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SOCIAL AND SPATIAL CONTINUITIES AND DIFFERENTIATIONS AMONG PORTUGUESE CIGANOS: REGIONAL PROFILES

MARIA MANUELA MENDES,¹ OLGA MAGANO² AND PEDRO CANDEIAS³

Abstract. The coexistence of people and societies marked by ethnic, social, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity is a subject that still generates controversies in contemporary societies. The “Ciganos’ situation” is an unavoidable issue that crosses the boundaries of different European countries, which leads to controversy and ambivalence in the so-called multicultural and/or intercultural societies characterised by the principle of universalism. In Portugal, despite the social and economic transformations that have occurred, the problems of exclusion and poverty among Ciganos persist. They are still considered the poorest ethnic group, with the worst housing conditions, least schooling and the main target of racism and discrimination. The Portuguese Ciganos are not a homogeneous community. The diversity and plurality are not always easy to grasp by the glare generated by the adoption of interpretive perspectives that are reductively linear and deterministic of the Portuguese Ciganos. For the purpose of outlining a national picture of Portuguese Ciganos, a national study was developed that combines both qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches. The central goal of this article is to present the main results obtained through a questionnaire survey carried out to Ciganos persons and to discuss the social and spatial continuities and differentiations among Ciganos in Portugal.

Keywords: Ciganos, Roma, social continuities, social differentiations, Portugal

Introduction

The “Ciganos’ situation” crosses the boundaries of different European countries, which leads to controversy and ambivalence in the so-called multicultural and/or intercultural societies and which are characterised by the principle of

¹ Faculty of Architecture, University of Lisbon, Portugal; Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE-IUL), CIES-IUL, Lisboa, Portugal, e-mail: mamendesster@gmail.com.

² Portuguese Open University (UAb), e-mail: olga.magano@uab.pt.

³ ICS, Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon and SOCIUS, Research Centre in Economic and Organizational Sociology, Lisbon, Portugal, e-mail: pedromecandeias@gmail.com.

universalism in social policies. The Portuguese Ciganos [corresponding to the English “Gypsies”] do not self-identify with the word “Roma” or “Roms”, but with the term “Ciganos”, with the exception of some mediators, association leaders and people with average and higher education, activists and members of Roma movement, who know this designation. For this reason, we chose to use in this text the term “Ciganos”, when we refer to the Portuguese Roma⁴. Despite the social and economic transformations that have occurred in the Portuguese population in general and in the Ciganos population in particular since 1974, with the turn towards the implementation of the democratic system, the problems of exclusion and poverty among Ciganos persist. They are the poorest ethnic group, with the worst housing conditions, least schooling and the main target of racism and discrimination. According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA, 2012) and the World Bank (2014), Roma individuals and families are severely affected by social and economic vulnerability, which results from a complex set of factors that are all linked together. The empirical evidence of a research performed by the FRA (2012) in 11 Member States shows that 80% of Roma respondents were at risk of poverty⁵. The highest levels belonged to Portugal (almost 100%), Italy and France. The results show the existence of strong disparities between the Roma and the non-Roma: on average, less than one in three Roma individuals has a paid job and one in three non-Roma respondents living among or in the proximity of impoverished Roma settlements is unemployed (FRA, 2012). Specifically in France, Italy and Portugal, only about one in ten individuals aged 20 to 64 years old holds a paid job. In fact, Ciganos are in a disadvantageous position when applying for a job, not only due to the lack of educational and professional credentials, but also because sometimes they are discriminated against (FRA, 2012). This project was probably the most extensive research that has involved the largest number of participants: 11 countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain), 22,203 households and data from 84,207 household members. From a methodological point of view, the research was relatively innovative, establishing a comparison with the non-Roma population living near the Roma. Thus, these 22,203 responses do not concern only the Roma people but also the non-Roma who reside in areas of high concentration of Roma. Methodologically,

⁴ Ciganos speak Caló or Romanon/Romanó, which basically encompasses a range of regional dialects of Spanish with numerous Romani loan words.

⁵ The at-risk-of-poverty rate is the share of people with an equivalised disposable income (after social transfer) below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60 % of the national median equivalised disposable income after social transfers. In http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:At-risk-of-poverty_rate [Last accessed: 22.05.2016].

this strategy can be especially useful in countries where there is a high stigma associated with the Roma self-identification. These are individuals and families characterised by an unavoidable cycle in which there is a self-perpetuation of unequal opportunities, discriminatory practices and hard to achieve aspirations.

The national bibliography reveals several changes and transformations that marked the living conditions, socio-economic and cultural practices of Portuguese Ciganos (Mendes, 2007; Lopes, 2008; Nicolau, 2010; Magano, 2010; Bastos, 2012; Brazzabeni, 2012). The studies on Ciganos before the Portuguese Revolution (25th April, 1974) focused on the search of ethnological features and involved especially residents in rural areas at the end of the 19th century (Coelho, 1995 [1892]) or in the 1970s (Nunes, 1996). The Revolution, “in which the restoration of democratic system resulted in the stabilization of citizenship rights, enshrining civil and political rights and broadening and deepening social rights” (Pereirinha e Carolo, 2009: 5) has led to the implementation of the principle of universalism in public policies. This guiding principle reinforced the responsibility of the State and society in general to promote the improvement of living conditions for all citizens. Nevertheless, recent data indicate disparities among Ciganos and non-Ciganos in important areas, such as education, employment, health and housing (Mendes et al., 2014). In order to ensure the existence of effective policies for the integration of the Roma in the EU, in 2011 the Commission proposed the issuing of national strategies for integration or, if these already exist, their adaptation to achieve EU objectives related to Roma integration (European Parliament, 2011). These objectives are based on four important areas, which are also the key axes that guide the National Strategy: access to education, employment, healthcare and housing (ACIDI, 2013).

There is no statistical information on Ciganos at national level, since the Portuguese Constitution sets several restrictions on ethnic statistics and any other element allowing the ethnic identification of citizens. The recently published national study on Ciganos communities (Mendes et al., 2014), which was developed in the framework of the Portuguese National Strategy, seeks to solve this shortcoming in the national scientific arena. The completion of this study enabled the elaboration of a social, cultural and economic picture related to the “Ciganos communities”. This designation is used by the High Commissioner for Migration and it conferred the title of the study funded by this institution. The authors understand that, in general, it is not possible to talk about “Ciganos communities” in the sociological and anthropological sense. The use of this designation tends to homogenise and reify interpretative perspectives about Ciganos persons. In fact, the fieldwork with Ciganos persons residing in the same space reveals various different forms of lifestyles, cultural traits and multiple identity statements.

Our survey from 2014 allows us to portray general aspects about the living conditions of the Portuguese Ciganos, and also to depict the intra-heterogeneity that marks Portuguese Ciganos, reflected in social and geographical differentiations and some continuities.

Theoretical context and the relevance of the study

Although since the 1990s there has been an increase in the number and quality of studies related to Ciganos in Portugal, qualitative studies of local neighbourhoods and well delimited geographical areas have prevailed (Sousa, 2010; Mendes, 1997 and 2007; Nicolau, 2010; Magano, 2000 and 2010; Casa-Nova, 2009; Castro, 2004; Lopes, 2008, Blanes, 2006; Brinca, 2009, Bastos, 2007 and 2012; Brazzabeni, 2012; Silva, 2015). There is a gap in terms of longitudinal studies and a lack of statistical data on characteristics and lifestyles of the Portuguese Ciganos because of the difficulty in gathering data due to constitutional restrictions, but also because of the difficulty in delimiting the sampling frame (the population) and the selected sample as such, for example, it is difficult to delimit a Cigano individual (Messing, 2014). The criteria more frequently used are the self-identification and hetero-identification. In the national context, several studies have tried to demystify the essence that normally involves the excessive homogenisation of the Ciganos concept (Mendes, 2007; Magano, 2014; Mendes et al., 2014), namely concerning the social and cultural characteristics and lifestyles that vary according to residence area and type of housing, family history, social interaction with the surrounding society and social status.

“The Roma” concept is a complex and multidimensional one, assigned to a vast diversity of groups and sub-groups broadly defined as Roma (Ivanov, Keller, and Till-Tentschert, 2015: 2), with the objective of using a non-pejorative designation that may refer to all Roma. However, this general convention is relatively recent and not always accepted passively by all those who consider themselves as being Ciganos, Manoush, Gitanos etc. this designation is vulgarized in EU countries (Simhandl, 2009). Roma identity is a multidimensional concept, a complex construct that can be associated with numerous different elements, constructing complex and dynamic combinations and not a static frame. It gains different connotations in different historical contexts. The same applies also to the way Roma present themselves to others, making Roma identity quite situational and reflexive, defined vis-à-vis the non-Roma.

Referring to the situation that characterises Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, Marushiakova and Popov (2001: 33-34) draw attention to the importance of considering the imprecise and fluctuating data and the non-existence of a model to triangulate the data. So, the best solution is to combine the data from

different surveys and censuses with personal observations, and subject them to critical analysis. However, the results of this approach are only approximate. Another problem is how to establish who the “genuine” Roma are and how to distinguish the Roma identity. Sometimes some of these people do not want to be recognized and do not wish to declare their ethnic identity for the fear of repressions or because they want to be socially invisible, still others often cannot understand the questionnaires.⁶

Thus, the differences among Roma and the territorial inequalities associated with Roma population are addressed in the international academic literature. In the research project “Poverty and Ethnicity in Central and Southern Europe: 1999-2000” coordinated by Iván Szelényi a questionnaire survey was carried out to the Roma from six countries (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia) and it was concluded that living in the capital was negatively related to poverty in Hungary, Romania and Russia. On the other hand, living in rural areas was positively related to poverty in Poland, Romania and Russia (Czismady, 2003). Likewise, the results of the survey regarding the Roma conducted by the United Nations in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia indicated that the lack of food was higher in the rural areas (UNDP, 2003). These results are not only obtained in large international researches. In the study on unemployment of Roma in Hungary (Kertesi and Kézdi, 2011), it was established that this group was over-represented in certain regions of the country, with a greater proportion living in villages and rural areas, especially in villages classified as distant, with few connections to economically important cities and characterised by high unemployment. Finally, it should be noted that, in the study on church attendance of Roma in Romania (Rughiniş, 2011), living in non-urban areas was considered a significant predictor to the frequency of attending religious worship gatherings and ceremonies.

Methodology

The national study carried out in Portugal was funded by the High Commissioner for Migration and included a variety of methodologies: interviews to experts, on-line surveys to local authorities, face-to-face surveys to Ciganos persons and validation of profiles obtained by the Delphi method. The objective was to report the complexity of the living conditions of Ciganos in Portugal by crossing data of several sources and perspectives of different social actors. In this article, we focus on presenting the questionnaire survey carried out face-to-face to

⁶ Marushiakova and Popov say “that the official statistical censuses reflect about one-third of the real number of Gypsies in each country” (Marushiakova and Popov, 2001: 34).

Ciganos individuals and families living in mainland Portugal. Taking into account the difficult access to this population and supposing that the majority of the Ciganos population lives in groups (clustered), the door-to-door surveys were not viable since they would have high costs and the results would be restricted to a small sample and of questionable quality (Bjerkan and Huitfeldt, 2004: 26-27).

Thus, in this study and in the implementation of the questionnaire survey to Ciganos we used a procedure inspired in the adaptive cluster sampling (Thompson, 1997: 294), a technique developed in order to query population of difficult access. Specifically, the procedure was as follows: in a first phase some territorial areas were randomly selected to be inquired (clusters). In a second moment, we tried to deepen the fieldwork in those areas where more individuals belonging to the intended target group were found; the areas where few individuals were found were left out. The areas which we had reliable information provided by the mainland municipalities and other sources that large number of Ciganos were living there had been included. The initial points of gathering information were diversified and while choosing them we took into consideration the information from interviews to socio-institutional agents and from surveys performed to local authorities, whose response rate was 54%, as well as previous studies (SOS Racism, 2001; Castro, 2004). It is known that Ciganos are distributed relatively dispersed throughout the country, it's possible, however, to highlight some areas of greater agglomeration, such as the municipalities of the two metropolitan areas (in AM Lisbon, 30.0% and AM Porto, 23.3%) and the Alentejo region (20,0%). The largest geographic concentrations occur in the districts of Lisbon, Setúbal and Porto, appearing after secondary areas of concentration some municipalities of the Alentejo, Algarve, from the northeastern and Beira Baixa. In spite of the predefined survey areas, according to the largest cores of geographical concentration of Ciganos population: Trás-os-Montes e Minho, Porto metropolitan area and Tâmega, Centro e Beira Interior, Lisbon metropolitan area and Setubal region, Alentejo (Alto, Baixo, Litoral), Centro and Algarve, the objective was to diversify the analysed areas (urban, rural and peri-urban profiles).

Among the main criteria we considered in order to obtain an adequate sampling of Portuguese Ciganos, it should be noted that: the sample should be representative of Ciganos (sociological and not statistical); it should have the sufficient dimension to perform solid analyses of the different subgroups within that population; and it should enable the comparison between the Ciganos and non-Ciganos (Bjerkan and Huitfeldt, 2004: 26). The sample encompassed a certain internal diversity through the formation of indicative quotas, taking into account sex, age, and *habitat* (rural/urban), social status, schooling and residence in areas of high/low concentration of Ciganos, which corresponds to different profiles of Ciganos in Portugal. Among Ciganos there is a diversity of

situations and social positions, and in Portugal little is known about interclass differences between Ciganos elite, the middle classes and the working class (Gamella, 2013). In addition, there are Ciganos whose families have always been integrated and benefit from greater acceptance either due to their high socio-economic status, or due to an upward social mobility, often based on a distinctive pathway of academic and vocational qualifications (Magano, 2010; Sousa, 2010). Although, most likely, there is a tendency to survey Ciganos residing in areas of higher concentration of coethnics. An effort was made to also inquire the segment of higher status Ciganos (groups that had been identified in previous studies) and to include as well residents from areas with high concentration of non-Ciganos. Despite this effort, how much of these groups are represented in the sample (as well as in the population the sample was extracted from) remains unknown. As regards citizenship and place of birth, the target population was Portuguese Ciganos, who represented 99% of the respondents. The remaining less than one percent of non-Portuguese Ciganos (largely born in Spain and with Spanish citizenship) were surveyed because they were culturally related to the Portuguese Ciganos and lived in the same habitats.

