappears non-transparently into the department funds and does not go to the authors. It is up to the chair to decide. Also, employees in the same position have very different workloads. Some teach a lot, some teach a little. Again, it depends on the department chair. The rewards don't go to the producers of the outcomes but only to the friends of the chair. It's entirely up to him' (postdoc, man, technical sciences); and 'The unequal workload of the employees in the department. [We can be] divided into two categories: breeding horses (20%) and workhorses (80%). Recognition from the chair doesn't depend on performance but on popularity and the amount of flattery directed at the chair. Weaker personalities, i.e., the breeding horses, use this cheap tactic very often, and they prosper tremendously' (assistant professor, man, technical sciences).

In the Czech academia, various studies have reported mixed evaluations of the quality of academic leadership [Matějů and Fischer 2009; Zábrodská and Květon 2013; Zábrodská et al. 2016; Vohlídalová 2018]. Negative perceptions of leaders represent a significant problem for institutions, regardless of the reasons underlying these perceptions, and it is crucial that they be effectively addressed [Evans et al. 2013]. Furthermore, when striving for effective academic leadership, the sectoral specifics of HE need to be considered [Spendlove 2007]. Academic leaders face specific challenges—they must reconcile the contradictory aspects of their position, such as simultaneously serving as experts in their fields, members of the academic community, and managers, and in this way they must come to terms with performing the role of 'translator' between various sub-groups within academia [Deem and Brehony 2005; Machovcová, Zábrodská and Mudrák 2019; Machovcová and Zábrodská 2016]. This role may be especially important in the context of Czech HE, which has been described as increasingly (albeit rather slowly due to the still dominant role of academic self-government) marketised at the policy level [Linková and Stöckelová 2012] but retaining the traditional values of academic collegiality and autonomy at the academic department level [Zábrodská et al. 2016].

Our current analysis further corroborates the mixed evaluation of the quality of academic leadership. A large proportion of the participating academics reported low-quality leadership as one of the major problems in their academic workplaces, whereas other (albeit less numerous) participants referred to good leadership as one of the main positive features. These descriptions provide important cues to understanding how academic leaders should (not) operate. According to Bryman [2007], poor-quality leadership can be especially detrimental, and attention should be directed towards the types of behaviour that academic leaders should

avoid. In our study, a relatively large number of participants described their leaders as uninterested, unsupportive, inclined to provide inadequate feedback or to be overly directive, ungenerous in allowing academic autonomy, or even tending to misuse their power through nepotism and the unfair distribution of rewards. However, when looking for ways to improve the current situation, caution is warranted, as there has been a surprising lack of studies that provide evidence on how to achieve effective academic leadership [Dopson et al. 2016].

Considering the complexity of this issue and the limited space of this paper, we suggest tackling the problem from two perspectives. First, the current literature provides various definitions of academic leadership. For instance, Evans [2013] suggests approaching academic leadership in a broader sense, viewing it not necessarily from the perspective of formal position but rather in the sense of senior academic influence. Therefore, stakeholders should initiate a discussion of what constitutes academic leadership in their institution before implementing changes in policy and practice. Second, a number of studies have revealed the relational nature of academic leadership [Dopson et al. 2016], which is also reflected in our data. For this reason, academic leaders and academics preparing for a leadership role should have access to support and counselling from experienced mentors (for example, through a university office) to help them cope with the challenges of their leadership position. However, the issue must be approached with concern for the current state of knowledge, taking into account the research on how to construct and promote effective models of academic leadership.

Conclusion

This paper sought to explore, from the perspective of academic employees, the key job resources and demands in Czech public university workplaces, their possible effects on academic employees' job satisfaction, and group differences and inequalities in these job demands and resources in relation to the basic demographic categories of gender, discipline, and position. Based on our findings, we may argue that one of the main reasons for high job satisfaction and work engagement among academics is the high intrinsic value they place on their academic work, which is supported by some key job resources present in Czech academic workplaces, such as a positive social community, a high level of autonomy, and positive evaluations of the quality of the academics' work outcomes. These findings are consistent with the conclusions of the JD-R model [Bakker and Demerouti 2014; Mudrak et al. 2018], which shows that job satisfaction is predominantly affected by job resources that facilitate the fulfilment of the needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence, with job demands such as excessive workload having a smaller effect, especially when a job offers extensive access to these resources [Bakker et al. 2007]. At the same time, these findings should not lead to the conclusion that Czech academic workplaces are without problems, as a large proportion of our participants also felt a lack of job resources and that

they were subject to excessive job demands stemming, in particular, from heavy workloads, problematic leadership, insufficient funding, excessive paperwork, and job insecurity.

Our results suggest that some job resources were especially important for the job satisfaction of our participants. Good leadership, positive relationships in the workplace, a sense of personal fulfilment, and access to financial resources were the main themes that significantly varied (in significance) between satisfied and unsatisfied participants. Furthermore, academic position represented the main demographic category that was significantly associated with different levels of job satisfaction as well as some key job resources and demands. Specifically, early-career academics reported less satisfaction with their jobs and experienced a bigger workload, greater job insecurity, and a lack of financial resources. In contrast, senior academics were particularly troubled by excessive administration. Significant yet less pronounced differences were observed with regard to gender and discipline. Notably, women experienced more performance pressure, job insecurity, and work-family conflict, and academics from the natural sciences showed the highest job satisfaction and appreciated the quality of their work and had a sense of personal fulfilment significantly more than others. These findings suggest that while there are positive as well as negative aspects of academic work and workplaces that are shared by the general population of academics, some subgroups of academics, especially early-career academics and women, have less access to some key job resources and experience higher job demands [cf. Mudrák, Zábrodská and Machovcová 2019a].

In conclusion, we believe that the ongoing transformation of HE should take these findings into account and implement changes in a manner that does not negatively affect the positive aspects of the current HE system but addresses its main problems, such as academic leadership, distribution of financial resources, or the organisation and evaluation of conflicting aspects of academic work. Moreover, the changes should consider the needs of different sub-groups of academic workers, when we can see, for example, that early-career academics are particularly troubled by job insecurity and senior academics by excessive administration. The implemented changes should be further supplemented with ongoing research that would assess their effectiveness and impacts on academic employees and the overall quality of Czech HE.

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Kenneth Newton: ***Surprising News: How the Media Affect—and Do Not Affect—Politics***
Boulder, CO, 2019: Lynne Rienne Publishers, 271 pp.

How do the media affect political attitudes and behaviour? The question is as old as empirical social science. But it has received very different answers at different points in time—for example, concerning the magnitude of the effects and the type of dependent variables. Kenneth Newton's answers in this book are nuanced and knowledgeable and build on an admirable synthesis of complex multidisciplinary research. At the end of the day, though, he is sceptical about media effects in a book that 'sheds the harsh light of fact-based social science research on the influence of different kinds of media…' (p. 2). For better explanations of attitudes and behaviour, the books argues, we should turn to 'the standard model'. This is basically a list of 'usual suspects', like class, party identification, education, religion, income, occupation, age, and gender. As the author puts it: 'This book shows that the standard model, rather than the media, is generally the most powerful when it comes to explaining political attitudes and behaviour.' (p. 2) Relatedly, most chapters emphasise the many contingencies in media effects, such that 'part of the difficulty in pinning down media effects … is the interaction between the media and their audiences' (p. 123).

This well-written book has much to recommend it. Its signature strength is its impressive range of relevant topics, several of which are rarely considered next to each other. Thus, the first few chapters deal with interesting but quite expected topics like 'belief preservation'; that is, why defending our predispositions and resisting uncongenial messages 'induces a shot of dopamine-induced pleasure so that we feel good about ourselves even if we are wrong'. Subsequent chapters, however, discuss less expected but equally relevant areas, such as how people's personal life experiences provide much more political input than we think and can regulate which media messages matter. A subsequent chapter explains how media effects may be outcompeted and circumscribed by 'political talk' among family, friends, colleagues, etc. Similarly, the book gives due attention to the role of media trust. Here, Newton concludes that '[b]ecause there is plentiful evidence that trust in the media is comparatively low and declining, the media's persuasive powers may also be low and declining' (p. 122). The last one-third or so of the book shifts gear once again and addresses the nature and impact of the macro, 'supply-side' aspects of media systems. Thus, one chapter compares public service and commercial broadcasting, whereas two others consider the validity of the media's 'pluralist' ideal in the current digital era. This means mapping how pluralist the structure of the media landscape is as well as how pluralist individual citizens' 'news diets' are.

This enjoyable book also has some weaker points. For example, one can debate the relevance of a comparison with a 'standard model' (a term this reader had not heard before). To begin with, this exercise really amounts to comparing the impact of one (type) of variable with the impact of many. How *surprising* is it really that many factors beat one? But more than this, could one not argue that these variables explain different types of variation? The standard model may explain overall stable patterns. Media effects may be weak overall but very concentrated among the increasing number of volatile voters, thus accounting for short-term deviations from stable 'standard' patterns. And even small deviations from such patterns may have large macro-political consequences for, say, who wins elections and referendums. These remarks are not very original and should not be controversial. Still, they

could have been made more often as the book compares the significant—but contingent and allegedly weak—media impact with multiple stable 'standard' model predictors.