It is impossible to quantify/estimate the Roma population, even in countries where ethnicity is declared in the general census of the population, since it is not viable to accurately calculate the error associated with these estimations/samplings. It is recommended in the literature to combine the data of questionnaire surveys with qualitative information gathered from the interviews to experts (Rughiniş, 2010: 354).

One of the methodological problems underlying the survey to Ciganos refers to the means of identification. Therefore, in the survey, we used as key criteria the ethnic self-affiliation, in which the person identifies himself/herself as Cigano (Ladányi and Szelényi, 2001: 81). The question over ethnic self-identification was not a filter question (the interview continued regardless of the response); however, self-identification was registered for each respondent.

The interviews to social-institutional actors (NGOs, public services, churches, mediators, Ciganos representatives) allowed to map and characterise, on a preliminary basis, the survey population, namely if the Ciganos persons live in well-identified communities, in big groups or in small groups or even in isolated areas where mainly non-Ciganos population lives (Rughiniş, 2010: 360-361), the constraints and the opportunities of integration and some of its basic characteristics that were considered while composing the quotas (with correspondence to profiles).

In the face-to-face survey we involved non-Ciganos and Ciganos interviewers alike. However, we were aware that the viability of this type of research project depended on the nature and clarity of its goals/purposes, but especially on the involvement of the members of the minority group in the

preparation and implementation of the survey (Bjerkan and Huitfeldt, 2004: 8). One of the problems in this type of studies is the distrust of Ciganos to participate in questionnaire surveys. We tried to guarantee the cooperation of active (Ciganos and non-Ciganos) organisations/institutions/associations in the surveyed areas and to consolidate the contact network of the research team, which resulted from their previous research experience dating back several years. In the surveys to experts and in the Delphi method it was also possible to reckon on the collaboration of representatives of the Ciganos persons and families.

The survey to Ciganos was addressed to a representative of the household and included a number of questions that allowed us to get to know some basic characteristics of respondent's household (one survey per household); the other questions were addressed to the respondent. Apart from data collected from the respondents, we elaborated ethnographic notes and respondents filled in records, so that it was possible to obtain context information (such as those related to the habitat), which gave us a more enhanced perspective concerning the living conditions of the respondents. We also tried to use indicators similar to the ones provided by official statistics, so that it was possible to establish comparisons with the non-Ciganos population (Milcher and Ivanov, 2004: 11).

The lack of consensus and reliable estimates of the size, composition and distribution of Ciganos in Portugal imposes additional constraints. The National Strategy for the Integration of Roma in Portugal (ACIDI, 2013) estimates between 40 and 60 thousand Ciganos citizens. The sample design was based on data obtained from previous studies (Castro, 2006; Castro, 2007; REAPN, 2009 and IGOT-UL, REHURB, 2013), and also on expert interviews and an on-line survey addressed to local authorities performed earlier within this study. Given the already mentioned limitations of national and international sources and the absence a quantitative consensus on the number of Ciganos in Portugal, in the initial phase the sample size was calculated using Epi Info 7. Taking as a maximum size a population of 60,000 individuals, and attempting at an 80% confidence and a maximum error of 5%, a sample of 1,500 persons would be required. Our fieldwork managed to exceed this number and we eventually covered 1,599 households.

The survey was elaborated on the basis of available information from qualitative studies on the main characteristics of the living conditions of Ciganos, and it was structured taking into account the following dimensions: i) labour market, ii) accommodation and housing conditions, iii) health and nutrition, iv) education, v) social and political participation, vi) social representations and practices, vii) traditions and identity features. A pre-test was performed in order to validate the questionnaire.

The survey was carried out between April and July 2014. The interviewer team was composed of more than 100 interviewers, some of them Ciganos themselves. Interviewers took part in a prior training on the implementation of the survey, with detailed explanation of the interview guide. The fieldwork was facilitated due to the cooperation of active (Ciganos and non-Ciganos) organisations/ institutions/ associations in the survey areas and to the contact network of some team members of the research. The questionnaire was answered by people at the minimum age of 16 years (no maximum age was defined), of Portuguese citizenship and only by one person from each household. 1,599 individuals were interviewed from 68 municipalities (out of a total of 278 municipalities in mainland Portugal): 940 women (58.8%) and 659 men (41.2%). Foreigner Ciganos without Portuguese citizenship were not considered for this study.

Results: a first national portrait of Ciganos in Portugal

All counties were covered in the mainland territory: we interviewed 1,599 individuals and collected information about 6,809 persons (members of respondents' households). A brief socio-demographic analysis of households' composition points at a young population with a mean age of 24 years. On average, households were composed of 3 people. According to their educational level, the total population living in the surveyed households is distributed as: i) 15.5% are illiterate; ii) about 30% do not have complete the first cycle (4 years), or never attended school; iii) approximately 39% only completed first cycle and only about 6% had the 3rd cycle (9 years); and iv) only 2.5% completed secondary education or higher. In general, these data are in line with the available studies in Portugal and suggest that Ciganos have low levels of education and often drop out from compulsory education (Bastos et al., 2007; Mendes, 2007; Nicolau, 2010). The main sources of livelihood are based on family support (33.8%) and Social Insertion Income (33.5%).

In the group of 1,599 respondents who provided information about the whole household the average age is 36 years, but half of them were below that age. The average age at marriage (including stable cohabitation) is 18 years, and half of the interviewees married when reaching 18 or before. Only 25% of the sample married above 19. The overwhelming majority of respondents are descendants of Cigano father and mother (91.7%). Thus, well-established endogamy practices (Mendes, 2007) can be said to enhance strong intra-group homogeneity. The average number of children is two. These data reflect the tendency of decreasing fertility rates that has been reported in other studies as well (Mendes, 1997 and 2007). With regard to the use of Caló (or Iberian

Romani, is a variant of the Romani language or dialect) 20% said they never use it, and 21% use this language sporadically, while 43% report speaking Caló every day (Figure 1). As one can see in the Figure 1, there is a polarization between those who seldom if ever use Caló and those speaking it frequently. Future studies may explore the factors underlying this frequent use of Caló. Our fieldwork observations suggest that Caló language is not frequently spoken at home, but rather in external contexts, as a form of communication that allows some privacy in front of the non-Ciganos.

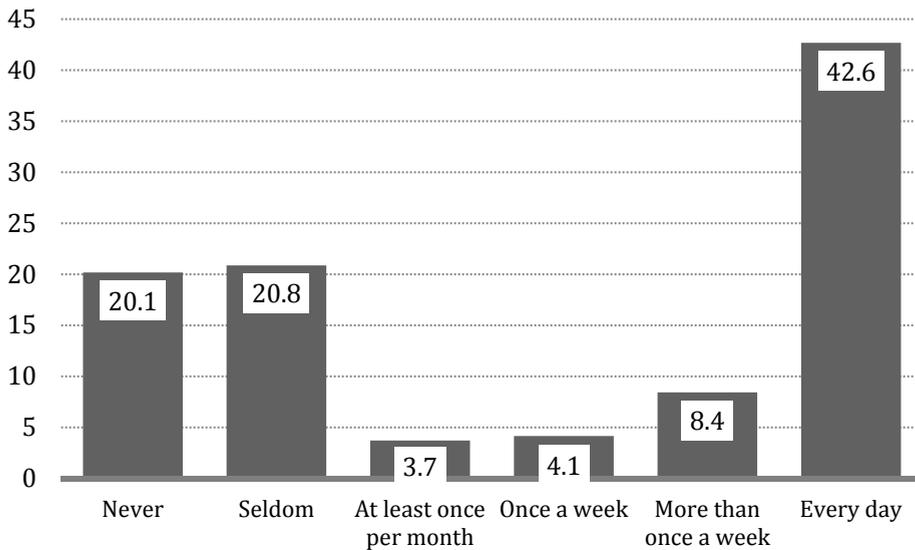


Figure 1. Frequency of the use of Caló (%)

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

It is important to highlight only some of the more revealing results on the socio-economic situation of Portuguese Ciganos that clearly point out the fact that the inequalities in the surrounding society are very prominent and persistent. The collected data show sharp differences between the educational levels of Ciganos and non-Ciganos, but also between Ciganos men and women. Thus, about one third of the 1,599 respondents does not exceed primary education or has never attended school, and only 2.8% have finished secondary or higher education (Mendes et al., 2014).⁷ In the European context, school segregation

⁷ General data about the Portuguese society show that in 2014: 8.9% couldn't read or write; 19.2% had finished secondary education and 16.5% higher education. See <http://www.pordata.pt/Portugal>, [Last accessed: 6.03.2015].

and other forms of discrimination are also common. We have identified exclusion dynamics affecting Roma who attend school: classification procedures are generated and Roma are moved to special education classes, while their presence in higher education is very small (IRS, 2008).

The aforementioned schooling levels are not equally distributed in the country; it is possible to highlight some regional patterns. In fact, more than half (54%) of Ciganos from the North region were registered only in the first cycle of primary education (complete or incomplete); in the Central region there are more people that cannot read or write (28%); and in Alentejo and Algarve the situation is even worse, with 39% who cannot read or write, while with 38% were only registered to the first cycle of primary school. When comparing with previous generations, one can state that nowadays there are more in the education system, especially in the first years of schooling, but the majority still cannot exceed the first and second cycles of primary education (Cortês, 1995; Mendes, 2012; Nicolau, 2010). Since the 1990s, several measures have been implemented in Portugal that helped to increase the schooling levels of the population (for example, Projects of Intercultural Education (PEI), the Educational Territories of Priority Intervention Programme (TEIP), the New Opportunities Programme (PNO), the Choices Programme (Programa “Escolhas”), the PIEF - Support Programme for Education and Training, recently amended to PAQUIEF - Integrated Programme for Education and Training). It is also known that the social integration income (RSI), introduced in 1997 with the designation of minimum income guarantee (RMG), was the policy-measure with the most impact in the increase of schooling levels, in the reduction of high rates of drop-out and school failure. Since then, many Ciganos citizens participated in programs of adult education (back-to-school education and literacy courses), vocational education and other training activities and compulsory school attendance that had an impact in the promotion of schooling levels among Portuguese Ciganos (Gomes, 2013). Despite the improvement of education attainment levels of Portuguese citizens, there still are persistent inequalities between Cigano and non-Cigano people, as well as gender differences that affect Cigano women (Mendes, 2007; Magano, 2010).

Concerning the economic activity, 18% have paid jobs while 57% are unemployed or looking for the first job, or have never worked (Mendes et al., 2014). In this respect, it is clear the performance of labour activities was understated (the respondents understand work as a contractual activity, in the formal economy, with regular salary and social rights). This situation contrasts with the results obtained in other qualitative studies performed in the Lisbon and Porto metropolitan areas, where half or more of the interviewed persons were active (Mendes, 1997 and 2007). This empirical evidence can reveal a tendency to reinforce the precarious socio-economic conditions of this population by

informal, precarious labour. Low-skilled, labour-intensive and monotonous work, along with traditional professional activities, is still common: street trade, agricultural labour, work in cleaning and constructions. This is in line with several studies that have revealed that the main professions/occupations of Ciganos are connected to commercial activities. Many of them continue to work at fairs, markets, in the street or door-to-door (Lopes, 2008; Mendes, 1997 and 2007; Magano, 2010). Their presence in informal sectors (collection and sale of scrap, cleaning activities, Internet sales, bivalve molluscs harvesting, agricultural activities, activities related to the construction sector) and a progressive inclusion in the formal sector (sometimes at the expense of hiding their ethnic identity) should also be mentioned. The majority of Ciganos continue to take up independent economic activities (employers and self-employed people), while remaining at low levels of professional qualifications. It appears that the structural impact of social policies, such as the social integration income, is not very visible and emergent (Branco, 2003). On the other hand, some Ciganos persons continue to value more independent economic activities, which allow them to manage in a more flexible way their labour and family life (Lopes, 2008). Among those who enter the labour market, it is clear that men are more likely than women to get higher-skilled jobs. This distinction is directly connected to schooling and training levels of both genders (Magano, 2010; Mendes et al., 2014). Ciganos women are struggling with difficulties that are shared by other women in a society that is not inherently equal, and among Ciganos women are still very subordinate and subjugated by cultural tradition or “Gypsy sexism” (Nunes 1996: 93; Casa-Nova, 2009), that assigns higher value to the social role of men and assigns women a subordinate position. Subordination to men remains constant throughout the life cycle of Ciganos women (Magalhães, 2005).

Among Ciganos the duality honour/ shame (Peristiany, 1988) is present in their culturally embedded law and morality, which govern relations between men and women. Ciganos women interviewed in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area (Mendes, 2007) are aware that they live in a situation of institutionalized inequality endemic to the Ciganos, and few women question this situation. Other studies, carried out in the neighbouring Spain, also find that women very rarely put into question their subordinate position, or the values of male authority and female obedience, internalized from an early age as something necessary, as a factor of cohesion and group harmony (Presencia Gitana, 1990).

However, the persistence of inequalities in accessing the labour market does not emerge only from the low schooling levels among Ciganos. In fact, this situation is the consequence of a complex and cumulative discrimination process (Higgins and Brüggeman, 2014) that falls upon Ciganos. In the perspective of Standing (2015) the transformation of social structures produced a new class

structure at the global level and within each country, and a new category of the “precariat”, characterized by chronic uncertainties, irregular employment and lack of financial security. Within the precariat several subclasses could be depicted, such as those who fail to ensure a professional carrier with constant returns, or others who are excluded from the mainstream society, have low market capacity and their work remains precarious, fragile and unstable, associated with randomization, informalisation, deregulation etc. The precariat is characterized by insecurity in access to basic rights and by relative deprivation.

According to our survey, the ratio of people who use the social integration income as their main source of income is higher than the ratio of people who depend mainly on a job. The percentage of people depending on allowances and retirement pensions (3.9%), temporary subsidies (illness, unemployment and others), social support (3.0%), or odd jobs (1.8%) is not significant. On the other hand, it is important to highlight that this population is very young: approximately 34% are still in the care of relatives (Mendes et al., 2014). We can conclude that the results obtained in relation to the income sources of the interviewees and their families, show that they live in a situation of dispossession that more generally occurs in capitalist societies. Capitalism created dispossessed social groups that do not fall within the working classes in the classical sense or in other possible classes, and there is a sharp distinction between the working class and the poor (Kasmir and Carbonella, 2008).