In some places, the book could have been clearer about how and why generalisations seem to differ from past research. The title of the book suggests strong argumentation against scholars or pundits who are somehow convinced that media effects are massive and widespread. But we are really never told for whom the conclusions are supposed to be surprising. This is mostly okay but creates problems in places, in particular for the discussion about the concept of 'agenda-setting'. Many readers will know that in the 1970s scholars largely abandoned 'persuasion'-type effects for the benefit of agenda-setting. The idea is that while the media may not directly dictate what people 'think', they may influence what people 'think about', i.e. which problem areas are salient. This can in turn have subtle but important consequences for voting, party competition, and even public policy. Many previous textbooks and overviews have concluded that agenda-setting is generally a well-documented (though surely contingent) media effect. Newton acknowledges the existence of these effects, but usually in passing, while reserving a greater number of words for the contingencies in such processes. Similarly, his handful of key examples from the US and the UK show weak agenda-setting effects. I would have liked greater precision in the conclusions drawn here. Does Newton actually argue that past work has exaggerated agenda-setting effects? If so, why does he come to a different conclusion? Is it because he is taking into account different, perhaps newer, studies or cases? Or is he evaluating the same evidence differently, perhaps using a different standard for what counts as a politically interesting media effect? Or perhaps the seeming disagreement is just a matter of emphasis, such that everybody agrees that the agenda-setting impact of the media exists but is contingent, and the book's contribution is to highlight contingencies and, using the 'standard model' to give effects reasonable proportions.

Each chapter typically starts by posing a big question and then proceeds to an in-depth discussion of 'example studies'. Squarely on the positive side, this strategy means the reader is pedagogically introduced to relevant theories as well as to empirical possibilities and limitations in real research. On the slightly negative side, the example studies are mostly from the US or the UK and occasionally feel slightly dated or at least very familiar (i.e. the Clinton–Lewinsky scandal, the Vietnam War, and the much-debated 1997 election that made Blair's New Labour). One sometimes wonders how representative the studies are in findings and methods. For example, the well-documented weak impact of the Clinton–Lewinsky scandal could have been complemented with one of the many studies that actually find more significant scandal effects on (some types of) dependent variables (see the meta study by von Sikorski [2018]).

These more critical remarks should not obscure the fact that Newton has written a very compelling account of one of the oldest, most complex, but still evolving accumulations of empirical social science. In the current era of article-based specialisation, social science needs high-quality books that structure the broader debate with well-considered 'stylised facts' for everyone else to chew on. Writing such books is clearly not for everyone. But those of us who enjoyed already *Beliefs in Government*—in which Kaase and Newton [1998] discussed the implications of a major international four-volume research project—knew that Newton is suited to the job. Consequently, he has produced a book that should work well for both master's students and advanced scholars who want a

trustworthy shortcut into a sprawling and multidisciplinary body of literature. The book deserves to be read and appreciated as the debate over the media impact on politics and democracy continues.

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James C. Scott: *Against the Grain. A Deep History of the Earliest States*
New Haven, CT, and London 2017: Yale University Press, 312 pp.

Although commonly acknowledged as an analytical problem that plagues the social sciences, the reach of *methodological statism* has never quite been fully pursued. Picking up the gauntlet, James C. Scott embarks on a daring interdisciplinary study, drawing on prehistory, archaeology, ancient history, and anthropology (p. x) so as to shed light on the earliest roots of state-building processes. Going as far back in history as 6500 BCE, Scott picks apart the rigid narrative of progress tying together crop-agriculture, sedentarism, and state formation (pp. 1–3). Throughout the book, the author skilfully employs the analytical toolkit of political sociology and political anthropology to the tricky field of prehistory, offering a set of hypotheses concerning a problematic bias—the *methodological statism* of archaeology qua state-sponsored research (p. 13).

Similar to some of the arguments outlined by Harari [2016: Chapters 2, 3], though more methodologically grounded, Scott's main argument is that '*stateness* must be understood as an institutional continuum, less an either/or proposition than a judgment of more or less' (p. 23). The key reconsideration is that sedentarism is not necessarily a corollary of crop-field agriculture (p. 10). As a crucial component of both crop-field agriculture and a sedentary lifestyle, domestication is also argued to have been somewhat arbitrarily placed in the *Homo Sapiens* timeline (p. 11). Further down the line Scott identifies a highly problematic 'essentializing element to the progress-settlement story that starts early in history as people codified how they were different from others' (p. 7).

The structure of the book follows these major reconsiderations proposed by the author. Chapter 1 delves into multiple issues of domestication. Scott's key point is that the connection between the domestication of plants, as a first stage towards mass crop-agriculture, and the creation of modern states is far more spurious than previously assumed, if not altogether missing. According to recent evidence cited by the author, there seems to be a gap of as much as 4000 years between the domestication of grains and livestock and the appearance of anything resembling an early agrarian state (p. 46). The source of the mistake, according to Scott, is a combination of a teleology of progress and an observation bias—'the narrative of civilizations arising from irrigation of arid lands because this fit with the contemporary landscape that those formulating the narrative were observing' (p. 55). Although he admits the speculative nature of his hypothesis, Scott proposes that wetland societies, which were far more likely the source of early urbanism and proto-states, have been ignored by existing narratives because they were not dependent on the type of central authority that would leave proof of its existence (p. 57). More broadly speaking, the main problem with the immediate link between farming and state-formation is that it involves far more intensive labour than these early states were capable of or-

ganising (p. 66). Reviewing some of the major existing studies, the author points out that flood-retreat agriculture required far less labour, was much more widespread than previously assumed, and could offer a way out of the teleology of previous explanations (p. 66). What this suggests is that the 'social will to sedentarism', the staple of the progress narrative linking agriculture and state formation, should not be taken for granted at all. Rather, Scott argues that this putative 'will', which does appear in *some* early historical sources, should simply be read as the discourse of an agrarian state stigmatising populations outside its boundaries (p. 62).

Broadly speaking, Scott argues that, contrary to the conventional narrative of progress, there is no definitive, irreversible, and clearly defined line when Homo Sapiens crossed from 'savagery' into 'civilization'. In this line of thought, Chapter 2 details the intricacies of moving from hunter-gatherers to sedentary communities. The key process identified is the domestication of plants and animals, which Scott sees as the move from organisms that thrive in the wild automatically towards ones that can no longer thrive without complete human attention (pp. 74–75). The starting point of the analysis is the observation that hunter-gatherer life is punctuated by bursts of intense activity over short periods of time, responding to the natural tempo of food availability (i.e discovering new resources – p. 88). The end result of the process is radical transformation, which centralises the idea of tempo; in contrast to the reactive bursts of activity in hunter-gatherers, farmers are almost fully confined to a single food web and their routines become geared to maximising it (p. 90).

Unlike the previous sections, Chapter 3 starts from a consensus in the literature: the 'broad spectrum revolution', the first wave of intensification of subsistence agriculture resulting from the scarcity of big game, pushed early humans away from over-reliance on naturally available resources, towards exploiting more labour-intensive resources such as crop-agriculture (pp. 94–95). Scott's argument is that what characterised the broad spectrum revolution was the environmental forcing of early humans to rely on crop-agriculture, a technique which they knew but used on-and-off owing to its labour-intensity and low returns (pp. 95–96). While a precise explanation for the revolution itself seems to be missing, the end result is agreed upon. Hunter-gatherers were compelled to extract more, even at a higher labour cost, from their immediate surroundings, rather than simply moving on. Quite clearly this process was a tenuous one because the early multi-species resettlement camps, while partly solving the issue of resources, brought about the immediate threat of vermin and diseases (p. 104). The survival and eventual flourishing of these communities had to do less with a 'will to sedentarism' and more with the simple fact that, despite high mortality rates owing to infection, early sedentary humans also had unprecedentedly high rates of reproduction (p. 113).

Was the leap from the domus to the early state an immediate consequence, as previous narratives had it, or was it more sinuous? Scott's answer, detailed in Chapter 4, is that highlighting an exact moment as the 'birth' of a state is quite arbitrary and is hamstrung by the fact that few sites that offer enough archaeological evidence (p. 118). Put simply, the author argues that the Neolithic agro-complex (i.e. domus) was a *necessary* but not *sufficient* condition for state-formation (p. 117). Scott proposes a multi-layered answer to the question of how early states managed to exert enough control on land and manpower. On the one hand, geography matters—only very rich soils could sustain concentrated populations (p. 124). On the other hand, climate change was also a key factor—as rivers retreated, labour-intensive irrigation became

vital and was made possible as low water levels had the effect of concentrating populations (p. 120). Yet, even with these crucial pre-conditions satisfied, state-formation was not linear at all, constant fragmentation and decay being the norm rather than the exception (p. 122).

By contrast, while the move from the domus to the early state must be reconsidered in a less functional way, 'it is virtually impossible to conceive of even the earliest state without a systematic technology of numerical record keeping' (p. 140). Granted, writing seems to have been used for accounting purposes far earlier than for the civilisational role it has usually been associated with (p. 141). However, writing seems to have been inextricably linked to state-building through processes of standardisation in coinage, weight, distance, and so on (p. 145). At the same time, Scott carefully steers his narrative away from any functionalist interpretations—while the writing–state-building nexus might have been tightly interwoven, the key lesson is that, just like the early state, writing and literacy are also quite prone to fragmentation and shrinkage (p. 147). The topic of collapse is returned to in more detail in Chapter 6, with precisely this idea of shrinkage in mind. The author shows that state-collapse is simply 'a reduction in social complexity' rather than a critical juncture in the putative march of progress (p. 186). The collapse of the 'brief miracles of statecraft', which seems to have been the norm rather than the exception, is 'less likely to mean a dissolution of culture than its reformulation and decentralization' (p. 186).