The regional differentiation of profiles

The objective of this section is to identify differences in the respondent’s profiles according to their region of residence. In order to meet this purpose, the following steps were taken in analytical terms: i) first, a set of relevant variables was selected; ii) afterwards, several *principal component analyses* (PCA) (Marôco, 2010) with the selected variables were performed until a satisfactory and coherent model was obtained; iii) in the third stage, some counties were aggregated due to the small number of replies. Finally, the factorial scores of PCA were assessed taking into account the average value per county. The analysis of these results was also supplemented by other variables of the questionnaire survey and some official statistics.

A set of variables related to several characteristics of Ciganos in Portugal was selected. These variables refer to their socio-economic status, socio-cultural features, continuity of education, and differentiation by gender and housing

conditions⁸. With these variables, a principal component analysis was performed; the objective was to reduce the information concerning these variables to new components independent of each other. The Kaiser criterion was used and no kind of rotation was performed. The KMO statistics and the Bartlett test were used as quality indicators of the principal component analysis. The KMO varies between 0 and 1; higher values are preferable. The reference value is 0.5, in this case, the obtained value was 0.665, which is satisfactory. The second one, the Bartlett test, was significant ($p < 0.001$), which justifies the use of the obtained factors. The factor loadings, as well as the variation percentage explained by each component, are presented in Table 1. The factor analysis extracted five components: 1) One first component is associated with self-employment, street trading, unemployment and access to social benefits (the last one is negatively related to the first and second ones). 2) The second component aggregates the attitudes towards gender differences. 3) The third component isolates items connected to some housing problems. 4) The next component aggregates indicators associated with formal employment and contributions to Social Security. Finally, the fifth component refers to indicators linked to socio-cultural characteristics, namely church attendance frequency, Ciganos origins and endogamy.

Table 1.**Factorial model**

	1	2	3	4	5
Street trading (<i>dummy</i>)	0.63	-0.28	0.28	-0.22	0.09
Unemployed (<i>dummy</i>)	-0.59	0.26	-0.21	-0.16	0.02
Self-employed (<i>dummy</i>)	0.58	-0.22	0.19	-0.45	0.11
Social work beneficiary (<i>dummy</i>)	-0.56	0.33	-0.25	-0.13	0.15
Boys should attend school longer than girls (<i>Likert</i>)	0.31	0.58	-0.06	0.13	0.12
Boys are more important than girls (<i>Likert</i>)	0.32	0.52	-0.04	0.20	0.03
Women should perform deep mourning (<i>Likert</i>)	0.21	0.52	-0.12	0.14	0.05
Men should take the major decisions in the family (<i>Likert</i>)	0.47	0.49	-0.03	0.15	-0.06
Women shouldn't argue with husband (<i>Likert</i>)	0.38	0.48	-0.12	0.00	-0.17

⁸ While there are arguments against the use of dummy variables and Likert scales in the same model of factor analysis, there is no consensus in the literature to discourage its use, therefore the analysis was performed.

	1	2	3	4	5
Home humidity (<i>dummy</i>)	-0.22	0.27	0.69	0.01	-0.06
House is cold (<i>dummy</i>)	-0.29	0.41	0.57	-0.05	-0.12
Noises at home (<i>dummy</i>)	-0.13	0.16	0.56	-0.04	-0.09
Employee (<i>dummy</i>)	-0.18	-0.16	0.15	0.69	0.35
Social Security contributor (<i>dummy</i>)	0.14	-0.29	0.17	0.52	0.40
Cigano spouse (<i>dummy</i>)	-0.18	0.19	0.11	-0.34	0.61
Cigano ancestor (<i>dummy</i>)	-0.01	0.17	0.01	-0.31	0.54
Church attendance frequency (intensity scale)	0.19	0.10	-0.14	-0.04	0.34
Explained variation (%)	13.3	12.4	8.6	8.0	6.9

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

During fieldwork we tried to cover all mainland counties; however, some of them had a low response rate, so that it was necessary to aggregate some of the counties with a lower number of answers (the original distribution and the subsequent aggregation can be found in Annex 3).

A little bit over one fifth of respondents (22%) live in Lisbon, 14% in Porto and 10% in Faro. The three counties that are part of the Alentejo region (Beja, Évora and Portalegre) represent 16% of the sample. The following step consisted in analysing the distribution of factorial scores (obtained through the principal component analysis) by counties.

Precarious work and unemployment

The first component (Figure 2) associates a higher number of self-employed people and pedlars and street vendors with Lisbon and Setúbal (LMA or Lisbon metropolitan area), but also with Castelo Branco, Braga and Viana do Castelo (Beiras and Minho). Bragança and Vila Real are characterised by a high number of unemployed people and social service beneficiaries⁹. Alto Douro and Trás-os-Montes have the counties most burdened by interiority (geographical and economic marginality; to be far from the coastal zone) and by peripherization and spatial exclusion processes. The data from Aveiro and

⁹ Positive responses were received to this question by all respondents who received some kind of social benefit, whether this where combined with other sources of income or not. It is not possible to know exactly the proportion of respondents who would have as only source of income such benefits.

Coimbra are not so evident but are also relevant. According to the Final Report of the Social Cohesion Benchmark (Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos 2015), the situations with low labour intensity, associated with work regimes that are less regular and structured, are more frequent in the Lisbon and Porto metropolitan areas, in Douro valley (especially north of Viseu and Vila Real) and Algarve. Simultaneously, the regions that are more affected by unemployment are the interior of Alentejo, Setúbal region, and the municipalities of the left shore of Tejo and Algarve. In the north, one can highlight Greater Porto and all north coast.



Figure 2. Self-employment and street trading versus unemployment and social services beneficiaries

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

This situation is not dissimilar to the one observed by the World Bank for some countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Gatti et al., 2016: 9-10) with the identification of several forms of precarious, unstable, and informal jobs. Limited access to quality education has resulted in important constraints to employability for many Roma and the long periods of unemployment and low wages are often driven by mismatches between the specific skills that employers require – both technical and non-technical – and those usually possessed.

Partially, the results observed in Portugal are also explained by respondents' schooling levels, since the counties where individuals are better educated present the most relevant scores of this component ($R^2=27\%$)¹⁰.

These component scores are also related to the self-evaluation of living conditions¹¹. The regions with negative scores of this component, associated with unemployment and strong dependency on social benefits, are also the geographical regions where few people evaluate positively their living conditions. In the opposite direction, the areas where there are higher scores related to informal employment and trading, are also the areas with more people evaluating positively their living conditions ($R^2=16\%$).

The distribution of these scores by county was also related to some official statistics at the territorial level, more specifically the population density and the average monthly income of population in general. Firstly, there is a correlation between this factor and population density (Figure 3). That is, informal employment¹² presents a greater importance in counties whose population density is higher. The underlying rationale is that informal employment practiced by Ciganos, mostly as pedlars and street vendors, needs a component of active demand that will exist only in some of these regions and among their residents.

Equally relevant for this component is the average monthly income (Figure 4). Here too, the relationship is positive in the sense that in the regions with higher average monthly income there is also a greater share of the informal sector and a lower share of social pension beneficiaries. On the one hand, a contagion effect may exist related to the majority population, as there are greater economic difficulties in regions with less income. A second supplementary explanation is that this informal employment consists of services and sales provided to the majority population that will search for this type of work/services depending on their income. According to IESE (2015), the North and Central part of the country present the worst situations in terms of income levels. In contrast, the best situation is observed in municipalities of the LMA (Lisbon and Setúbal).

¹⁰ The percentage of respondents by district that have lower secondary education or higher (9 years of schooling or more) was used as schooling indicator.

¹¹ The answer options were: 1. Lives in poverty. 2. Is poor. 3. Is in an average/normal situation. 4. Lives well. 5 Is rich. The percentage of respondents that chose option 3 or 4 was used as indicator. It should be noted that no respondent chose option 5.

¹² Although the component refers to self-employment and street trading, in this text, this one is also referred as informal employment, since the component 4 has as indicators the paid employment and the contributions to Social Security.

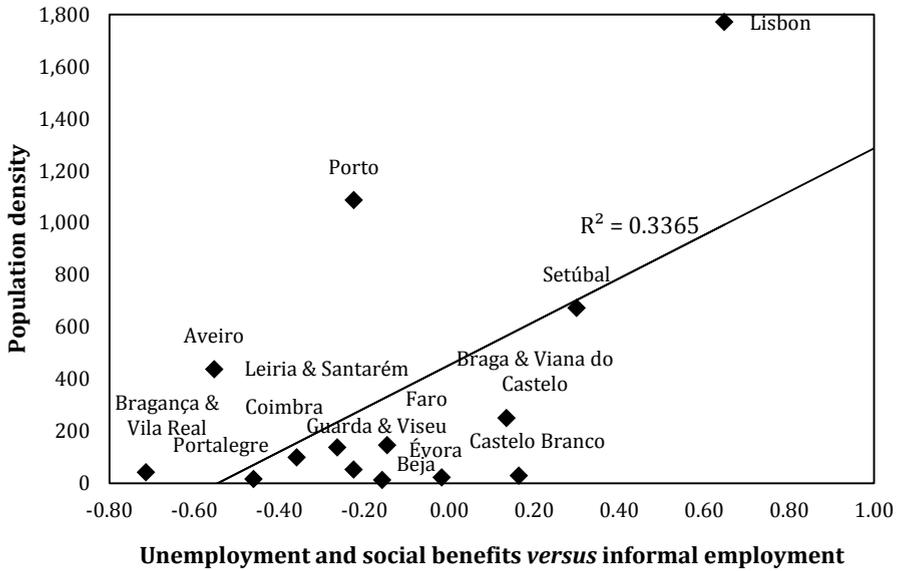


Figure 3. Unemployment, informal employment and population density

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

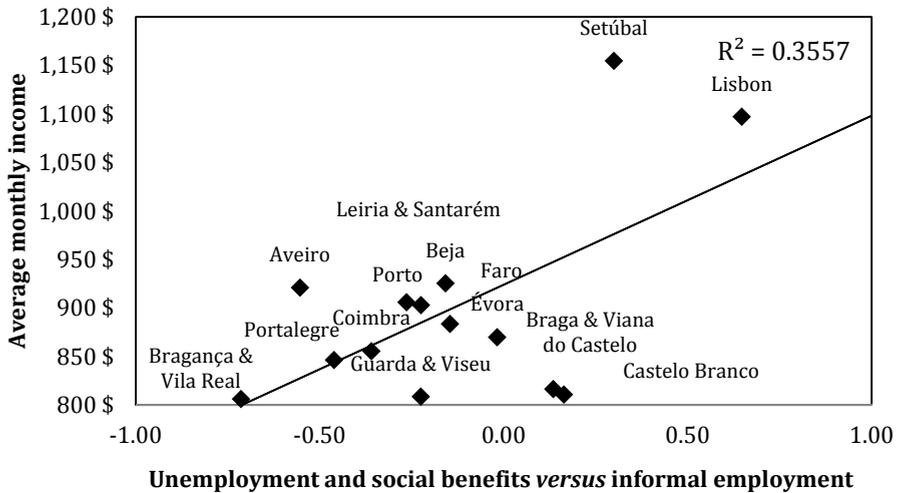


Figure 4. Unemployment, informal employment and average monthly income

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

Gender attitudes

The second component refers to some attitudes towards gender differences (Figure 5). The territorial analysis demonstrates residents in municipalities of Beja and Faro are more linked to the preservation of cultural traditions (more “traditional”) in terms of gender norms. At the opposite end, more equalitarian attitudes can be observed in Lisbon, Bragança and Vila Real.



Figure 5. Attitudes towards gender differences

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

In search for potential explanations, we looked first at friendly relationships between co-ethnic people. The regions with more respondents declaring to have mostly Ciganos friends¹³ are also the regions where the attitudes towards gender differences are shaped by tradition ($R^2=30\%$). This can mean that little contact of friendship with the exogroup limits the adoption of more open or equalitarian attitudes towards gender relations. Simultaneously, friendly relationships in the endogroup can generate a reproduction of traditional values present in the communities. In accordance with this indicator, the correlation ($R^2=13\%$) with the proportion of respondents whose parents are both Ciganos (in relation to those who have one parent that is non-Ciganos) should be also relevant in the same direction, i.e. the existence of both Ciganos parents might generate a higher closure in the endogroup by reinforcing traditionality through endogamous social closure strategies.

Second, formal education may also play a role, so that we looked at the proportion of individuals with higher schooling levels in the region¹⁴ in relation to differences in gender attitudes. In this case, the correlation ($R^2=24\%$) is negative. That is, in counties where the schooling level of the respondents is generally higher, the traditionality (the preservation of tradition) towards gender norms is not so pronounced.

In the light of these, we can conclude that contact with educational institutions and the larger society (and with non-Ciganos) can lead to a decrease in sexist attitudes due to the social transformation of Ciganos' cultural norms. If the Ciganos do not live in isolation but as part of society, they will also experience the transformations of social relations within and outside of the family.

Housing problems

For the third component, some indicators of housing problems are aggregated (Figure 6). They live mostly in houses of the classical type of social rent, with 3 rooms (outside of the kitchen and bathroom), spending on the maintenance between 51 € and 200 €. There are less housing problems in Setúbal, Bragança, Vila Real, Leiria and Santarém. In contrast, the IESE (2015) concludes that the most deficient conditions are registered in rural areas with low population density, in particular, in the majority of the municipalities of Baixo Alentejo and Alentejo Litoral. Alto Alentejo and the North coast are also included. In rural localities with high scores, the characteristics that hold the greatest influence on the score of this indicator are the lack of infrastructures, the overcrowding and the existence of non-classical houses.

¹³ The respondents had to select one of the following options *The majority of your friends are:*
 1. Ciganos. 2. Ciganos and non-Ciganos. 3. Non-Ciganos.

¹⁴ As an indicator of schooling level, one used the proportion of individuals with lower secondary education or higher.