Chapters 5 and 7 offer very interesting reconsiderations on statehood, war, and the 'age of barbarians'. Reading between the lines there is an implicit dialogue, above and beyond the immediate literature on the prehistory of states, with Olson's roving vs stationary bandit [2000]. For Olson the stationary bandit takes on a state-like or governmental function by protecting citizens against roving bandits [Olson 2000]. For Scott early warfare and state-building were similarly about settling a stable population close to a power core, coercing them there to produce a surplus, part of which would indeed be used to buy off security from roving, neighbouring warlords who were labelled 'barbarians' (p. 151). This is precisely why the author shows that 'barbarians' do not lack a specific culture, nor are they a 'stage' in the ladder from hunter-gatherers to the peak of tax-paying state citizens (p. 227). If methodological statism is deducted from the historical narrative, barbarians quite simply are a position in relation to early statehood (p. 227). Further down this line, Scott argues that warfare in Mesopotamia from around 3000 BCE to 1000 BCE was less about the conquest of territory than about the assembling of the population at the state's grain core (p. 154).

On the whole, this book impresses with analytical clarity and a crisp writing style. Acknowledging the limitations of a political anthropologist venturing into uncharted methodological waters, Scott manages nonetheless to masterfully dissect the dominant teleological narrative. What is offered in its place is a set of plausible hypotheses that stand at the interesting junction of political science, sociology, and ancient history.

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Besnik Pula: ***Globalisation under and after Socialism: The Evolution of Transnational Capital in Central and Eastern Europe***
Redwood City, CA, 2018: Stanford University Press, 272 pp.

The conventional narrative of the post-socialist transition in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) takes the fall of the Iron Curtain as a watershed moment. Previously, CEE was marked by an inefficient, autarchy-inspired planned economy futilely attempting to match the capitalist West. But after the collapse of the metaphorical drape's physical expression in Berlin, the end of history seemed in reach as democracy and liberal markets arrived in formerly communist Europe. While somewhat of a caricatural depiction, this understanding runs through numerous writings on CEE's transition period. For many, the socialist past is either an obstacle to successful transition or something irrelevant as policy-makers started from scratch in building market democracies on the ashes of the past.

In this captivating and clearly written book, author Besnik Pula corrects this narrative. Taking a comparative historical institutionalist approach, Pula demonstrates how socialist market reforms in the 1970s already shaped the institutional conditions for transnational integration during the transition. Pula discerns three types of 'protoglobalisation' which ultimately had a lasting impact on CEE's diversified integration into transnational networks of production. Firm-level ties with Western Europe particularly increased the ability of some post-socialist economies to deeply integrate, while the lack thereof constrained the opportunities of others. With this original analysis, Pula contributes to a broad institutionalist literature dealing with issues of stability versus change as well as to specific regional studies finding the sources of (varied) transnationalisation elsewhere.

To substantiate the relevance of his inquiry, Pula starts his book with a review of the Cold War and post-socialist scholarship (Chapter 1). Most critical is his view of the above-described transitology literature. According to Pula, it profoundly disregards past legacies, as if post-socialist reformers autonomously operated within a tabula rasa context when implementing market-liberal policy recipes. Problematically, the dominance of this view meant that both the pre-1989 globalisation history and more critical approaches to post-socialist transition got side-lined. Pula reinvigorates both literatures, but also departs from them.

Of these critical approaches, the materialist view argues that international integration was not independently pursued but imposed by a coalition of (domestic forces and) transnational capital. The ideational variant stresses that the global neoliberal consensus destined the radical character of market reforms and legitimised its social consequences. Pula affirms the relevance of these critical perspectives, but, for him, globalisation was neither externally imposed nor preordained. Rather, domestic actors actively participated in globalisation, indeed under asymmetrical power conditions, but with their own influence on the process. Or as Pula puts it, by 'navigating at the margins and helping shape the articulations of globalisation' in order to adjust them to domestic conditions and objectives (p. 17). Similarly, Pula also brings the pre-1989 scholarship back into view without fully adopting its arguments. This literature sees socialist CEE as wedged into the semi-periphery of a capitalist world-system. Pula is sympathetic to the acknowledgement of CEE's prior participation in global markets, instead of being seen as submerged in an isolated Soviet system. However, Pula argues this functionalist perspective incorrectly treats CEE's domestic politics as a mere derivative of systemic dependency, and therefore obfuscates the possibility of transformative agency.

Pula's position in these debates crucially shapes his comparative historical institutionalist approach. For him, integration and institutional transformation are a 'series of cumulative but non-linear "punctuated evolutions"' (p. 5). This means that historical developments unfold in relative stability, only gradually changing until crises enable open institutional contestation and, accordingly, structural transformation. Legacies are a vital theme. Pula argues that these products of prior processes become causally relevant during crises, yet not as deterministic and everlasting properties but as constraints or conditions. Consequently, Pula sets out to trace historical sequences of events across his cases so as to establish clear, temporally ordered causal mechanisms.

The book's structure closely follows this ordering of events. To provide historical context, it starts with a background sketch of the early socialist past (Chapter 2). Specifically, Pula describes how CEE successfully industrialised and integrated into the Comecon trade bloc. The region, however, grew dependent upon the USSR for raw materials, capital, and technology, and socialist elites became increasingly aware of the limits of autarchy. Therefore, after Stalin's death, Khrushchev initiated reforms of both the planning economy and Comecon. Further intra-bloc integration and economic specialisation overlapped with Comecon's opening-up to the West. Liberalisation measures such as world market pricing were implemented within Comecon and CEE companies made the first commercial linkages with Western enterprise to boost trade and import advanced technologies.

The real change came, however, with the 'reform socialism' of the 1970s (Chapter 3). Pula argues that, in this 'crucially transformative decade' (p. 66), endogenous change coincided with key developments in the world economy, together enabling CEE's so-called protoglobalisation. New geopolitical conditions (e.g. Ostpolitik) and the post-1973 stagflation induced the expansion of Western firms into CEE. Moreover, offshore eurodollar markets enabled almost unrestricted borrowing for CEE to finance its imports. Yet, the socialist countries took different approaches to these structural opportunities. In the 1960s, CEE experimented with market socialist reforms, but while domestic pressure for change was strong in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, it was weaker in Bulgaria and Romania. Not just the intensity but also the longevity of market socialism varied. For example, Czechoslovakia's domestic reforms and outward orientation halted with the 1968 Soviet invasion, whereas Hungary moved up its gear with the New Economic Mechanism. Correspondingly, each country engaged differently in the world economy. Next to Slovenia's atypical Yugoslavian experience, Pula discerns three paths: import-led growth (Hungary and Poland), Stalinist globalisation (Romania), and Comecon integration (Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria). These varieties of protoglobalisation led to crucially different legacies conditioning the post-socialist reforms. To illustrate this, consider Hungary for the highly globalised scenario. Among others, Hungary introduced profit-making for assessing company performance and decentralised trade decision-making to industrial authorities. Having greater incentives and more autonomy for outward orientation, Hungarian companies laid strong organisational linkages with Western enterprise. This, Pula argues, was a crucial comparative advantage for deep transnational integration in the later transition period.

With the book's main narrative in place, Pula shows empirically how exactly protoglobalisation structurally conditioned the integration processes unfolding once communist rule started to crumble (Chapter 4). Moreover, these processes culminated into the distinct market or specialisation roles in transnational production networks

that the CEE countries subsequently assumed (Chapter 5). For me, the main contribution of *Globalisation under and after Socialism* lies in these two chapters. Equipped with a diverse methodological arsenal, Pula offers a novel and persuasive interpretation of the region's developmental history and present-day roles in transnational production networks. By combining empirical rigour with theory-building, Pula's ideal-types direct our attention to other structures of CEE's political economies. The historical institutionalist account is, however, not deterministic but conforms to the idea of change by punctuated evolution. Namely, Pula argues protoglobalisation only conditioned the political agency during two critical junctures, which itself was necessary to institutionalise the transnationalisation differences (Chapter 6). Put together, Pula thus contributes to specific regional studies and the wider institutionalist literature.

So, what exactly are these contributions? Starting with protoglobalisation (Chapter 4), Pula argues its legacies provided continuity during the uncertain years when CEE embarked on FDI-led development policies. In contrast to existing explanations emphasising production costs, policy preferences, cultural affinity or industrial complexity, Pula maintains that organisational ties with Western firms explain uneven transnational integration. Although even the import-led models had limited success, they did provide domestic enterprise, as a by-product, with the necessary experience and connections to later effectively integrate in global networks. Pula convincingly demonstrates this by correlating data on the interfirm agreements of the socialist period with FDI patterns in the 1990s. Those with tighter prior relations witnessed more joint ventures and, correspondingly, a higher influx of foreign capital. The Czech outlier case, which had few interfirm agreements but high FDI-levels, is credibly explained with domestic contingencies—namely, a limited number of enormously lucrative privatisations.

Then, Pula provides evidence for how protoglobalisation structured the likelihood of success of FDI-development strategies (Chapter 5). After outlining common factors for these strategies, Pula designs a structural measure for transnational integration based on the degree of external dependency on investment, product demand, and technology. Summarising his findings, Pula argues there were at least two alternative paths of transnational integration leading to three distinct international market roles. The paths direct our attention to the speed and intensity of export specialisation and the unfolding FDI reliance. Yet, the roles are most interesting. Capturing the structural position of domestic industry in transnational value chains and the sophistication level of export sectors, Pula distinguishes between assembly platforms (Hungary and Slovakia), intermediate producers (Czech Republic and Slovenia), and combined roles (Bulgaria, Poland, and Romania). Simply put, the first group refers to the most asymmetrically dependent economies, because they 'serve primarily as a site for downstream, low-cost, low-skill assembly of foreign inputs, relying primarily on imported capital goods' (pp. 155–156). The second type, in contrast, is 'an exporter of sophisticated manufactured goods' (p. 156) with larger domestic value-added activities and higher domestic ownership of export sectors. The combined role falls in between, as its roles differ across economic sectors. Further substantiating his framework, Pula links his typologies to domestic institutions and policies such as innovation and employment protection and validates his categorisation of the cases empirically.

Pula's convincing argument sheds new light on the developmental differences across CEE and confronts existing explanations and regional classification schemes. The only criticism I would level against

this book refers to how it ends. The remaining chapter and some elements of the conclusion appear less convincing. For me, Pula certainly contributes to institutionalist scholarship and regional studies, but the latter part unfortunately upsets the strength of the book's overall narrative. In Chapter 6, Pula moderates the protoglobalisation legacy. Discerning externalist and internalist policy orientations, his analysis demonstrates how differences in privatisation and FDI policies in the early 1990s structured the tenability of the outward-oriented policies commonly pursued from the second juncture later that decade. Choices made during the initial critical juncture thus produced new path-dependencies with different effects. Problematically, while this means Pula stays in conformity with his nuanced theory of institutional change, his original argument becomes less significant. Transformative agency not only affirmed the institutionalisation of market roles, the reform politics of the two critical junctures appear as considerably more meaningful for integration outcomes than protoglobalisation. Because these causal mechanisms are already well-established in the literature, the relevance of Pula's principal argument decreases.

Furthermore, the final analysis not only reduces the seriousness of interfirm relations with the West as a key condition for transnationalisation outcomes. In fact, some cases only thinly support the explanatory leverage assigned to the argument of transformative political agency. For example, Pula convincingly demonstrated how the Czechs, for contingent reasons, suddenly attracted high levels of FDI, thus overcoming their disadvantageous position. However, apart from some discussion of domestic ownership and party politics, little is offered on why various Czech governments pursued particular policy paths. Ideology, electoral anticipation, and employer interests are quickly invoked to explain variations in education policy, but similar arguments clarifying general political economy trajectories remain absent. Another example is the Slovak case. Pula argues trade unions substantially influenced the drawback against radical neoliberalism in the 2000s. However, this mechanism is merely asserted. The case study neither provides evidence for this link nor considers alternative explanations.

Finally, the book gives much insight into production and trade, but little into domestic distributional conflict. True, Pula shows how early and swift globalisers became the most asymmetrically dependent, but the typologies do not improve our understanding of socioeconomic struggle, electoral cleavages, or political mobilisation as factors of change. In fact, the welfare state and distributional issues are largely overlooked. The cases also say little about the interaction of state-business elites and its effects on the formation of economic strategies. The concluding discussion only lightly touches upon economic nationalism and (populist) distributional politics, leaving vital questions about recent institutional transformations unanswered. Hence, the book hardly strengthens our understanding of contemporary politics and the functioning of the CEE political economies. For me, therefore, despite its great merit in regard of previous decades, it somewhat loses on scholarly and societal relevance.

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Robert Plomin: ***Blueprint: How DNA Makes Us Who We Are***
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This is a book that promises to leave a mark in the academic and public debate. It is an essential addition to the never-ending discussion of nature versus nurture. A contribution in the quest to find an explanation on what determines who we are. As the subtitle suggests, the book focused on how nature paves the way for a person's development. The author seemingly downgrades the role of the environment, but more precisely, he rethinks how it interacts with genes and which environmental setting is the most important. Besides the somewhat controversial and debatable interpretations of the findings, it introduces a set of methodological toolkits of behavioural genetics, enabling an understanding of the progress done so far in this field. For example, the author discusses the twin and sibling studies and exposes the pioneering Genome-Wide Association (GWA) studies and their promises for the future of DNA research. Therefore, the book is an accessible introduction to behavioural genetics that can be read by academic and non-academic readers.

It is divided into two parts, the first titled 'Why DNA Matters' and the second 'The DNA Revolution'. The first part is dedicated to the exposure of his early research, based on the findings derived from studies on twins, siblings, and adoptive children. These research designs make it possible to hold the shared family environment of the children constant and observe how genes or the non-shared environment generate differences between siblings. The non-shared environment refers to the environment outside the family that is not shared by the siblings. For example, the friends they meet, the classroom in the school, or the sports they practice. What is striking is that the findings point to the more substantial effect of genes than parental upbringing in shaping children's behaviours or outcomes in life (e.g. weight or divorce).

Moreover, the role of the environment is reinterpreted with the introduction of the concept of 'nature of nurture'. It implies that the individual plays an active role in framing the environment, giving it the shape that better fits his/her personal preferences. The individual is understood not as passively receiving the effects of the environment but rather as actively making choices that determine it. The same setting, depending on personal aptitudes, can affect or be shaped by different individuals in a variety of ways. For example, a mother could teach her daughter how to play the piano from an early age, but the child may or may not be receptive to this input. A daughter interested in music would ask for more piano classes and concerts. Conversely, if she is not interested, she would avoid the classes or concerts, trying to allocate her time to other endeavours.

Plomin claims that DNA plays a more significant role in adulthood than in childhood. During childhood, freedom of choice is limited by parents and tutors, narrowing the child's scope to shape daily activities. Conversely, in adulthood, individuals have the freedom to frame the environment based on their individual preferences. Recalling the previous example, the daughter that attended piano classes in her childhood could choose to drop the lessons later in life to focus on other hobbies that better resemble her preferences. Despite the mother's effort, when the daughter can shape her environment individually, she can decide whether or not to follow the path laid out by her parents.

In the second part of the book, Plomin introduces the reader to a different set of concepts and methods. First, Plomin introduces the basic concepts and methodologies in DNA studies to build a common ground of knowledge. He then discusses the Genome-Wide Association (GWA) stud-

ies and how they are revolutionising behavioural genetics, allowing comparisons of the genomes of large samples of individuals. The large-scale associations of the genome, using the DNA of millions of individuals, permit the formation of polygenic scores. It is relevant to note that there is not a single gene that is responsible for a specific psychological trait; rather, a combination of several bits of DNA form the 'polygenic score'.

Understanding where an individual is placed in the normal distribution of a specific polygenic score makes it possible to predict from an early age the development of personality traits, aptitudes, or illnesses. Large samples of individuals are needed to build the relevant polygenic scores. Currently, with more and more data being gathered and with progress in computational power, the construction of these scores is possible for an increasing number of psychological traits.

The implications of GWA studies and the construction of polygenic scores are potentially beneficial. They could be used to detect individuals that are at a high risk to develop a particular psychological illness, making it possible to intervene in their environment early in life and thus reducing the probability of disease occurring. But things are more ambiguous. On the one hand, it could be considered a blessing that these types of breakthroughs are happening, as knowing of a predisposition to a particular kind of mental disease beforehand could effectively prevent its occurrence. On the other hand, knowledge could generate anxieties and frustration. For example, some individuals could find that the polygenic score of their child is low in intelligence or some other relevant psychological trait causing unhappiness and fatalism. Plomin claims that acceptance and understanding from parents could also ease the life of an 'ungifted' child who would have been pressured to achieve what he may not have been able to. However, an overly deterministic parental stance on the life outcomes of the infant could itself determine the development of a trait in a child.

The interpretations of findings based on the polygenic scores are still in their infancy. Therefore, they need to be taken with caution, as further studies are required to test their validity. Arguably, the more that humankind becomes aware of how nature 'builds us', the more the environment can be framed in a way that accommodates individuals' needs and predispositions. For this reason, the development of more refined methods to explore the genome to discover and prevent the occurrence of psychological illnesses can be considered favourable for enabling further understanding of the gene-environment interaction. However, caution and awareness on the possible misinterpretations of the findings should be maintained so as not to lapse into too common partisan stances on nature and nurture.