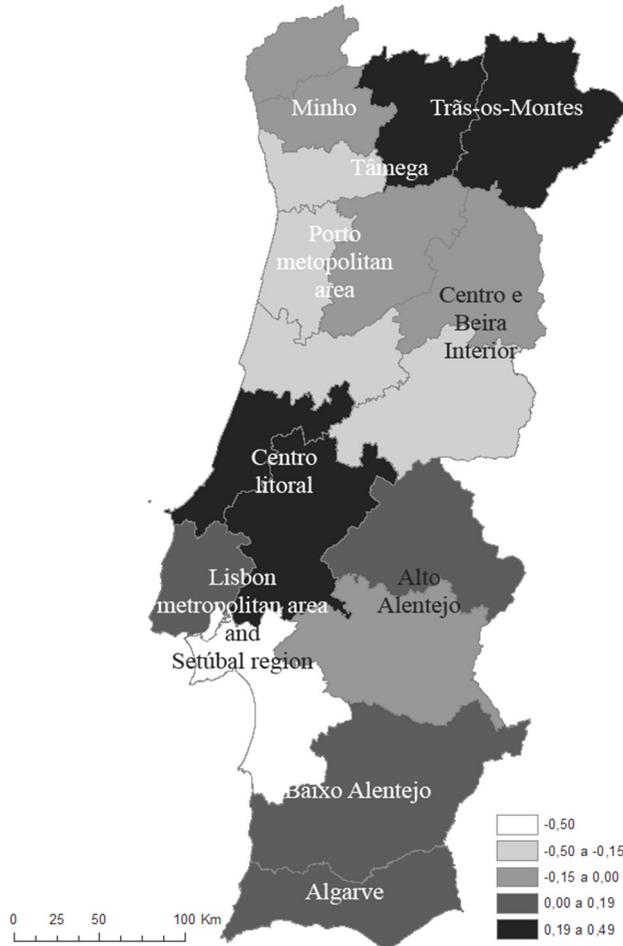


Figure 6. Housing problems

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

These housing problems are correlated with some factors of aggregate level that result from the questionnaire survey. In particular, higher scores belong to counties with a higher proportion of residents in shanty towns¹⁵ ($R^2=21\%$) and to counties with longer-term residence¹⁶ ($R^2=12\%$).

¹⁵ Questionnaire survey data.

¹⁶ The respondents were asked how long they had been living in the same house.

Formal employment

The fourth component (Figure 7) is composed of two indicators of formal employment (paid employment and contributions to Social Security). The lowest scores are found in Aveiro, while Portalegre is the county with the highest scores for this factor.



Figure 7. Formal employment

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

The scores of this component are negatively correlated with a positive life assessment concerning the intergenerational¹⁷ perspective (29%). That is, in the regions with more employees and more contributions to Social Security, the

¹⁷ The following question was asked *How do you classify your life when comparing it to the life of your parents?* The answers were 1. It is better now. 2. It is the same as theirs. 3. It is worse now. The indicator used was the percentage of individuals that selected answer 1.

intergenerational assessment is not so positive. In accordance with these results, there is also the correlation of scores concerning social discrimination perception¹⁸ at county level ($R^2=13\%$). Such results point to the conclusion that paid employment (formal labour contracted by an employer) involves greater contact and stronger interrelation with the majority population, which also leads to a greater exposure to possible situations of discrimination. In turn, this will have impact on individuals' intergenerational assessment of their situation.

When correlating our data with the official statistics, it is relevant the share of the tertiary sector in the total active population (Figure 8). In other words, there seems to be a contagion effect, that is, the majority of the work performed by the interviewed population belongs to the service sector. There is also a relevant share of agricultural labourers and construction workers, but not as high as service providers. This is more relevant in counties where there is an increased labour supply in this sector.

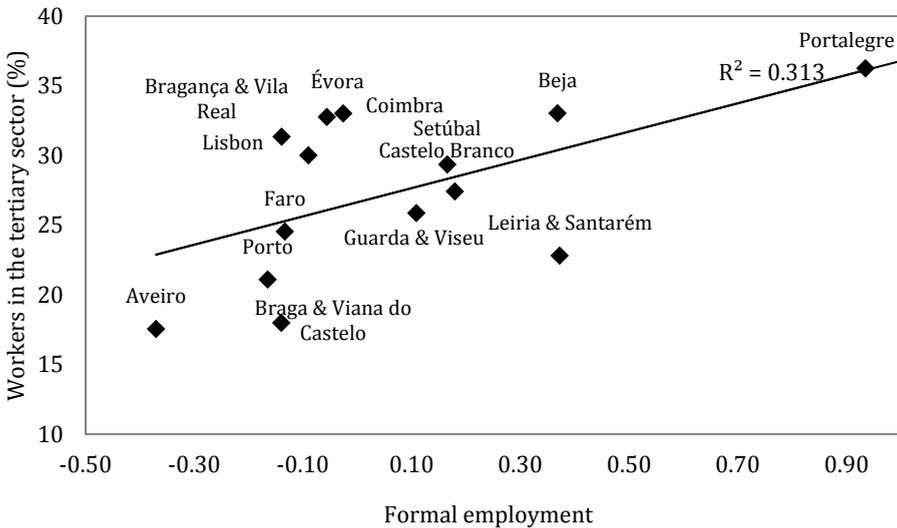


Figure 8. Formal employment and contributions to Social Security and the proportion of workers in the tertiary sector

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

Regarding Social Insertion Income (RSI) it should be noted that the share of households whose main source of income RSI is 38%, while the remaining most frequent situations are to be in charge of the family (38%) and live mainly

¹⁸ The following question was asked *Have you ever felt discriminated because you are a Gypsy?* The indicator used was the proportion of individuals that answered affirmatively.

from work (10%). This question appeared in the questionnaire as a matter of exclusive answer, thus it is not possible to know from the survey possible conjugations of this benefit with other sources of income. Since RSI is a stable source of income, it is assumed that this has sometimes been indicated as the primary source of income, taking into account the variability of the other sources. Note that in the individual questionnaire (n = 1,599) 915 respondents claim to have as their main source of income RSI, while 13% also performed activities as a peddlers / market traders.

Culture and tradition

The last component relates some indicators regarding socio-cultural aspects (Figure 9). There is a smaller share of people with Ciganos origins and

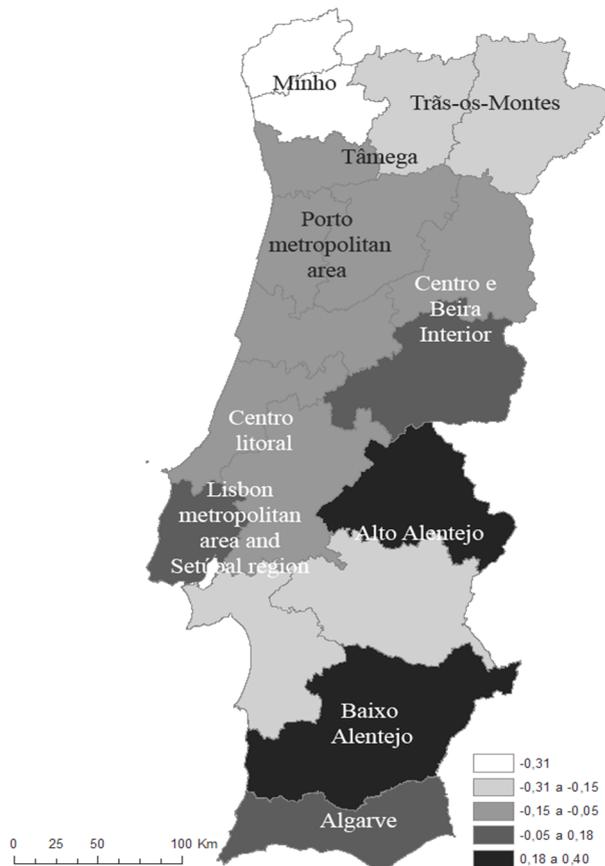


Figure 9. Culture and tradition

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

Ciganos spouses and a reduced religious worship frequency in Braga, Viana do Castelo (Minho), Bragança and Vila Real (Trás-os-Montes). On the other hand, Portalegre and Beja (Alentejo) have the highest share in this factor.

For this component, there is a negative correlation with the schooling indicator at the county level ($R^2=19\%$). Nevertheless, without more information, it is not possible to understand which the causal factor is. That is, it might be that higher schooling levels involve lower participation in religious worship and also choice for non-Ciganos spouses.¹⁹ On the other hand, it might be possible that Ciganos origins, endogamous marital relationship and high participation in religious worship make it difficult to continue formal education in the school system.

Final remarks

With this analysis it was possible to grasp some regional nuances, mostly related to the singularities that characterise the socio-territorial information about these families, their coexistence with the local societies and the integration policies developed by local authorities and other local institutions and services. We have found some diversity concerning the social profiles, but also territorial patterns, which indicate a certain socio-economic assortment of Ciganos individuals and families.

The results of the questionnaire survey allowed us to get to know the socio-demographic characteristics of households and other dimensions, such as living conditions, employment, health, sociability, religion and social discrimination. It was possible to determine some distinctive characteristics between profiles. These profiles were validated by local experts, and mediators confirmed this diversity among Ciganos (Mendes et al., 2014).

The results obtained from the national study allowed us to conclude that Portuguese Ciganos continue to be largely affected by poverty and social exclusion. Of course, some social policies introduced in Portugal in the last 40 years (since the turn towards democracy) have effectively contributed for the improvement of their living conditions. However, there are significant differences between the living conditions of the Portuguese Ciganos and the Portuguese population in general. The old forms of social inequity expressed in poverty, poor housing conditions, low educational levels, difficult access to the labour market, uncertain incomes and sometimes dependency on social incomes, i.e. “witnessed imprisonment in poverty” (Wacquant, 2014) still exist. Furthermore, the empirical evidence can prove on the one hand a tendency to strengthen the precarious socio-economic conditions of this segment of the population and, on the other hand, it reveals less autonomy in parents’ lives.

¹⁹ Clearly, the Ciganos origins are not considered in this hypothesis.

Finally, we are certain that the data obtained at the regional level is extremely useful for understanding the differences and the contribution of Ciganos to the diversity in plural societies and can inform national and regional policies (Messing, 2014). In fact, the universalism of social policies (equal dignity to all citizens) has not produced the desired results regarding the reduction in levels of poverty, exclusion, discrimination and racism against Ciganos.

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ANNEXES

Table A1.

Descriptive measures of variables included in the model

	%	Average
Street trading (<i>dummy</i>)	22.6	
Unemployed (<i>dummy</i>)	77.3	
Self-employed (<i>dummy</i>)	23.6	
Social work beneficiary (<i>dummy</i>)	68.2	
Boys attend school longer than girls		3.3
Boys are more important than girls		2.2
Women should perform deep mourning		3.4
Men should take the major decisions in the family		3.6
Women shouldn't argue with husband		2.9
Home humidity (<i>dummy</i>)	55.9	
House is cold (<i>dummy</i>)	53.2	
Noises at home (<i>dummy</i>)	57.4	
Employee (<i>dummy</i>)	15.8	
Social Security contributor (<i>dummy</i>)	18.4	
Cigano spouse (<i>dummy</i>)	85.7	
Cigano ancestor (<i>dummy</i>)	91.7	
Church attendance frequency		
Never	22.4	
Only on holy days	7.8	
Once a month	11.6	
Once a week	13.0	
More than once a week	34.3	
Every day	10.9	

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

Table A2.**Average of factorial scores per geographical unit**

	1	2	3	4	5
Aveiro	-0.55	0.09	-0.22	-0.37	-0.11
Beja	-0.16	0.71	0.15	0.37	0.30
Braga and Viana do Castelo	0.13	-0.07	0.00	-0.14	-0.31
Bragança and Vila Real	-0.71	-0.23	0.37	-0.14	-0.20
Castelo Branco	0.16	-0.10	-0.28	0.18	0.18
Coimbra	-0.36	-0.02	-0.22	-0.03	-0.10
Évora	-0.02	0.21	-0.03	-0.06	-0.15
Faro	-0.15	0.42	0.13	-0.13	0.16
Guarda and Viseu	-0.23	-0.14	-0.03	0.11	-0.05
Leiria and Santarém	-0.26	-0.02	0.49	0.37	-0.13
Lisbon	0.65	-0.39	0.19	-0.09	0.06
Portalegre	-0.46	0.07	0.10	0.94	0.40
Porto	-0.22	-0.08	-0.15	-0.16	-0.08
Setúbal	0.30	-0.09	-0.50	0.17	-0.20

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.

Table A3.

Residence county of the respondents and county aggregation

	n		n
Aveiro	144	Aveiro	144
Beja	125	Beja	125
Braga	30	Braga and Viana do Castelo	41
Viana do Castelo	11		
Bragança	23	Bragança and Vila Real	41
Vila Real	18		
Castelo Branco	44	Castelo Branco	44
Coimbra	80	Coimbra	80
Évora	80	Évora	80
Faro	166	Faro	166
Guarda	23	Guarda and Viseu	51
Viseu	28		
Leiria	18	Leiria and Santarém	83
Santarém	65		
Lisbon	346	Lisbon	346
Portalegre	48	Portalegre	48
Porto	220	Porto	220
Setúbal	130	Setúbal	130
Total	1,599	Total	1,599

Data source: National Study on Ciganos Communities, 2014. Authors' calculations.



FOGGY DIASPORA: ROMANIAN WOMEN IN EASTERN SERBIA

ANNEMARIE SORESCU-MARINKOVIĆ¹

Abstract. Drawing on ethnographic and anthropological research on the Romanian communities in Eastern Serbia, this article seeks to contribute to the global scholarship on diaspora and migration. It reveals interesting differences between the well defined and intensely studied notion of “diaspora” on the one hand, and the understudied, but useful concept of “near diaspora” on the other. First, the presence of Romanians in Eastern Serbia is looked at from a gender perspective, in the wider context of feminization of international migration. Second, the paper argues that the Romanian women in Eastern Serbia adopt the strategy of living in the “social fog”, thus becoming what can be termed “foggy diaspora”.

Keywords: diaspora, women and gender, migration, Serbia, Romania

Preamble²

It was already midday in the torrid summer of 2003 when the second Vlach lady I tried to talk to that day about local traditions and customs saw me off to the gate. Wearing a long black skirt, faded t-shirt and dark head scarf, under which strands of grey hair could be spotted, and bracing herself on a thick wooden stick, probably carved from a branch of one of the trees behind her shriveled house, she waved with a wrinkled hand in the direction of the bridge. She was old, she said, and could not remember a lot of things. Furthermore, she could not speak proper Romanian, only the broken speech from her village, stuffed with Serbian words, as she claimed. But, she added, there were real Romanian women (*românoaice*, as opposed to the local *rumânce*) in the village, who would for sure know much more and better than she did. Maybe I even knew them from Romania, she encouraged me. They also came to work.

¹ *Institute for Balkan Studies, Belgrade, e-mail: Annelia22@yahoo.com.*

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My “work” back then, as a 25 year-old researcher, was to gather material for my PhD thesis, which was meant to offer a comprehensive image of the Vlach folklore and mythology. As my thesis was supposed to dive into the current situation on the field, the first step was to establish a reasonably large network of Vlach settlements, of almost 150 in Eastern Serbia, and to conduct interviews with the inhabitants. As a Romanian native speaker and language professional, with sound knowledge of Romanian dialects, I thought communication with the locals would flow unimpeded. I was wrong. In the beginning I made a fool of myself trying to disguise my standard Romanian accent under a local palatalized pronunciation, and inserting in conversation Romanian archaisms I would randomly pick up from the scant memory of dialectology courses I attended in faculty, and Serbian words, whenever I would think fit, or when my high Romanian was met with frowns or bewilderment. Another mistake was that I would ask, in Romanian, to talk to *români* (Romanians), about their traditional culture. Back then I was not aware of the huge difference between the two words that sounded almost the same: *români* and *rumâni*. While in standard Romanian both terms mean Romanians and Vlachs alike, the Vlachs make a strict distinction in their local dialect: *români* are the Romanians living on the other side of the Danube, in Romania, while only *rumâni* refers to “themselves”.

The Vlachs were thus quick in categorizing me: young Romanian woman, who has come, as tens of others, to their village in search of work. The Romanian women whom I met during my field trips in every Vlach village I put step into – or, better, I was directed to – were also there to work. As bartenders in the village tavern, to take care of senior residents, to work in the field. They also spoke Romanian, like the local Vlach community, but their Romanian was different. Different was also their Romanianness, the Vlachs felt. These “new” Romanians were looked down upon in many instances.

The first to draw attention on the Romanian women settled in the Romanian indigenous communities in Serbia, Romanian anthropologist Otilia Hedeşan wrote, in 2007:

After 1990, an important number of women from Romania who crossed the border with nowadays Serbia married Serbian citizens belonging to one or another Romanian community in this country. The reality in the field confirms the fact that, after almost ten years from these events, these women try to play a specific cultural role in the groups they have entered. Their “voice”, their opinion about the world they are living in and about the world they come from can already be found in a series of documents obtained as a result of ethnological research. (...) The list of such situations remains open, and the topic should be accepted as such and studied in perspective (Hedeşan, 2007: 283).

Their voice can still be heard today, but only if you are keen on hearing it. They can be seen by those who pay close attention, but not because they want to “Romanize” the region, as it has been suggested. On the contrary, most of the Romanian women living in Eastern Serbia prefer to keep a low profile.

The stereotypes of Romanian migrants in Serbia as poor and desperate women who would do anything to marry a Serbian citizen and settle here, or as deprived men prone to crime and even murder, as woven into sensationalized stories in the Serbian media, surfaced as implicit or explicit allusions during my discussions with Vlach residents. It is my aim in this paper to bring forth the voices of the Romanian women living in Eastern Serbia. Using data collected from in-depth interviews with those who came and settled here after the fall of the Romanian communist regime, I try to examine the strategies of adapting and of survival of the interviewees. In so doing, I seek to contribute to the growing scholarship on migration, diaspora and genders studies and, in the same time, to bring to the attention of international academia this Romanian community.

Migrant women, near diaspora and the social fog

The movement of people has always involved the participation of women. Migration research has long recognized the important role women play in migration flows (Pfeiffer et al. 2008), challenging the conventional wisdom that women are generally “dependents” and move only as wives, mothers or daughters of male migrants. Due to several factors, it is increasingly women who migrate in the modern era (Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk, 2005: 52), a phenomenon which has been described as “the feminization of international migration” (Gabaccia et al., 2006). Today, women account for nearly half of the world’s population of international migrants (Morrison et al., 2008). The role of women in destination labour markets and in remittance flows is getting ever more important in understanding the development of international migration, and “theoretical and empirical models that omit gendered determinants and impacts of migration are missing key elements of the story” (Morrison et al., 2008: x).

The percentage of women taking part in migratory processes continuously grows, due partly to the modification of population structure in developed countries (through aging), and partly to the increased need of caretaking services, mainly provided by women (Phizacklea, 1998; George, 2005). In addition, marriage is an important strategy for women seeking to migrate. This is usually understudied, one reason being the assumption that marriage is a social contract based on affection and mutual commitment, which downplays the pragmatic aspect (Sorescu-Marinković, 2012b: 229). As Fan and Huang put it in a study on female

migration in China, “the social-romantic and pragmatic facts of marriage are often intricately intertwined and difficult to observe independently. The decision for marriage and migration are also intertwined, so that it is very difficult to determine if marriage motivates migration, or if the desire for migration induces marriage” (Fan and Huang, 1998: 229).

Migration research suggests that patterns of international migration vary significantly between men and women. In any international migration model, “considerations of gender are likely to become increasingly critical as the female share of international migration rises” (Pfeiffer et al. 2008: 13). I will explain the gender pattern of recent Romanian migration to Eastern Serbia by analyzing the push and pull factors behind the process. Drawing on the narratives of my interviewees, I examine the complex relationship between gender, decision to emigrate, labour market in the host country, strategies of coping with the new environment and perceived distance from home.

Gabriel Sheffer (1986) described labour migrants as incipient diaspora. The probability of labour migrants actually becoming a diaspora is often determined by the quality of the diasporic network established in the host country, which can be facilitated by “legal frameworks and accidental circumstances” (Trandafoiu, 2006: 132). In this paper, I will show how the incipient Romanian diaspora in Eastern Serbia has transformed into a *near diaspora*. As Van Hear puts it, “a distinction may be drawn between *near diasporas* (a term echoing Russia’s “near abroad”) spread among a number of contiguous territories and those scattered further afield” (1998: 240). Even if the use of this concept has been limited to a specific geopolitical context, and migration and diaspora theorists have not developed it, it deserves our attention. Distance proves to be a crucial factor here. The Romanian diaspora of Eastern Serbia has characteristics which significantly differ from those of the *distant Romanian diaspora* in Western Europe. While there is a substantial number of studies on Romanian migrants and Romanian diaspora from Western Europe or other continents, research on the diaspora in the countries neighbouring Romania is yet limited. The existent academic papers on the Romanians near the state borders focus on Romanian historical or transborder communities, which are not to be mistaken for “near diaspora”.

Looking for an overall definition of diaspora, Brubaker (2005) identifies three core elements: *dispersion* (interpreted as forced or traumatic dispersion or more broadly as any other dispersion in space, provided that it crosses state borders), *orientation to a homeland* (real or imagined, as an authoritative source of value, identity and loyalty) and *boundary maintenance* (the preservation of a distinctive identity vis-à-vis the home society). I argue that, even if these elements can be safely applied to distant diasporas, when it comes to near diaspora, a necessary distinction must be made. On the one hand, the orientation is always

towards a real and geographically easily reachable homeland; on the other hand, boundary maintenance is rather weak and in many instances is even replaced by the wish to go invisible, in what can be called *social fog*.

The concept of *social fog* has been used to describe the reciprocal alliance between irregular migration flows and informal economies. Irregular migrants produce *social fog* “as they evade control and identification by hiding from the state in their modes of working and living” (Bommes and Sciortino, 2011: 222). By analyzing the narratives of my interviewees regarding the reasons for their coming to Serbia and their experience of integration and adaptation, I argue that they adopt the strategy of going invisible in the social fog. However, I use *social fog* with a slightly changed meaning. As they try to evade identification and stigmatization, my respondents create social networks within the home society in which they are perfectly integrated, and where they are not perceived as outsiders. These are kin networks in which they play well established roles (wives and mothers) and which make ethnic identification less relevant.³

Romanian migration and the formation of Romanian diaspora

After the fall of communism, in December 1989, Romania had to confront a new phenomenon, which other more permissive countries in the region already knew: massive labour migration, followed by the formation of diasporic communities, mainly in Western Europe. During communist rule, Romanian authorities exercised rather restrictive exit policies, severely limiting the ability of its citizens to travel internationally. Passports were held by the police, and prior approval from the authorities was required to obtain the travel document. Despite this harsh stance on international mobility, a relatively high amount of permanent, legal emigration also took place under the communist regime. Ethnic minorities (Jews, Germans and Hungarians) were clearly over-represented among the group of people who legally emigrated from Romania during communist rule (Diminescu, 2009: 46-48). This was due to the West German government practice of practically “buying back” ethnic Germans under a program to reunite families, prices varying depending on age, education level etc. Some temporary migration was also prevalent during the communist era, notably for education and work. Labour migration was exclusively state-managed. A large majority of Romanian workers headed to the Middle East, particularly to the Persian Gulf, where their labour was tightly regulated and family reunification forbidden (see Horváth, 2007: 2).

³ By the same token, Armanda Hisa (2015) described how patriarchy breaks the barrier of nationalism in the case of Albanian women married to Serbs in Southern Serbia.

After the fall of communism, passport administration and international travel were liberalized. Although some measures to curb the international travel of certain categories were taken during the 1990s and at the beginning of the new millennium (Horváth, 2007: 3), none of them drastically reduced the international mobility of Romanian citizens. In the first three years after the fall of communism, 170,000 persons legally emigrated from Romania. Again, ethnic minorities (especially Germans and Hungarians) were over-represented in the legal emigrant population: 60,000 out of a total of 97,000 emigrants registered in 1990 were Germans. Nevertheless, the main motivation for emigrating was economic. At the beginning of the 1990s, young, highly qualified emigrants obtained long-term residence in European countries, the USA and Canada. Thereafter, more and more unskilled, poorly qualified persons from rural areas began seeking (mostly temporary) migratory arrangements. Talking about the exodus that has been associated with Romania since 1990s, Ruxandra Trandafoiu thinks that “it is the cumulative effect of a national psychosis induced by half a century of communism and dictatorship, followed by a lengthy and traumatic transition process” (Trandafoiu, 2013: 49).

Even if the Romanian diaspora has a much longer history, the massive labour migration of the last 25 years resulted in the mass departure of millions of Romanians and the spectacular rise in the Romanian communities in Western Europe (especially Italy, Spain and France), North America, South America and Australia. Researchers have been asking themselves whether Romanians living abroad are immigrants, free movers, diaspora or something else. Before Romania joined the EU, the Romanian press called them *căpșunari* (strawberry pickers), *macaronari* (macaroni eaters) or *stranieri* (foreigners, in Italian) (Trandafoiu, 2013: 7), terms strongly connected with the destination countries, with a rather pejorative connotation. However, today the term *diaspora* is more habitually used, as “for Romanians back home, these work-seeking migrants have now evolved to the status of diaspora” (Trandafoiu, 2013: 7). After the Romanian presidential election of 2014, when Klaus Iohannis won largely due to the vote of Romanians living abroad, *diaspora* quickly switched from a neutral to a fairly positive meaning.

Despite the large and still growing Romanian diaspora, Romania lacks an official institution to deal with diaspora issues. The Department Politics for the Relation with the Romanians Everywhere (Ro. *Departamentul Politici pentru Relația cu Românii de Pretutindeni*, DPRRP), today within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was initially set up with the mission to reconnect and support Romanians outside the state’s immediate borders, the so-called historical or indigenous minorities. From its set up, in 1995, the Department has changed its name and subordination several times, but could not effectively tackle the recent phenomenon of massive migration from Romania and the consequent formation of huge diasporas.

As Trandafoiu puts it, “uneasy about the role such communities should play in the already uncomfortable relationship with neighbours and Western countries, the Romanian government prefers to talk about “Romanian communities living abroad” rather than diasporas” (Trandafoiu, 2006: 132). The focus of DPRRP is still on Romanian indigenous groups living outside its immediate territory, rather than on more recently formed groups, with a much shorter history, different needs and problems. Hence, the Department constructs the nation in a rather traditional fashion, focusing on ethnic and cultural rights, mainly the protection of Romanian language and religion. It also strives to promote Romania’s image abroad, supporting Romanian organizations and associations. Most of the DPRRP work consists of financing projects that are believed to sustain the preservation of cultural, linguistic and religious identity of Romanians from abroad. Until 2015, the DPRRP site did not even mention the immigration system or recognition of Romanian diplomas and degrees. In 2015, however, the *Guide of Romanian Worker Abroad* was uploaded, in four versions: for Italy, Germany, Hungary and Great Britain, this being to this day the only document directed specifically to the Romanian diaspora.

Romanians in Serbia and the Yugoslav route

Serbia is home to three main transborder Romanian communities, not to be mistaken for the Romanian diaspora. The first are the Romanians of Vojvodina (Serbian Banat), officially recognized as a Romanian minority in Serbia. They have access to schooling, mass media and religious service in the Romanian language. According to the last Serbian population census, of 2011, they number 29,332 persons and inhabit around 40 settlements in Central and Southern Vojvodina. Some of these settlements are already mentioned in medieval archives, others were established in the 18th or beginning of the 19th century, during the Austro-Hungarian colonization of the Banat. They speak dialectal variants of the Romanian language and have knowledge of the standard (Măran, 2009; Sikimić, 2014).

The second community are the Bayash or Rudari. They live dispersed throughout Serbia and the Balkans, their mother tongue is Romanian, but they are considered Roma by the surrounding populations, because of their semi-nomadic way of life, mentality and physical characteristics. They do not speak Romanes, but their belonging to the Romanian nation has been intensely contested (for details, see Sikimić, 2005; Sorescu-Marinković 2013).

The third Romanian transborder community are the Vlachs of Eastern Serbia, who speak archaic dialectal variants of Romanian (see Sorescu-Marinković, 2012a). According to the last census, they number 35,330, but members of the community put forth unofficial estimates between 150,000 and 300,000. They

are not officially recognized as a Romanian minority. Within the Vlach community there are divergences whether or not they belong to the Romanian nation, and whether or not they should merge, at a political level, with the Romanian minority in Vojvodina. Today, most of the Vlachs have a dual, contextual or politicized identity: they register as Romanians, Vlachs or Serbs and accordingly, but not necessarily in an overlapping manner, they declare their mother tongue to be Serbian, Vlach or Romanian. Romania does not question the Vlachs' origin and considers them Romanians living in Serbia. However, Serbia declares that "there are no concordance and sameness between the Romanian and the Vlach languages and their speakers" (Comments Government Serbia 2009). Until recently, they have not been granted any minority rights regarding the use of their mother tongue. Vlach has been restricted to family use, but even its transmission to the younger generation was endangered. Nevertheless, 2013 saw the publication of the first grammar of Vlach, in 2014 the first textbook for Vlach was printed, and Vlach introduced as an optional object in primary schools. In September 2015 the Vlach National Council adopted the standardization of the Vlach language (Huțanu and Sorescu-Marinković, 2015).