In this regard, Plomin seems overly enthusiastic in stating some of his claims. The author shifts from more moderate stances to more radical ones, failing to sound credible throughout the whole book. For this reason, the book oscillates between being a balanced introduction and summary of the research on behavioural genetics and being a manifesto in support of DNA research and its superiority in explaining an individual's life outcomes. The duality of the book is damaging, as some of the interpretations can be considered overstretched and unbalanced, exposing the book to easy criticism and limiting the potential credibility of the whole text and the reach to a wider public. Hence, the discussion of the social implications of the author's findings and their interpretation is essential. What Plomin's work disproves is the assumption that individuals are born as a blank slate. A claim that has been already stated in other contexts and supported by psychologists and neuroscientists such as Steven

Pinker in *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature* [2002] or, more recently, Kevin J. Mitchell in *Innate* [2018]. In this regard, an individual's genetic background is understood as interacting with the environment, with both determining personal development. Plomin does not deny the environment's role in determining 'who we are', but he reconsiders the interaction between the two. In line with the implications of 'nature of nurture', the individual is seen as actively shaping the environment, and even more so in adulthood, implying that there is not much space left for parenting or schooling in changing certain inherited psychological traits.

Similarly, the environment is considered as unpredictably affecting the individual, mostly based on unplanned, erratic events that happen in the non-shared environment. A question naturally arises. Does Plomin go too far in speculating on the implications of the findings? Arguments such as the irrelevance of parenting or the limited role of the type of schooling in determining psychological traits are difficult to accept, especially for social scientists that have been publishing several studies on the importance of these factors for a child's development.

Therefore, the book's main take-home message is the evidence that individuals are not born as a tabula rasa, as genes influence the way a person interacts with the environment. However, the role of the environment is overly reduced by Plomin. Not all interventions are useless in enhancing an individual's quality of life but more needs to be known on which are the most effective factors that can contribute to improving an individual's life outcomes. Therefore, how the environment interacts with genes is still open to debate. In this context, psychologists and social scientists can be motivated to build studies with more robust empirical evidence to support their claims, taking into consideration the possible confounder of genetic background and the variations in which genes interact with environmental stimuli. First, this would enable studies on nurture, such as ones on the role of parenting or schooling, to build more robust findings and claims, controlling for the effect of genes. Second, how nature and nurture interact with each other in different national, institutional, and cultural contexts needs further explanation so that we can better grasp the various ways in which the two could determine certain psychological traits or outcomes in life across populations. Third, what seems clear is that the never-ending debate on nature and nurture still offers new insights and discoveries that can be particularly vivid in the contemporary academic debate. So, the latest findings and methods available can inspire further studies and conversations and lead to breakthroughs in the understanding of 'what makes us who we are'.

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James S. Fishkin: *Democracy When the People Are Thinking: Revitalizing Our Politics Through Public Deliberation*
Oxford 2018: Oxford University Press, 272 pp.

In this ambitious book James S. Fishkin tries to solve one of the biggest problems of modern democracies: 'How to engage the actual will of the people into the political process?' With *Democracy When the People Are Thinking: Revitalizing Our Politics Through Public Deliberation* Fishkin sets the stage for relevant questions that political science litera-

ture—in his opinion—has not paid enough attention to for a while. For this he goes back to the roots of democracy and democratic thinking, by building on the cornerstones of the democratic principles of ancient Athens and borrowing the philosophical concept of deliberation from John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas. His main concerns with the current state of democracy are (1) the way 'the will of the people develops' and (2) 'the mechanisms by which that will is expressed' (p. 2). His criticism is especially based on Bernard Manin's diagnosis of 'audience democracy' (p. 5) and refers to Schumpeter's reflections on the 'manufactured will' of the people, caused by elite manipulation of the public.

Fishkin separates the book into four parts. Part one introduces the reader to his thoughts on the current state of democracy and his aims in establishing deliberation as a central part in modern (more specifically US) democracy. For this he outlines a trilemma between political equality, deliberation, and participation, a problem he addresses later in the book with the idea of Deliberation Day. In part two, Fishkin starts by listing four criteria for popular control: inclusion, choice, deliberation, and impact (pp. 13–14). He furthermore establishes his four principles of democracy: 'political equality, (mass) participation, deliberation, and avoiding tyranny of the majority' (p. 23). Based on these principles he evaluates current forms of democracy (competitive democracy, elite deliberation, participatory democracy) and compares them with deliberative democracy in how they achieve these principles. In part three he delivers the key evidence for the validity of deliberative democracy by examining, in depth, four microcosmic examples of deliberative polling in California, Mongolia, Uganda, and the EU. In all four examples this microcosm consisted of a few hundred people that gathered over a weekend for deliberation in small groups and bigger plenary sessions, with the support of moderators and competing experts. In evaluating these experiments, Fishkin lists eight criteria that need to be fulfilled for representativeness and good deliberation. He lists three criteria for representativeness: '1) demographic representativeness, 2) attitudinal representativeness, 3) sample size', (p. 73) and five criteria for good deliberation: '4) the opportunity to engage policy arguments for and against proposals for action in an evidence-based manner, 5) knowledge gains, 6) opinion change, 7) whether or not distortions in the dialogue are avoided, 8) whether or not there are identifiable reasons for considered judgements after deliberation' (ibid.). These criteria are Fishkin's main tools to examine and investigate deliberative polls around the world and he argues that these are largely fulfilled in all of the examples presented to the reader.

Part four of the book is the most interesting. Here, Fishkin aims to design deliberative elements to be implemented into the US political process. This is also the part where the reader will find out if Fishkin's theory can stand the test of reality. By building on the evidence from the third part, Fishkin addresses some of the main criticisms in an effort to disperse, for example, concerns about the risk of deliberative polling being biased towards the status quo or the opinions of the elite. Fishkin goes on to distance his ideas from the reflections of Rawls and Habermas, criticising the former for only engaging in theoretical and hypothetical thought-experiments and the latter for not offering any concrete institutional framework for putting the principles to work. Following discussions on implementing deliberative elements into the constitutional, candidate-selecting, and agenda-setting process, Fishkin goes on to elaborate on his main idea, Deliberation Day, a proposal that, in his opinion, could solve the aforementioned trilemma between political equality, participation, and deliberation by offering

deliberative polling on a national scale in similar conditions to the microcosm. By making it a public holiday and reimbursing people for attending, Fishkin aims to motivate every citizen to equally participate in a one-day deliberation event, which should fulfil the criteria he established in part three and finally offer the democratic legitimacy for deliberation to have a sustainable impact on the political process.

What is the potential behind Fishkin's idea? Fishkin's arguments fit onto a broad base of theory and evidence on the qualities of democracy, and the reader can turn to well established insights on public opinion and its manipulation by Walter Lippmann or Joseph Schumpeter and to research and theory on the effectiveness of and problems with modern democracy [Dahl 1956, 1989; Manin 1997; Przeworski 2018]. An important insight into the connection between public opinion and deliberation can be gained by applying Timur Kuran's [1995] theory of preference falsification to a very recent example of deliberation in the constitutional process, namely, the political discourse on liberalising abortion rights in the Republic of Ireland. When the criteria for good deliberation are fulfilled we can aim to minimise the distortions between public and private preferences by laying open people's actual private preferences, and de facto show actual public opinion, all on the condition that the deliberative design minimises social pressures and bias and effectively communicates the results to the greater public. The preference falsification could remain persistent during the debates since there will be a bigger audience and some participants still feel the social pressure and are uncomfortable voicing their actual opinion. However, when it comes to the final poll, the results of which will be communicated to the public sphere, the participants fill out anonymous judgement questionnaires. In this situation the participant will not have an incentive to falsify his or her opinion. Therefore, we argue that the social pressure in this situation is less prevalent and following Kuran's argument we expect less preference falsification.

As to the question of how to scale up deliberative polls, Fishkin has set out to offer ideas on how to implement deliberative democracy on a larger scale in the US political process. We therefore now turn to the process of scaling up the method of deliberative polling. In the process of scaling up, we identified a number of barriers or problems along the way: costs, the quality of moderation and experts, the inertia of political institutions, and motivating people to participate. First and foremost, somebody has to *pay the bill* for deliberation. We have seen in the evidence presented by Fishkin how much effort it takes to achieve the 'good conditions for deliberation' (p. 73). There is a need to more carefully consider the feasibility of raising the funds for such a large-scale event. Furthermore, we are faced with the problems of organising enough moderators for the sessions and the very high number of competing experts that help citizens deliberate. There is valid concern that this could lead to lower-quality moderation and experts, which are very key elements in ensuring good deliberation. Apart from the problem of getting hold of enough personnel, we also see a problem with having the government instituting the moderation of the deliberative process, simply because we cannot ignore the partisan nature of government. This raises the concern that the current government can influence the process of deliberation through this channel, a scenario that does not seem unlikely, considering the motivation of those institutions to hold on to their power. We can observe evidence of this meddling of the government in the close relationship between the executive and the judiciary, as well as in attempts to change the electorate in one's favour (i.e. gerrymandering and excluding prisoners or former prisoners from the right to vote).

A further point we would like to address is the problem of sufficiently motivating people to partake in this democratic process, an activity that takes up even more of their time than the regular voting process. The typical tools to increase participation, namely mandatory participation and financial compensation, both raise serious concerns about the state of people's intrinsic motivation to participate. Crowding theory [Sandel 2012; Bowles 2016] offers valuable insights to understand how financial incentives can crowd out the individual's intrinsic motivation to contribute and participate. Fishkin seems to forget that material incentives do not always have a positive effect since it has long been known that rewarding or compensating people with money or material things can crowd out their intrinsic motivation [Warneken and Tormasello 2008; Belkin 2002].