Apart from these Romanian indigenous communities, a Romanian diasporic community emerged in the last 25 years in Eastern Serbia. It is made up of Romanian citizens who have crossed the border with Yugoslavia, following the *pre-migration patterns and networks* already existing in this area, and finally settled there for good. The border region of Romania with ex-Yugoslavia had a special regime during late communist rule: people inhabiting the settlements in the vicinity of the state border were issued *small-scale trade permits* [*legitimații de mic trafic* in Romanian], which allowed them to pass the border for one-day trips to the markets in Yugoslavia (Sorescu-Marinković, 2012b: 223).⁴

After the fall of Romanian communism, a big share of rural population of Oltenia remained oriented towards Yugoslavia, and engaged in "multiple types of migration, difficult to register" (Sandu, 2000: 21). This exploratory period was marked by individual, temporary, investigative migrations.⁵ *Suitcase traders* or

⁴ The Western Romanian frontier, 994 km long, from which 546 km with Serbia (290 along the Danube) and the rest with Hungary, has been regularly crossed, from 1944 to 1989, illegally, by Romanians trying to escape the suppressive communist regime (Ro. *frontieriști* "the borderers"). Between 1980 and 1989, 16,000 Romanians tried to cross the border, and 12,000 were caught; only in 1988, 400 people were shot on the border between Romania and Yugoslavia (Steiner and Magheți, 2009: 13). By that time, Romania's western border had become one of the best protected and bloodiest borders of Europe. For many people, Yugoslavia represented the gate to freedom or to hell. As Lavinia Snejana Stan puts it, "communist Romania invented a border concept that had in its centre not the enemy from the outside, but the escapee coming from the inside" (2013: 164).

⁵ Adrian Favell argues against labeling of Eastern Europeans as *migrants* and prefers the term *free movers*, as Eastern European migration is temporary and circular rather than permanent, stimulated by labor requests rather than asylum seeking (2008: 703).

shuttle traders, already visible in the 1980s in many Eastern European countries (Wallace and Stola, 2001), expanded considerably at the border with Yugoslavia. Practicing a pendulum movement, most of them were going abroad and coming back home in the same day (Diminescu, 2009: 46).

Research methodology and data

My data come from two main sources. During my field work in the last 10 years in the Vlach community of Eastern Serbia, I often came into contact with Romanian migrants, but did not consider the topic an important one. However, I conducted some interviews with these women, being mainly interested in their perspective on the Vlach culture, as all of them were married to Vlachs. As well, the majority of my Vlach interlocutors offered me their perspective on the “new” Romanians from their villages, during our conversations. All these interviews have been recorded and are part of the Digital Archive of the Institute for Balkan Studies (DABI) in Belgrade.

My other main data source is a research project from 2015 and 2016, financed by the ERSTE Foundation, aiming to map the Romanian diaspora in Serbia. Trying to determine how the Romanian diaspora is being formed, what social groups take part in it, where is it located and what its demographic impact in Serbia is, I revisited Vlach villages to conduct in-depth interviews, primarily with the Romanian citizens established here.⁶

Through snowball sampling, I conducted 15 interviews, ranging in length from one to three hours. I talked with my respondents about their moving to Serbia, the period when they arrived, the reasons which fuelled their decision, the ethnic origin of their partners, whether or not they had Serbian citizenship, whether or not their children had Romanian citizenship and speak the language, whether or not they knew other Romanians, how many and whether they were in contact with them, whether or not they were politically active and considered themselves diaspora, etc.

The joint data is offered in Table 1. This table presents an overview of the geographic, demographic and socio-economic characteristics of 26 interviewees, Romanian women settled in Eastern Serbia mainly after the Romanian Revolution of December 1989.

⁶ Apart from the Romanians in Eastern Serbia, I identified Romanian diasporic communities in the Romanian villages of Vojvodina, in the city of Belgrade and in the town of Pančevo. However, they will not form the topic of my paper.

Table 1.**Romanian women settled in Eastern Serbia after 1990**

Name*	Year of birth	Year of departure to Serbia	Residence in Romania	Marital status, children	Education	Occupation
Garofița	1972	1994	Neamț	married, 2	elementary school	unemployed
Diana	1968	1992	Sighișoara	married, 2	faculty	teacher
Ofelia	1975	1994	Arad	married, 2	high school	unemployed
Elena	1968	1988	Orșova	married, 1	vocational school	unemployed
Anca	1974	1992	Borșa Maramureș	married, 2	high school	unemployed
Daniela	1977	2001	Dr. Turnu Severin	married, 3	high school	unemployed
Livia	1979	1999	Dr. Turnu Severin	married, 2	high school	unemployed
Ileana	1975	1996	Bocșa Română	married, 2	elementary school	employed in a private company
Victoria	1964	1993	Dr. Turnu Severin	married, 2	high school	business owner
Aurelia	1950	1990	Orșova	married, 4	vocational school	unemployed
Nicoleta	1978	2000	Orșova	married, 2	high school	unemployed
Gheorghîța	1961	1990	Orșova	widow, 1	vocational school	unemployed
Gabriela	1973	1999	Dr. Turnu Severin	married, 3	high school	unemployed
Larisa	1978	2001	Focșani	married, 3	vocational school	unemployed
Florica	1962	1990	Dr. Turnu Severin	widow, 2	Vocational school	village sorcerer
Alexandra	1980	1999	Baia Mare	married, 2	high school	unemployed
Margareta	1979	2001	București	married, 3	high school	business owner
Eleonora	1975	2003	Bacău	married, 2	elementary school	seller at the green market
Adriana	1967	1999	Dr. Turnu Severin	married, 2	vocational school	maternal assistant
Dorina	1981	2000	Orșova	divorced, 3	high school	unemployed
Magdalena	1969	1998	Craiova	married, 0	high school	unemployed
Luminița	1966	1991	Hunedoara	married, 2	high school	unemployed
Paraschiva	1956	2000	Dr. Turnu Severin	widow, 2	elementary school	wage labourer
Mariana	1965	1992	Râmnicu Vâlcea	married, 2	high school	folk music singer
Costina	1979	2001	Dr. Turnu Severin	married, 2	high school	business owner
Brândușa	1967	2000	Dr. Turnu Severin	divorced, 2	high school	wage labourer

Source: Author's summary. * All names are pseudonyms.

The women in the sample of interviewees were, at the time of writing (2016), between 35 and 66 years old, the average being 46. Given the span of the study, I have interviewed both women in their 20s, as well as in their 60s, which made the sample a rather heterogeneous one, in terms of age of respondents and, consequently, on their life perspective. The year of the respondents' departure to Serbia varied between 1988 and 2003, with a peak between 1999 and 2001; after this date, only one woman in my sample came to Serbia.

Most women came from Oltenia (17), followed by Moldova (3), Transylvania (3), Maramureş (2) and Bucharest (1). The snowball sampling may partially account for the large percent of residents of Oltenia. My Vlach informants mentioned that Moldova was also well represented, however I only interviewed three women from that region. Many Romanian men I talked to on the field were from Moldova, but most of them were only commuting seasonally. Most interviewees came from rural regions, but when asked about their place of residence they mentioned the biggest closest city.

Of 26 interviewees, 21 were married to Vlachs; for a few it was a second marriage, after a first one in Romania. Three respondents were widows: in two cases, the late husbands were Vlachs, while in one, the respondent lost her husband in Romania, came to work in Serbia, but did not remarry. All women but one had children, most of them (17) – two. In a few cases, some women came to Serbia with children from their first marriage, and several gave birth to more children after getting married again, to a Vlach. Two respondents were divorced: one was working seasonally in a Vlach household, while the other was freshly separated from her Vlach husband and intended to move to Western Europe.

Most interviewed women had secondary education (high school – 15, vocational school – 6), a few (4) graduated elementary school, only one had a university degree, illustrating that the migration of Romanian women to Eastern Serbia is not part of the skilled migration flows that Romanians were engaged in the last 25 years (Sandu, 2010). Among the factors influencing the structure of labour migration to Serbia is lack of need of qualified workers and of barriers related to distance, culture and language. More than half of the women in my sample (15) were officially unemployed, but, as most of them live in the rural area and possess land, they are household and agricultural workers.

Gendered Romanian recent migration to Eastern Serbia

After the collapse of communism, migration from Romania began as a mainly male process. However, it has grown and diversified in a very short time, despite its relatively short history (see Vlase, 2013: 46). Migration to Serbia

followed a similar pattern, with men mainly commuting to the neighbouring country in order to pick up seasonal or daily jobs in agriculture or on small construction sites. In the first years after the opening of the borders, this destination was particularly attractive from various reasons: rural Eastern Serbia was a relatively well off region, due to the significant remittances and investments of the Vlach migrants from Western Europe in their native places (see Schierup and Ålund, 1986; Marjanović, 1995; Sorescu-Marinković, 2012b). It was very cheap, close to home and to the West, people could go back at any time, with the ones from the border regions of Eastern Serbia even being able to see Romania over the Danube. No visa was necessary, unlike for Western Europe; and, maybe most important, there was no language barrier, as the local dialects spoken by Vlachs were easily understandable to Romanians.

Soon, this route became attractive to women, too, but not to follow their partners. During my field research, I met only two men settled down in Eastern Serbia, but married to Vlach women. The migration of Romanian women to Serbia can be characterized as autonomous migration of unattached women. Most of them arrived there independently, via a friend or relative, in search of work in the informal sector, with no job security or protection: as bartenders, housekeepers, agricultural workers or care takers for the many elderly Vlachs who live alone, as consequence of more than five decades of labour migration from Yugoslavia to Western Europe and North America (see Schierup and Ålund, 1986; Marjanović, 1995). Most of these women came to marry Vlach men and settled there for good, the temporary migrations changing into permanent ones, difficult to distinguish from marriage migrations, as I mentioned in the beginning.

The literature on post-communist Romanian external migration mentions the routes to Italy and Spain as being especially dynamic due to facilities of linguistic nature, mainly for the rural population with a reduced level of foreign language knowledge (Sandu, 2000: 21). Yugoslavia was also preferred for similarity of language, but also for the affinity with the inhabitants of the regions towards which Romanians mainly oriented: those inhabited by Romanian transborder communities. This phenomenon, labeled *ethnic-affinity migration*, has been generally studied in the context of return migration of ethnics to their homeland after some generations (e.g. Cook-Martín and Viladrich, 2009). However, in the case of Romanians in Eastern Serbia, the linguistic- and ethnic-affinity migration was directed towards a Romanian community settled there many generations before.

Most Romanians migrating to Serbia lived at or below minimum standards of living. A major issue for many was survival: how to obtain enough income to feed and provide for their families. Aurelia, who came in 1990 to Serbia from Orșova, confesses that she left her four children from a previous marriage in

Romania and moved to Serbia in order to be able offer them a better life and send them to college: “There were nights when all we had for dinner was tea. I couldn’t watch my children go to bed hungry day after day. (...) When I saw all this land here, I knew they would also be better.”

Brândușa, a divorcee with two children, is keeping her job as a nurse in Romania and commutes during summer to care for an elderly Vlach couple whose children are living in Austria, and to help them with field work. She is forced to do this in order to supplement her meagre income and pay for the college education of her children. Paraschiva is a widow also working as a wage labourer in order to support her grown up children in Romania and, even if she did not formally marry, she is cohabiting with her Vlach partner in Eastern Serbia.

Apart from these women, older, divorced or widows, coming to Serbia initially to support their children back home, who are a minority, most of my interviewees arrived in Serbia relatively young, are single, have secondary education, come mainly from rural areas or small provincial towns of Romania. They came with the declared aim to work temporarily as wage labourers and with the undeclared intention to get married and settle in Serbia. Part of them visited a friend or a relative, and then met their future husbands. Thus, they bypassed the wage labourer stage, getting married and settling here, which can be definitely defined as marriage migration.

There are a few exceptions from this double pattern. Diana met her future husband in Romania, where they both studied at the same college. In her case, economics was secondary, love came first: “I met my husband to be in Craiova, in college. He was and still is the best and kindest man I’ve ever met. After graduating, we just decided to move to Serbia.”

Mariana is a Romanian folk music singer. Having been invited many times to sing at Vlach migrants’ weddings and other celebrations, she married a Vlach man, settled in Eastern Serbia and successfully pursued her career.

Today, in every of the around 150 Vlach villages of Eastern Serbia there are at least 10-20 Romanian women. The official 2011 Serbian population census indicates 831 Romanians and 27,645 Vlachs in these villages. However, these numbers do not reflect the real situation (the number of “new Romanians”): some Vlachs also declare as Romanians; not all the “new Romanians” have been registered at the census, as many of them, even after 20 years of residence in Serbia, do not have Serbian citizenship;⁷ most of the children who come from

⁷ Here we should point to Serbia’s policy towards naturalization: in order to apply for Serbian citizenship, there is no need for language proficiency, no need of knowledge of Constitutional order, no oath requirement, no renunciation of foreign citizenship, no healthy requirement, and still the state has the discretionary right to turn the application down, which is usually the case.

mixed marriages between Vlachs and Romanians are registered as Serbs and many do not even speak Romanian etc. We estimate a few thousand Romanian women permanently settled in Eastern Serbia, maybe up to 5,000 persons.

The situation of the new Romanian settlers in the Romanian settlements of Vojvodina is somehow similar to that in Eastern Serbia. The Romanian diaspora here is also greatly feminized, but counts less women, as the Romanian indigenous community in Vojvodina is significantly smaller than that of the Vlachs. The Romanian women settled here come from the Banat, Moldova, Oltenia regions of Romania and, per total, are slightly higher skilled than those in Eastern Serbia. Among them are school teachers, professors, doctors, as they can work using the Romanian language (the Romanians of Vojvodina enjoy all the minority rights, including schooling and administration in Romanian, unlike the Vlachs). Here it is more difficult to distinguish between the two groups. Kinship and social connections between the Vojvodina Romanians and Romania have persisted throughout the years, individuals moved from one country to the other, even if during the communist period the intensity of these migrations has decreased. Only in Vojvodina did I have participants in the study who have settled here in 1975, for example. After 1990 a lot of Romanians moved to Vojvodina, again driven by economic reasons. Today, there are probably between 1,000 and 2,000 Romanian citizens living in Vojvodina.

Researchers have also outlined the agenda for gendering diaspora, which includes, among others, two very important aspects: the extent to which diasporic groups are subjects to two sets of gender relations, that of the host country and that of the ethnic community, and the way in which women become the carriers of the cultural symbolism that marks out the boundaries of the diasporic group (Anthias, 1998). As for women coming from rural Romania and settled mainly in rural and provincial Eastern Serbia, within the Vlach community, they comply with both sets of value. The minimum value attached to education in personal achievement is in accordance with the role of women as housewives and mothers in rural Romania and Serbia. Education and professional careers are downplayed in comparison to household duties. Most of interviewees follow their roles in a traditional community: mothers and wives, agricultural workers and housewives.

Strategies of coping: living in the social fog

Complying with the role of wives and mothers is both a method of being accepted by the local community and a strategy of becoming invisible and assimilated, of living in *social fog*. Romanian women from Eastern Serbia

form networks almost exclusively at family level. Although they usually use other Romanians to get to Serbia, they do not interact with them after having settled in the host community. In other terms, these groups, even if numerous, do not display a characteristic thought to be crucial for any diaspora: boundary maintenance. Boundary maintenance between them and the Vlach community they anchor in is rather weak, being replaced by the wish to go invisible or foggy, coupled with the strong ethnic affinity between the two groups. The kind of assimilation the Romanians are undergoing is double-folded: first, they merge with the Vlach community they live in, and second, they tend to be assimilated by the wider Serbian majority.⁸

The Romanians in Eastern Serbia, hidden among Romanian-speaking Vlachs, are an invisible diaspora, with no cohesion. Its members are highly dispersed and, as they are settled there for good, long for Serbian citizenship, which is still almost impossible to get. Most of these women have been looked down upon in the beginning, but tacitly accepted, as their demographic role was a crucial one: they practically revived the Vlach villages, with a very large aging population. This practice of accepting immigrants only for certain periods of time, and only if they fulfil a purpose, was coined by sociologists *differential exclusion* (Schierup et al. 2006: 52) and can be applied to the Romanian women in Eastern Serbia.

The dependence of more developed regions on migration becomes more emphasized when fertility declines and the population ages. United Nations specialists speak of *population replacement migration*, meaning migration which imposes itself in circumstances of imbalanced demographical structure (Horvath and Anghel, 2009: 16). As a result of the migratory politics from the second half of the 20th century, the aging of the Vlach communities is quite emphasized. Labour force in Vlach settlements was mainly supplied by exchange or replacement migrants from Romania, who were in time adopted by the host community and who, apart from their economical role, came to play a most important demographic one.

Social assimilation includes linguistic assimilation. Many Romanian women who settled in Romanian indigenous communities have an urban background or come from rural regions of Romania other than Banat, they speak only standard Romanian or other Romanian dialects, not known to Vlachs. They had to learn the Banat dialect spoken in these communities, which is quite distant from the

⁸ Out of the Romanian citizens living on the territory of Serbia, the only ones maintaining boundaries, in the meaning of preserving a distinctive identity vis-à-vis the home society and thus fitting the definition of diaspora are the Romanian high-skilled professionals in Belgrade, who are there for a definite period of time and have a relatively high social status, and the Gabori Roma in the town of Pančevo, who are a very closed social group, strictly endogamous.

literary language, mainly in terms of vocabulary and phonetics. Then, they had to learn Serbian, for official communication or interaction with the Serbs. As Margareta, a Bucharest native, described: “It would have probably been easier for me to marry a Serb. Like this, first I had to learn the Vlach spoken here, which is to me like a foreign language, then I had to learn Serbian, so I would be able to talk to Serbs...”

Other interviewees mocked the Romanian vernacular spoken by Vlachs, imbued with Serbian neologisms, but nevertheless do not hesitate to speak it in the company of the locals (Sorescu-Marinković, 2012b). Some Romanians feel the “pure” Romanian language they can speak, with no Serbian borrowings, automatically lifts them up on the social prestige scale. However, they do not use it in family settings and many of them do not even teach their children standard Romanian. Frequent are also the cases where children from mixed marriages of Romanians and Vlachs speak only Serbian.

After 2007, when Romania joined the EU, the prestige of Romania and Romanians started to rise. The Romanian passport became wanted for it guaranteed access to the Western European labour market. The prestige of Romanian women living in Eastern Serbia rose also. The Vlachs married to Romanian women were hoping they would get Romanian citizenship, as well, but this did not happen.⁹ However, the European rights of Romanians after the EU enlargement did not completely lift prejudices of the majority population towards Romanian women in the region: “Symbolic political geography is still inescapable and one only has to turn to the tabloid press for confirmation” (Trandafoiu, 2013: 9).

The consolidation of the Vlach identity currently taking place in Eastern Serbia, with the standardization of the Vlach variant and the introduction of Vlach as optional subject in primary schools, is counterbalanced by the introduction, for the first time in the 150 years, of the Romanian language in the schools of Eastern Serbia (Huțanu and Sorescu-Marinković, 2015). The presence of Romanians here was presented in media as a threat of Romanization of this region. In this local clash of language and political ideologies, uncertain of the role they are supposed to play, Romanians in Eastern Serbia chose to be visible only at a family level and to stay in the social fog.

⁹ Romania passed a new amendment to the law on citizenship in the second half of 2015, which opens up the possibility for foreign citizens living abroad to be granted Romanian citizenship, provided that they contributed to the affirmation of Romanian culture. Many members of the Romanian transborder communities from Serbia have high hopes they would get Romanian citizenship this way, which is, however, rather improbable.

Is near diaspora real diaspora?

At a certain point during my research, further reflection on the usefulness of the term *diaspora* was needed. To my question: “Do you consider yourself diaspora?”, most of the respondents answered “No”. Being asked to explain why, they offered several answers: they are not a political force; they are scattered and do not have any connections to each other; they have no institutions; they are very close to Romania. Gabriela, who comes from Drobeta Turnu Severin, a town on the Romanian bank of the Danube, only 6 km away from its Serbian counterpart, Kladovo, says: “How can I be diaspora if I see my hometown on the other bank? We are too close to be away.”

Distance does play an important role in defining diaspora. Van Hear’s distinction between near diasporas, spread among a number of contiguous territories, and distant diasporas, scattered further afield, comes in handy here. The community of Romanian citizens from Eastern Serbia forms a diaspora of the former kind, as opposed to the distant Romanian diaspora of Western Europe. Ruxandra Trandafoiu’s research on the Romanian diaspora in Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom showed that “diasporans continuously reflect on social and political realities in both home and adoptive countries, constantly locating their diasporic experience within a transnational space with fast-changing parameters” (Trandafoiu, 2013: 5). The Romanian diaspora in Serbia follows a different pattern of action. Thus, *long-distance nationalism* (Benedict Anderson) turns into short-distance indifference and political inertia or into short-distance nationalism, which can best be practiced at home, as home is within a reachable distance when it comes to voting or taking part in political or social events.

At first glance, it might seem strange to even use the word *diaspora* in relation to the Romanians living in Serbia. The Romanian indigenous communities here are well known, both to the academia and to the public, and the naturalized names used to refer to them are simply descriptive, localizing the community: *Romanians in Serbia*, *Romanians in Vojvodina* or *Romanians on the Timok Valley* (sometimes within the wider category of *Romanians from abroad* or *forgotten Romanians*); in Romania, *diaspora* tends to be associated with the big Romanian communities formed in Western Europe from the 1990s on (mainly in Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, Germany etc.), which have a great political potential, coupled with financial power. Little is known about the Romanians settled in Serbia at the same period when *distant Romanian diasporas* were forming in Western Europe. My research points to the necessity of distinguishing between the Romanian indigenous communities in Serbia and the newly formed (and forming) *near Romanian diaspora*. Talking about Romanians in Serbia, we have to operate with two concepts. The Romanian indigenous community or minority in Serbia, even if

it acts as a possible anchor for coming Romanians, is not levelling or completely adopting the newcomers. Serbia is a unique case, as the indigenous Romanian minority coexists with the Romanian diaspora.¹⁰ In spite of the common origin, the two communities speak different variants of the Romanian language, perceive the world similarly, but not identically, and in many instances perpetuate different cultural values.

Romanian research on labour migration does not offer any data regarding Serbia or remittances coming from Serbia. DPRRP has many projects directed towards Serbia, but they are exclusively focused on the Romanian minority of Vojvodina and on the Vlachs of Eastern Serbia. The Romanian diaspora in Serbia is an invisible one, both for the Romanian state, which does not address its problems in any way, and for Serbia. Furthermore, not even the members of this diaspora know about the existence and the dimension of this group(s) in Serbia. The social networks of the diasporans are rather reduced, as they tend to nurture kinship networks, not national clusters.

The near Romanian diaspora in Eastern Serbia, intermingled with the Vlach transborder community, *in between* home and away, small in terms of figures, if we compare it, for example, with the ones in Western Europe, with part of the members settled here for good, part being here only for a definite period of time, lacks some of the traits that characterize distant diaspora. Remittances, for example, are insignificant, as only the very few who have children in Romania are sending money back home. As for the intention of return, there was none in my sample. However, from the beginning of my research three interviewees left Serbia and settled in Austria or Germany: two together with their Vlach partners and children, and one alone, after divorcing.

Concluding remarks

The longitudinal dimension of my research and studying the host community, the Vlachs of Eastern Serbia, for more than ten years, enabled me to understand the strategies of coping with the new environment employed by Romanian women settled in Eastern Serbia. Unlike the distant Romanian diaspora from Western Europe, which usually complies with the three core elements used to define it (*dispersion, orientation to a homeland* and *boundary maintenance*), the near Romanian diaspora in Serbia adopts the strategy of living in social fog. They create social networks within the host society in which they are perfectly integrated, and where they are not perceived as outsiders, allowing them to

¹⁰ Hungary might be another example, but there was no representative research on this topic so far.

merge with the majority population. The combination of geographical closeness, ethnic affinity and low level of education explains to a great degree why this female population has settled here and adopted this way of life, in which traditional gender roles are valued above individual qualities.

My research suggests that the Romanian diaspora in Eastern Serbia does not seem to grow any longer. The process of consolidation reached a peak between 1999 and 2001; after this date the number of Romanian women coming to Serbia drastically decreased. After 2007, when Romania acceded to the European Union and the Romanians could freely travel and work in most of the EU countries, the favourite destinations changed, Serbia being chosen only rarely. Many children from mixed marriages of Romanians with Vlachs have double citizenship, both Serbian and Romanian, even if some of them are not taught Romanian by their parents. For part of the Romanians in Eastern Serbia, this is only a temporary destination, as some have already moved to Western Europe, and many others intend to do so in the near future.

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DIGITAL NATIVES OR NOT? HOW DO ROMANIAN ADOLESCENTS CROSS THE BOUNDARIES OF INTERNET COMMON USE

BIANCA BALEA¹

Abstract. The present paper challenges the dominance of the digital natives' agenda and turns its attention to the social context in which Internet usage among adolescents occurs. Findings indicate that even when young people are using the Internet with the same frequency, i.e. every day, the differences among them remain significant. Therefore, it can be argued that considering an entire cohort to be similar in terms of Internet use only due its age is a misconception. The way children make use of the Internet and the gratifications they gain after using it depend, as van Dijk (2005) showed, on the quality of access, on the level of skills, and on the personal (e.g. Experience, self-efficacy, confidence) and positional resources (e.g. Age, gender, socio-economic status). Questioning the main determinants that lead to the most advanced way to make use of the Internet, the logistic analysis shows that, in order for a Romanian adolescent to turn into an experienced user once he or she embedded the Internet in his or her everyday life, is a matter of skills, experience, and time online, and is less a matter of socioeconomic background. However, we have to keep in mind the previous path analysis' findings, which emphasize that online experience, time spent online, self-efficacy, and digital skills are all determined, through direct or indirect effects, by demographic variables (i.e. age, gender and socio-economic status), even when age is held constant (Fizesan [Balea], 2012).

Keywords: digital natives, digital engagement, ladder of opportunities, digital inequalities

Introduction

Understanding what children do online, what techniques they use in order to embed the Internet in their everyday life could offer valuable insights regarding the benefits/gratifications gained from the use of the Internet or other communication technologies. Unfortunately, more often than not, studying

¹ Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, e-mail: bianca.balea85@gmail.com.

the digital differences among children was a matter of focusing on the relations between age, gender, socio-economic status (SES), and other demographic variables with the way children and young people access and use the Internet. Recently, scholars turned their attention to other factors which can increase silent inequalities within Internet users (DiMaggio et al., 2004, Hargittai, 2010). Digital literacy has received a lot of attention lately in relation to opportunities that children and adults take up online, making Internet skills a possible contributor to social inequalities (Livingstone and Helsper, 2007, 2010; Van Deursen, 2010; Helsper and Enyon, 2009). Witte and Mannon (2009) consider digital literacy as a particular skill set and knowledge base that might be used to maintain class advantage while the lack of it may translate into class disadvantage. Numerous studies on children and adolescents' Internet usage have shown, indeed, that those who are more skilled undertake a broader range of activities and are able to participate to a greater extent in digital practices.

EU Kids Online II findings have revealed that the number of online activities young people undertake highly correlate with their level of digital skills and their confidence in own use (Lobe et al., 2011). According to the last, children climb on a ladder of opportunities, beginning with information seeking, progressing through games and communication, taking on more interactive forms of communication and culminating in creative and civic activities. Only a quarter of European children reach the last, most advanced and creative step according to the model proposed by Hasebrink et al. (2011). Considering all of the above, it is a legitimate reason to question the popular assumption that children and young people are digital savvy (Livingstone and Helsper, 2010; Helsper and Enyon, 2009), and to search for determinants of differentiated use among them.

Literature review

Digital natives is one of the most popular narratives that address the way the younger generation makes use of the new forms of information and communication technologies. This approach claims that these young people, who have grown up with ICT, have sophisticated technology skills and a whole new set of cognitive capacities (Kennedy et al., 2008). However, recent research shows that this idea has gained widespread popularity on the basis of claims rather than evidence. On this basis, several academics have challenged the dominance of the digital native model and examined the influence of the social context in which skills develop (Facer and Furlong, 2001).

The mainstream discourse of digital native narratives often omits that breadth of use, experience, self-efficacy and education can generate differences in the way children and adolescents make use of the Internet. Mainly, this view

assumes that children use online information effortlessly, due to the fact that they have grown with it. Therefore, they feel comfortable and confident in online environments “seemingly never in need of an instruction manual” (Lorenzo et al., 2006; Green and Hannon, 2007; Kennedy et al., 2008).