As to the idea of a deliberation day, we reiterate the problem of identifying the challenges of financing such a big event. Not only will it be expensive to pay the organisational costs but also the compensation of the participants' salary will be an issue. Fishkin does not properly address this issue. The problem seems even larger, considering that one day of deliberation per year might not be sufficient to properly address the important issues on the agenda. Another important issue will be to organise enough moderators and experts for each poll. Fishkin's solution to this problem would be to educate a random participant as a foreman for moderation and debate and then invite experts from the different parties. We notice a major challenge in the assumption that the foreman will be able to act as an apolitical and balancing moderator while still participating in the deliberation, confronting the individual with a difficult dilemma. We now take a step back and start asking ourselves 'who is going to appoint the citizens that need to be trained as apolitical foremen?' This requires us to reflect on whether we need an apolitical organisation that randomly invites people to have this opportunity or if this is even possible since this organisation has to be funded by the current government and that could likely lead to a bias in the interest of the incumbent. Or maybe we need to make it mandatory for citizens to take part in this process. In doing so we might fear that the motivation for participation and being truly interested in the job as a foreman might be crowded out owing to the feeling that this is a burden being placed on citizens by the current state. This concern about motivation can be extended to general participants and we are unsure if Fishkin's solution of creating a national holiday and compensating participants would be either effective or adequate. Regarding the matter of experts, we highly doubt that it is fitting to equate political party representatives with experts. It would be bold to assume that party representatives would act in an unbiased way since it might be hard for them to separate the interests of the party from the actual facts of the issues at hand.

Lastly, we point out the issue of inertia in political institutions as we do not believe that Fishkin's proposal offers an adequate solution for assuring the political impact of this deliberation, keeping in mind that this was one of his four criteria for popular control.

All in all, Fishkin's newest book offers a great insight into the problems of our current democracies and makes a good case for adding deliberative democracy to the political process. We do, however, see many challenges to scaling up the concept to a national level and we would conclude that Deliberation Day cannot solve the trilemma between political equality, participation, and deliberation.

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Surendra Munshi (ed.): *Democracy Under Threat*

New Delhi 2017: Oxford University Press, 221 pp.

This timely edited volume aims to map the endangered state of democracies around the globe, to understand the potential causes of this crisis from various angles, and to explore plausible solutions. To this end, it brings together twenty contributors from fourteen countries with various backgrounds—academics, counsellors, diplomats, journalists, and political leaders. The book consists of twenty essays, which are grouped into six parts. Following the editor's introductory essay, the first two offerings explore threats to democracy from the perspective of leadership and institutions. The third part examines the growing influence of authoritarianism in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, East Asia, and Turkey and Russia. Afterwards, in the fourth part, the book delves into three specific threats to democracy—populism, caudillism, and dynastic rule. The last two sections investigate whether the West has failed in preserving and promoting democracies around the globe, and what insights we can draw from two prominent leaders—Václav Havel and Mahamata Gandhi—who upheld democratic values both in word and in deed.

In the opening essay, Surendra Munshi directs readers' attention to the famous 'end of history' remark made by Francis Fukuyama in his 1989 article. He argues against this interpretation by fleshing out the relevant contexts such as the general decline of democracy and its immanent problems, including legislative gridlock and gerrymandering, the increasing attractiveness of authoritarian alternatives, and the 2008 global financial crisis, whose origins can be traced to the old democracies. This nicely sets the stage for the next nineteen essays. Since a short review cannot do justice to the full range of contributions made by this diverse book, I will introduce the key arguments of five essays I found particularly intriguing.

To begin, an essay by Shlomo Avineri points out four challenges to liberal democracy in the West—the mass-elite representation gap, the mismanagement of economic crises, the rise of social media, and the inadequately handled large-scale immigration crisis. He ascribes voters' alienation to an out-of-touch parliamentary elite oblivious to daily concerns and problems of the wider public. For instance, he points out that the liberal left shifted their concern from the socio-economic needs of the working class to other socio-cultural concerns, such as the environment, global warming, gender equality, LGBT rights, race, and post-colonialism. He rightly argues that the liberal left (particularly the middle class and academics) should get out of their comfort zone and re-orient

their attention towards the bread-and-butter issues of the weaker groups in their societies.

The essay by Tarek Osman provides a nuanced understanding of the rise and fall of democratic development in the Arab world by evaluating the Arab Spring in the light of the region's history. He argues that the Arab world has been consumed by tension between Islamists and secular nationalists with two differing views—one side trying to retain the structures formed in the early 1950s and other side wanting to transform them. He warns that the West should resist its urge to intervene in the region with the aim of promoting democratic ideals, since this is more likely to exacerbate existing problems and cause new ones. Instead, he finds hope from emerging businesses and social entrepreneurs who utilise human, financial, and logistical capital and as a result decentralise power and advance the rule of law, checks and balances, and anti-corruption measures.

In his essay 'The Growing Authoritarian Influence in Democratic Systems', Chistopher Walker underscores how susceptible democracies (particularly unconsolidated new democracies) are to the intervention of authoritarian regimes in Russia or Iran. It details a wide range of 'negative soft power' examples that demonstrate the development and application of media (China's CCTV or Iran's Press TV), education (the Russia-supported NGO sector in Europe), and policy think, spreading confusion and misinformation and, as a result, undermining democracy. Walker argues that established democracies have been complacent by taking democratic ideals for granted, and he calls for the active reaffirmation and revitalisation of the core values of democracy.

A paper co-authored by Neelam Deo and Arjun Chawla highlights the issue of dynastic rule in India. The authors point out that the practice of familial succession in Indian politics became prevalent beginning with the Nehru-Gandhi family. They then argue that this now deeply-rooted practice has compromised the meritocratic principle of selecting the most deserving candidates for a leadership position. Moreover, dynastic politics has resulted in a shrinking of the political space outside the party structure and the blocking of opportunities for regional party leaders to move to the national level. These shortcomings notwithstanding, the authors also admit the upsides of dynastic politics in that it has been functionally equivalent to quotas for under-represented social groups (castes or tribes) and women.

In 'The Enduring Legacy of Western Dominance' Thomas Pogge shares his critical view of whether the West has led the world towards democracy. The answer is an emphatic 'no'. Pogge points out examples of how the West overthrew democratically elected governments, helped to build a worldwide network of tax havens, and purchased a large amount of natural resources from the leaders of developing countries without asking how they came to seize power. Going further, he also demonstrates the failure of the West in upholding its cherished democratic values in its concern to survive and prevail against its rival—for example, Gorbachev's attempt to democratise the Soviet Union came to a halt due to the West's lack of reciprocation, and the West has financially supported dictators when it has needed resources or military bases.

In sum, the contributions by multiple authors in this volume add to our knowledge about the status of democracy around the globe in the following respects. First, given the widely-present democratic-backsliding happening in both old and new democracies, the book clearly shows that no country is immune to authoritarian appeals and a simple dichotomy of the East versus the West is of limited utility. Second, although various forms of threats exist around the globe, it is evident from the

book that specific threats are more likely in particular regions. For instance, old democracies suffer from the backlash against immigration from under-developed/developing countries, while new democracies are more vulnerable to manipulative intervention from authoritarian regimes. In other words, there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Evident contributions notwithstanding, several of the book's limitations also need to be pointed out. First, many chapters fail to provide readers with potentially the most interesting details. For instance, Christopher Walker's paper details the ties, connections, and subsidies of authoritarian regimes to vulnerable democracies, without offering smoking gun evidence such as Russia intervening in the US election by targeting African-American voters in an attempt to suppress Democratic voter turnout using social media platforms. Works by Michnik (Chapter 7) and Kiniklioglu (Chapter 8) convincingly demonstrate the growing influence of authoritarian values in Eastern Europe, Russia, and Turkey with various related examples, (e.g. politicising religion, cracking down on homosexuality and feminism, promoting an anti-EU stance). But readers could have benefitted more if each paper pointed out who in each society is particularly vulnerable, how they are targeted, and why the authoritarian strategy has become particularly successful in the recent period.

Second, some of the measures suggested as the means to save democracy are too vague for us to draw meaningful guidance. Specifically, remarks made by various authors, such as 'good leadership includes… good vision and morality' (p. 109), 'the United States must elect a true statesman or stateswomen to the presidency' (p. 203), or '[p]eople should hear each other's aspirations, and pain, and develop solutions together that give everyone equality of opportunity and dignity' (p. 62), come across as no more than aspirational. Instead, the authors could have given real-world examples that demonstrate the living spirit of democracy and what concrete measures were taken to achieve this. For example, although Lu Hisu-Lien's chapter primarily describes them as victims of neighbouring authoritarian regimes, South Korea and Taiwan exemplify how new democracies can consolidate and function (e.g. peaceful mass protests resulted in the impeachment of President Park in South Korea,, while student occupation of the Legislative Yuan led to closer legislative monitoring of trade agreements in Taiwan).

Third, comparing the key messages from some chapters can leave readers wondering where we should go from here. For instance, on the one hand, one can draw from Axel Kaiser's chapter about populism in Latin America that the major force endangering democracy is the people's expectation of big government. By making reference to prominent thinkers such as Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, John Stuart Mill, Antonio Gramsci, or Friedrich Hayek, the author clearly argues that the root cause undermining democracy is the region's socialists pushing 'too much government involvement'. On the other hand, following Avineri (Chapter 3) and Maira (Chapter 5), we are offered solutions such as more responsible and inclusive intervention by the government in caring for weaker and marginalised groups in society and addressing the growing inequality caused by globalisation and financialisation. Regarding these potentially contradictory messages, the book could have been more complete had the editor devoted a concluding paper to reconciling different viewpoints between chapters and suggesting fruitful avenues for future research and policy measures in this ever-important topic.

All things considered, *Democracy Under Threat* provides an accessible overview of the state of democratic back-sliding observed around the world and the potential

causes behind this phenomenon. A wide range of intriguing examples offered by authors with various backgrounds will send a clear wake-up call to both academics and policy-makers that 'history has *not* ended' and democracy is not something we should take for granted. More than two years have passed since the authors completed their papers and the 'various threats to democracy' pointed out throughout the book have come to loom ever larger. According to the Democracy Index of the Economist Intelligent Unit [EIU 2017], which the editor used to describe the plight of democracy in 2016, the world was faring much worse in 2017: 89 countries experienced a decline from the previous year, many of which include downgrades from 'hybrid regime' to 'authoritarian regime'. And even at the time of my writing (January 2019), the two oldest representative democracies—the UK and the US—are experiencing legislative gridlock over the Brexit withdrawal bill and the budget for Trump's border wall, respectively. These events make the book ever more relevant, and it is particularly recommended for students of public policy and comparative politics.

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Hilary Appel and Mitchell A. Orenstein: *From Triumph to Crisis: Neoliberal Economic Reform in Postcommunist Countries*
Cambridge 2018: Cambridge University Press, 257 pp.

Within the simultaneous challenges of post-communist transitions, the construction of liberalised markets was typically forecast as impossible or, at best, as limited to specific windows of opportunity. Yet, post-communist countries have devised complex strategies to bypass the hurdles [Vanhuysse 2006]. And as Hilary Appel and Mitchell Orenstein's book shows, the region in fact exhibits a puzzling high embrace of neoliberal policies (p. 3). What is more, as the authors explore in great detail, this process did not unfold through a string of stand-alone episodes driven by right-wing power holders. Rather, because of an almost complete lack of prerequisites for functional markets, virtually all post-communist state-makers pursued neoliberal policies (pp. 2–5). According to Appel and Orenstein, the explanation rests on the underexplored process of 'competitive signalling', wherein the desperate need for capital galvanised the adoption of a globally hegemonic 'neoliberal consensus', above and beyond other transnational options or internal partisanship (pp. 4–6).

To begin with, the book parts with traditional transition studies by arguing for a clearer emphasis on the 'imperative of reinsertion into the global economy' (p. 5), rather than the more amorphously defined state–making-marketisation duality. Though the collapse of communism implied a high degree of institutional disintegration, Appel and Orenstein argue that at least a modicum of statehood did persist, whereas markets had been all but completely cut off for four decades (p. 16). Further urgency came from the fact that relatively similar economies across no fewer than 27 countries emerged all at once on

the global scene, all desperately requiring FDI, but possessing very few distinct competitive advantages and suffering a time-gap vis-à-vis other developing economies that had already been liberalising for a decade (p. 49). On a superficial level, against this highly uncertain background, neoliberal policy-making seems easily explainable: owing to the dire need for capital, post-communist countries simply had no choice but to accept whatever agenda was being pushed by the largest international creditors (p. 91).

On a deeper level, however, neither conditionality nor conventional arguments from the internationalisation literature (pp. 13–20) seem strong enough to explain why the 'Washington Consensus' neoliberalisation phase of the early-mid 1990s (Chapter 2) and the EU-mandated agenda of the late 1990s–early 2000s (Chapter 3) were followed by a seemingly voluntary stage of 'avant-garde neoliberalism' (Chapter 4). According to Appel and Orenstein, a more potent explanation lies in elite agency. Rather than being passive rule-takers, post-communist state-makers proactively used neoliberal policy-making to eke out a competitive advantage in attracting FDI. This is, of course, not a new theoretical concept: elite agency and proactive preference-shaping by post-communist policymakers were at the heart of Vanhuysse's [2006, 2007, 2009] studies of social policy. The way this worked in FDI was by 'signalling' the readiness of the economic-institutional environment of their respective countries to host, use, and develop FDI. If in its broadest sense 'neoliberalism' is a transnational policy paradigm comprising ideas about economic policy-making designed to develop unencumbered market economies (pp. 9–11), then competitive signalling through its emphasis on ideational constructions offers more wide-reaching explanations than any functionalist arguments.

The strength of the mechanism is two-fold. On the one hand, it centralises the policy environment to the detriment of structural variables in attracting FDI (pp. 127–131). On the other hand, it allows for a more fluid understanding of why and how governments on opposite sides of the political spectrum continued to push forward with neoliberal projects (pp. 44–50). This raises complex criticism of conventional transition theory, which, in its classical form, either totally ignores transnational developments (p. 178) or, when it does integrate them, takes a mechanistic approach wherein the transnational is just superimposed or leveraged against the national (p. 179). Quite clearly, because EU conditionality could not have been foreseen by the early 1990s literature (p. 180), the authors rightfully note that the strength of the mechanism lies particularly with the avant-garde, post-membership phase (Chapter 4). Notwithstanding, the strong point remains that competitive signalling opens up a research agenda in which the national and the transnational are co-constitutive.

Yet, though the book does erode deterministic views on the national-transnational interaction, some lingering gaps remain. For instance, the emphasis placed on the instrumental use of signalling downplays any intrinsically derived preference for neoliberal policy-making. While Appel and Orenstein do indeed note the role of transnational networks of reformers (pp. 46, 115), this is not fully explored and only given secondary causal weight. This is problematic because the ambiguous umbrella concept of 'neoliberalism', comprising both proven and experimental ideas, may have in fact dissuaded post-communist policymakers who, already faced with high uncertainty, may very well have opted for more straightforward transnational templates. Consequently, for signalling to accrue strength over time, despite failures and across partisan lines, it may have fundamentally required a complex process wherein 'neoliberalism goes local' [Ban 2016]. Such a nuanced take on national

agency does not invalidate the thrust against conventional transition studies or functionalist diffusion. Rather, it pushes the comparative ethos further by potentially shedding new light on the ebb and flow of differences in degree and in kind within policy-making agendas across post-communist countries (which is a self-admitted limitation—pp. 184–186).

Broadly speaking, the 'Washington Consensus' phase in the early-mid 1990s consisted of three major pillars: stabilisation, liberalisation, and privatisation (p. 39). The thorny question for the newly emerging post-communist economies was that while neoliberal reform opened up the possibility for development and potential growth, it also held the distinct prospect of unleashing job insecurity and the related social problems (p. 41). The key problem was that while in theory freed markets would reallocate labour more efficiently, this would require time and capital, the latter perhaps being in even greater short supply than the former (p. 36). Taken together, drastically rising inequality (pp. 39–41) and structural obstacles make it even more perplexing that, even above and beyond partisanship, most post-communist countries had cut subsidies, liberalised trade and currencies, and embarked on complex privatisation by the end of the 1990s (pp. 38–39). An extremely important facilitating factor was the fact that an otherwise small group of domestic neoliberals managed to leverage their transnational connections to both expand domestic networks and leverage connections to the West (pp. 46–47). It is crucial to bear in mind that, at the transnational level, financing bodies not only took neoliberal reforms as sine qua non conditions, but in fact pitted countries against each other (p. 46).

For Appel and Orenstein, the most illustrative example for their argument drawn from the Washington Consensus period is that of voucher privatisation. According to the authors, the wide use of 'an unprecedented, untested and experimental neoliberal policy' (p. 50) can only be explained through signalling. Quite clearly, the sheer scale of the privatisation challenge in post-communist countries limited the scope of pre-existing transnational templates (p. 52). This, however, is insufficient to explain the virtually across-the-board adoption, albeit at different speeds (p. 62), of a programme that was understudied even at a theoretical level. On paper, voucher privatisation would raise capital directly from citizens, bypassing the structural constraints of the state and the banking system. A secondary benefit would come from bypassing the factory-level power of inherited 'red barons'. In practice, however, voucher privatisation turned out to be quite difficult to manage, requiring much more institutional experience than predicted. What is more, the system did not in fact foment entrepreneurship, but only marred companies with an unclear system of management, ownership, and financing (pp. 51–55).

While the inconsistent results with the Washington Consensus would intuitively lead to a waning of the neoliberal impetus, EU accession negotiations in the late 1990s-early 2000s mediated not only the costs of the failures of the 1990s but also of the new ones that came with the acquis (pp. 65–67). This occurred because EU accession also implied a revamping of market institutions so that, after membership, post-communist countries would be not just continuous recipients of aid but 'prime sites for investment' (p. 66). In fact, full implementation of the Washington Consensus was a key component of the Copenhagen requirements (p. 75). Thus, above and beyond the failures of the 1990s, the promise of EU membership unleashed such a fierce competition based on neoliberal signalling that the EU had to revamp its initial accession strategy based on 'waves' (p. 71). Nevertheless, even the revamped system still meant individual evaluation, which was

accompanied by the credible threat, as exhibited by Romania and Bulgaria, that delays in any EU-mandated reform would generate a costly postponing of membership (p. 75). It was the sheer power of individual assessment that directly fed into a competitive signalling for neoliberal policymaking in spite previous experience of potential failure (p. 74).

The strongest proof for competitive signalling in this stage is offered, according to the authors, by what were otherwise the laggards of reform in the 1990s, namely Romania and Bulgaria (p. 79). Both countries started their negotiations in the early 2000s from what was not just an incomplete background, but even clear reversals of the 1990s' liberalisation attempts (pp. 79–82). Not only did EU negotiations curtail the waning of the 1990s impetus, but it in fact unleashed a new fervour for neoliberal policy-making in the key areas of prices, trade, land, and privatisation. Granted, the EU judged the 2007 accession to be premature in both cases and mandated an additional control mechanism (pp. 82–83). This does not, however, invalidate the argument that, on the whole, Romania and Bulgaria opted for a galvanised neoliberal policy-making that was both unforeseen from the vantage point of the 1990s and quite difficult to dissect with conventional theoretical models.

Chapter 5 explores the extremely interesting development that, even after the dire contingencies of the 1990s and the EU 'carrot' of the early 2000s, post-communist leaders still pushed forward with a neoliberal agenda (p. 91). The puzzle is sharpened by the fact that the strength of EU conditionality all but vanishes after accession. For Appel and Orenstein, the argument is that the highly visible adoption of neoliberal policies was again used to issue a signal to investors, particularly now that post-communist state-makers also had experience and data that backed up the correlation between policies and investment (p. 91). The most potent examples that amount to an 'avant-garde neoliberalism' are pension privatisation, which was not part of the Washington Consensus, flat-tax rates, and cuts to the nominal income tax (pp. 93–112). Granted, these turned out to be far shallower than previous developments, leading to many reversals (p. 155), particularly against the backdrop of the 2008 financial crisis, which eroded the ideational preference for neoliberalism (Chapter 6). Nevertheless, as the authors show in detail, the preference for such policies, which like many earlier examples from the 1990s were insufficiently tested, can be best explained through a recalibration of signalling—not to the EU or large financing bodies like the IMF, but to transnational capital in the form of FDI.

On the whole, Appel and Orenstein's book impresses with its analytical clarity and research scope. The central argument—competitive signalling—represents a significant addition to conventional explanations of transition, as it opens up a more flexible research agenda that blends structural constraints with the role of agency. In this line of thinking, the book crucially shows that radical institutional reforms can happen not just in specific windows of opportunity but in a longer-term horizon. While the comparative ethos would be enhanced by an even stronger emphasis on national agency, the book does nonetheless unearth important region-wide findings vis-à-vis the puzzling across-the-board attachment to neoliberal templates.

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Wolfgang Streeck: *How Will Capitalism End?*

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The last decade or so has witnessed what is to many a socio-economic system on the edge of collapse. Economic dysfunction proven by continuous economic crises and the increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of the few is causing havoc in our historically unprecedentedly but unequally affluent world. At the same time, political inadequacies in dealing with these economic problems have given rise to populist political movements and disillusioned voters. This is the crisis of democratic capitalism, and it harbours the start of the decay of capitalism. At least, this is the sobering prediction of Wolfgang Streeck's *How Will Capitalism End*? The book's sociological approach makes it part of a long line of capitalist critiques started by eminent scholars such as Karl Marx, JM Keynes, Friedrich Hayek, and Karl Polanyi, and contemporaries such as Immanuel Wallerstein and Craig Calhoun. However, until now capitalism has proven capable of surviving every lethal prediction and obstacle it has been exposed to. Streeck's argument, however, is different from previous ones. Capitalism will not be killed by its enemies, but rather it will die a slow and painful death from an overdose of itself.

In spite of the deep dysfunction of capitalism today, democratic capitalism actually successfully managed society during the Keynesian era. Stable economic growth allowed states to easily divide the fruits of capitalist operations with the rest of society, thereby legitimising the capitalist society in the public, and still leaving enough for capitalists to satisfy their need for more wealth. However, when post-war economic growth ended in the 1960s, tension arose as the conflict over resources became more explicit. States attempting to maintain the efficiency of capitalism implemented a series of solutions to satisfy the wants of the people, which could no longer be satisfied by getting a share of the spoils of economic growth. According to Streeck, none of the solutions provided long-term answers. Instead, they ended up causing further damage. The first of these state-solutions were to hold the promise of full employment at the risk of high inflation. This failed when stagnation came at the end of the 1970s. The second attempt was for states to finance welfare states through borrowed money, but when private debtors wanted their money back that solution also failed. It created what Streeck terms the 'consolidation state' (Chapter 4). The third solution was to liberalise financial markets to make it easier for citizens to borrow money privately, while states were allowed time to pay off theirs. However, when the financial crisis of 2008 hit this too was undone, as states had to take the bad private debt to avoid disaster. The endemic crises of democratic capitalism have thus not been solved.

In Chapters 4–8 Streeck addresses the political attempts to create an efficient environment for business mainly by letting free-market powers rule with as little government intervention as possible. In Streeck's opinion the institutional set-up of institutions such as the European Commission, the European Court of Justice, and the European Central Bank has profound con-

sequences. These institutions serve, politically, to enforce the neoliberal regime, and they are non-democratic in nature as they are exposed to no democratic pressure from the people. These non-democratic institutions and the high public debt that holds states accountable to private market forces above all else have resulted in the promotion of the language of capital rather than that of the people. Streeck here argues that the liberal capitalist state has practices similar to Carl Schmitt's authoritarian state.

This takeover of the market logic in democratic and governmental institutions, along with disappearing labour strikes, highlight how capitalism has defeated all its opponents. But this very victory has left capitalism without constraining institutions and left it to its own devices, essentially without self-control. Paradoxically, Streeck argues, it is highly problematic that capitalism has been left to its own, as there are inherent limits to market expansion, while capitalist behaviour on the other hand is without limits.

Keeping up demand for goods especially is an important constraint in Streeck's analysis. After the increased prosperity in the middle of 20th century and with the well-functioning welfare states, most people's basic needs had been met and thus demand for mass-produced goods saturated. Simply relying on the replacement of already bought goods was not enough for capitalism, so the advanced economies opened for trade with foreign markets. Domestically private companies attempted to create demand by specialising goods and advertising them through the creation of new consumer desires, such that consumers would even borrow money to buy them (Chapter 3).

The big question that remains is whether capitalism can solve the crises that follow capitalist behaviour. The series of crises of democratic capitalism has all been solved temporarily, but the scars are still with us. Streeck points to three long-term trends in this respect: a persistent decline in the rate of economic growth, rising economic inequality and a persistent rise in overall indebtedness. Streeck argues that these trends will prove too big a task for capitalism in the long run. While other scholars have argued capitalism might evolve in other forms, Streeck is sure that it will disappear—but only after a long interregnum in which capitalism is neither dead nor alive.

It may well be true that we can see in today's capitalist consumer society a fondness for fancy material objects that shields citizens from realising the deeply exploitative relationship between capitalist mechanics and their own lives. Larry Bartels [2008], in *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the new Gilded Age*, shows that most Americans want a more equal society. However, when push comes to shove, they still support tax cuts—even when they only help the rich—thereby creating higher inequality. Until citizens realise capitalism's role in the dysfunction of capitalist society, capitalism will not be blamed. Instead, 'dangerous immigrants' and 'corrupt politicians' are the ones blamed for either taking jobs from the middle-class or not protecting citizens from the fair workings of a free market.

This appears in line with Streeck's argument, even though he really claims capitalism's own workings will lay the foundation for its dissolution. Streeck backs away from wanting to predict the future specifically, but in so doing what he attempts to answer (how will capitalism end?) becomes highly bendable and post-hoc adjustable. Streeck does not make it clear how capitalism really is going to dissolve. Will it be a crisis of nature? Is it the high inequality and the following lack of demand for goods? Or another key cause? The author merely reiterates that capitalism will dissolve from its inherent contradictions.

At the same time, one cannot help but noticing that capitalism has been able to

solve every crisis it has created until now. So why can't it continue? It thus remains worth asking whether capitalism might survive in another form. Rodrik [2011] argues that either de-globalisation or further integration into an international society are potential solutions to the current problems of capitalist society, thus suggesting regulation of capitalism instead of replacement. In the end, while 'only time will tell' may be cautious but thin as a conclusion. But if you are interested in understanding the dynamics of capitalism that are partly invisible to the naked eye, this is the book to start with.

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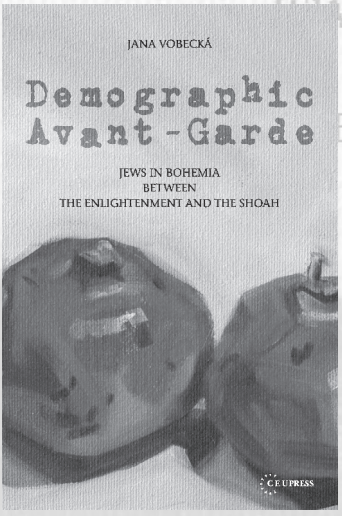

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