The first researcher who coined the term digital natives was Prensky in 2001, who focused on the new generation which has grown up with these new technologies and spent their entire lives “surrounded by and using” all kinds of tools of the digital age, i.e. computers, video games, cell phones. Today’s young adults “think and process information fundamentally differently from their predecessors”, due to these circumstances. Furthermore, those who are born into this new culture learn the language of the information society easily like their native language which helps them not only to consume the information received via various devices, but also to create and re-create it (Lorenzo et al., 2006). Consequently, those who were not born into the digital world but have adopted most aspects of the new technology are named as *digital immigrants*. Moreover, according to the same viewpoint, older people are always one step behind and unable to reach the natural adopting of new technology that is specific for those who have grown with them (Jones and Healing, 2010). However, agreement is hard to reach with regard to which generation is digitally native. Within Prensky’s original work, children born after 1980 are digitally native, an idea supported by other scholars like Obeliner and Obliner who position the start of this new generation, named *Millennials*, in or after 1982 (Jones and Healing, 2010). However, according to the recent literature this category seems to have shifted. The rise of web 2.0 applications created a second generation of digital natives, placing the distinction line in 1990 (currently 26 or younger), which means that young adults born between 1983 and 1990 are the first generation of digital natives (Helsper and Enyon, 2009). Regardless of the year in which they were born, the first generation and the second generation of digital natives are assumed to have broadly universal experiences, but also a sophisticated knowledge and understanding of information and communication technologies (Kennedy et al., 2008).

In spite of this claim made for the existence of a generation of digital natives (also named the Net generation, the Google generation, or the millennials), the findings of the most recent studies (Bennett et al., 2008; Kennedy et al., 2010; Helsper and Enyon, 2009; Bennett and Maton, 2010) argue against its homogenous view on this entire generation (i.e. Children and young adults) by emphasizing that generalizing the ways in which digital natives cope with these new technologies is a misconception since it fails to recognize the variations in young peoples’ Internet usage. Furthermore, these variations are caused both by demographic variables like age, gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity, and cognitive factors

(Bennett et al. 2008). Moreover, some studies suggest that the research of the relationship between children and new media should go beyond basic dichotomies evident in digital natives debate to develop a more comprehensive understanding of children's online behaviour. Drawing on this academic context, several scholars have challenged the dominance of the digital natives agenda and turned their attention to the social context in which skills develop (Bennet et al., 2008; Kennedy et al., 2009; Helsper and Enyon, 2009; Bennet and Maton, 2010). It was not long until it became obvious that children's Internet access and use are not equal and easy for all of them (Bennett et al., 2008), resulting in significant differences in how effectively and why young people use these technologies (Helsper and Enyon, 2009).

The research evidence indicates that, indeed, many teenagers correspond to the label digital natives. They adapt quickly to the new technology and use this technology to undertake a significant amount of information and activities. However, at the same time, it appears that many young people do not have the levels of access or technology skills predicted by advocates of the digital native idea (Bennett et al., 2008). On these lines, drawing on a questionnaire of 855 children with low computer skills and group interviews with 46 young people with the same profile, Facer and Furlong (2001) reported accessing computer difficulties, a lack of relevance of computer technology to these children's daily lives, and the potential of formal educational environments to exacerbate inequalities in access and anxieties around computer use. Moreover, as the same study argues, these children, which are unable to use and access new technologies, will be marginalized from key aspects of economic and social activity (Facer and Furlong, 2001). Likewise, several other studies reveal the same conclusions. Bennett and Manton (2010), which have focused their research on the extent of young people's access and use of technology, revealed that different histories of access and use, which result in different opportunities, are the core assumptions which describe children's Internet use. Jones et al. (2010) conducted a two year study, which started in 2008, in five universities in England investigating young adults' online behaviour. Their results illustrate significant variation of Internet use, within and between age groups. Even if most of the students engage frequently in a wide range of activities, for some, the participation and generational homogeneity predicted by digital native narratives is not supported (Jones et al. 2010). Kennedy et al. (2008) have also focused their attention on student population with regard to technology and a potential digital divide between them. Their study highlights the lack of homogeneity in the level of digital skills students possess.

On the same lines, the research conducted by Helsper and Enyon (2009) reports some intriguing results. On the one hand, their findings support to a certain degree the digital natives narratives. Accordingly, a large number of young people

are using the Internet, are more likely to live in a media rich homes, to be confident in their own skills and to engage in online learning activities. However, the same findings support a *continuum engagement* instead of a dichotomous divide between those who have grown up with these new technologies and those who did not. As other research emphasizes, Helsper and Enyon (2009) demonstrate that there are significant disparities among young people in terms of their preferences, skills and use of new technologies.

Hargittai (2010) also conducted a study that is worth mentioning in order to complete the final picture of the issue addressed in this section. In order to test the assumption that young people are universally savvy with the information and communication technologies, Hargittai (2010) has conducted an original study in the U.S that reports significant differences in young adults' Internet skills and activities even when controlling for Internet access and experiences. Moreover, according to the same work, higher levels of parental education, being a male, and being white or Asian American are significant predictors of high levels of Internet skills, which in turn positively relate with types of uses. The major contribution of this study is that its results emphasize that socioeconomic status remains a significant predictor of how young people are incorporating the Internet into their everyday lives, even when controlling for basic Internet access. Accordingly, those from more privileged backgrounds are using the Internet in more "informed way for a large number of activities" (Hargittai, 2010, p. 19). Moreover, Hargittai (2010) argues that even among this "highly wired group" (p. 19) systematic variation in online Internet skills exists.

Along with these studies, in a previous work (Balea, 2012) we tested for differences in digital engagement among Romanian 11-16 year-olds who incorporate the Internet in their everyday life. The results were very similar with the ones described above. A path analysis was used in order to count for predictors of different levels of digital skills, self-efficacy and digital engagement among Romanian adolescents. Among the independent variables that measured children's SES background (child's age, child's gender, parent's educational level and parent's age), four intermediate variables were also implied in the model: online experience, autonomy of use, parental support and peer support. Most important results showed that older children are receiving more support from their friends, less from their families, have more experience, and they are more digitally engaged. Boys are more experienced than girls, use the Internet from various locations and are more skilful. Moreover, children from privileged backgrounds are receiving more support from their families, have greater experience and autonomy of use and possess more skills. Nevertheless, children whose parents are younger, and are receiving more support from them are more experienced, skilled, and are engaging in various activities than children

whose parents are older. In spite that this analysis considers only children who are using the Internet every day, the final path model emphasizes significant digital differences among Romanian adolescents when it comes to quality of access, usage and taking up online opportunities. The results obtained from conducting this path analysis emphasize that even those adolescents that use the Internet every day exhibit various ways of engaging with the Internet. For that reason, those observed paths reinforce other findings that reject the ordinary notion of digital natives and highlight the complexity of adolescents' Internet experience (Bennett et al., 2008; Kenedy et al., 2009; Helsper and Enyon, 2009; Bennett and Maton, 2010).

Unfortunately, the path analysis does not provide any information about the types of activities that adolescents take up online. Helsper and Enyon (2009), and, also, Hargittai (2010) stress about the importance of knowing what kinds of activities children are most likely to conduct when access the Internet, this information being a significant indicator of the intensity of the digital engagement. In order to understand this diversity, there are some studies that go beyond the number of online activities when trying to explain how children are digital engaged, by considering the types of online opportunities taken up, some more capital-enhancing than others.

On these lines, Livingstone and Helsper (2007) propose a gradation in digital inclusion among children: certain basic activities tend be done first, and by most children, while more creative or participatory activities come later and are undertaken by fewer children. This hypothesis named the ladder of opportunities was tested on EUKO II dataset by Lobe et al. (2011) and proposes five different stages of engagement, whereas the first one is reached by all children that are using the Internet and is composed by most common activities like use of Internet for schoolwork and playing games on your own against the computer. The last stage consists of the most difficult activities that require experience and skills, like visiting chat rooms, using file sharing sites, creating characters, spending time in a virtual world or writing a blog or a diary. This stage is regularly reached by those who use 13 or more online activities, meaning less than a quarter of European children (Lobe et. al, 2011). One of the most notable inferences of this theory refers at the lack of accuracy that the number of online activities offers when studying both digital engagement, and the benefits that a child undertake from its own Internet use. Accordingly, there are children or adolescents that undertake a broader range of online activities, but they never reach the last stage which is the most creative, advanced and gainful way to make use of the Internet. Therefore, the number of online activities is significant since, as the path analysis showed (Fizesan [Balea], 2012), is related to confidence, skills, amount of use, but is not sufficient in order to state if a child is digital engaged or not.

For that reason, we need to offer a glance over those adolescents that reach the final step, the most creative and advanced one and to investigate what are the main factors that determine an adolescent to cross the boundaries of the common use. In order to accomplish such an aim, firstly is essential to understand how Romanian children climb on this “ladder of opportunities”. Thus, the “ladder of opportunities” hypothesis was tested on Romanian EUKO II dataset, which includes all children 9-16 year-olds regardless of their frequency of Internet use (N= 1,041).

Table 1 shows that the hierarchy of activities hypothesis is supported for Romanian children too, even though there are some differences compared to children across all 25 countries surveyed. Over 80 % of Romanian children use the Internet for school work or for playing online against the computer or themselves while fewer (less than 20%) post photos, videos or music to share it with others, create a character, pet or avatar or visit a chat room, and even fewer (less than 10%) spend time in a virtual world, write a blog or online diary or use file sharing sites. In what follows all the five stages will be presented with reference to the findings on children across all countries surveyed.

Stage 1: this stage is represented by most popular activities that are, also, practiced by most of people who only engage in 1-2 activities. 9% of Romanian young people practice less than two activities, predominantly using the Internet for schoolwork and using the computer for playing video games.

Stage 2: watching online video clips and using instant messages are the next popular activities, which are undertaken by almost one third of those who engage in 3-5 activities. 23% of Romanian children conduct up to five of the activities listed, compared with 14% of the overall sample.

Stage 3: About one in three Romanian children (39%) and three out of four European children take up to nine of the activities. This stage represents the use of the Internet interactively for communication (social networking, instant messaging, and email) and reading/watching the news.

Stage 4: One in five Romanian adolescents expands his activities to 10 or more opportunities, and is likely to engage in reading/watching news on the Internet, using a webcam or posting messages to others. These activities already include some conduct-related practices where young people become active contributors to the online environments. Across Europe, over half of 9-16 year old Internet users reach this point, although only one third of 9-10 year-olds and less than half of 11-12 year-olds do so (Livingstone et al., 2011).

Stage 5: these activities are regularly practiced by those who are able to use 13 or more online activities. A quarter of children across all countries reaches this last, most advanced, and creative step while only one in ten Romanian children undertakes more than 13 activities and more than a half of them engage in activities

like visiting chat rooms, using filesharing sites, creating characters, spending time in a virtual world or writing a blog or a diary, which are in general practiced only by a small percentage of the overall population. These children, from the last stage, will represent the focus in the following analyses.

Table 1.

“Ladder of opportunities”: type of opportunities taken up by Romanian children by age

		Groups according to number of opportunities taken up					
	% of people in each group	0-2	3-5	6-9	10-12	13-17	Total
Stage 1	Used the Internet for school work	60	85	93	96	100	87
	Played games on your own	58	77	78	86	96	83
Stage 2	Watched video clips (e.g. on YouTube)	15	65	95	97	98	77
	Used instant messaging	20	79	97	98	100	82
Stage 3	Sent/received email	6	41	76	91	94	60
	Downloaded music or films	6	27	75	93	100	57
	Played games with other people on the Internet	19	41	64	87	94	57
	Visited a social networking profile	1	18	70	89	98	51
Stage 4	Used a webcam	5	30	57	78	92	48
	Read/watched the news on the Internet	2	11	36	75	75	33
	Put (or posted) a message on a website	0	6	26	71	98	28
Stage 5	Put (or posted) photos, videos or music to share with others	0	3	20	54	90	22
	Created a character, pet or avatar	1	6	17	36	70	18
	Visited a chat room	1	1	12	43	74	15
	Spent time in a virtual world	0	1	4	24	61	9
	Written a blog or online diary	0	1	2	29	63	8
	Used file sharing sites	0	0	1	11	61	5

Source: Table adapted from Haserbrink et al., 2011. EU Kids Online dataset, author’s computations.
Base: All children 9+ in Romania (N=1041).

In sum, as in the case of children across all 25 countries, climbing on this ladder of opportunities is a matter of age, as most of the youngest children do not reach the final step. The majority of them lie between the first and second stage, using the Internet mostly for school work and playing online games. In total, only 9% of Romanian children engage in at least 13 activities, out of which 93% are 11 and 16 year-olds. However, being older is not a guarantee for an adolescent that he or she will make use of the Internet in a gainful way. Simple linear regressions were used to test for the theory that as children grow and use the Internet every day, the age is less and less relevant in predicting the range of activities undertaken, especially for girls. Accordingly, for the overall sample (All children, 9+, N=1,041) the age variation ($R^2=0.178$, Male $R^2=0.22$, Female $R^2=0.14$) explains about 18% in the variation of the number of online activities, for 11-16 year-olds sample (N=771) it explains less than 10% ($R^2=0.09$, Male $R^2=0.13$, Female $R^2=0.05$), whereas in the case of the girls is almost insignificant. Finally, in the case of 11-16 year-olds that make use of the Internet every day (N=595) the age variation explains about 7% of the total variation in the number of online activities ($R^2=0.07$), where for male children $R^2=0.12$, female $R^2=0.03$), which statistically is insignificant. Therefore, even if studies show (Barbovschi and Fizesan [Balea], 2013) that the gender gap seems to diminish, if we look at the entire cohort, there are important gender differences between adolescents, with boys more likely to engage in a creative use than girls, regardless of their age. Thus, there is reason to question the main predictors for an adolescent to make use of the Internet in a creative and capital-enhancing way.

Sample and method

In order to explain which factors influence the odds ratio for a young person to be involved in the most creative and advanced step when access the Internet, a logistic regression was conducted on 11-16 year-olds from Romania which use the Internet on daily bases (EU Kids Online dataset) since 11-16 year-olds are considered, according to previous findings (Haserbrink et al., 2011, Balea, 2012), to be more likely to be online, to make use of the Internet in a greater amount of time, to be more skilled and confident, characteristics that correspond perfectly to what digital narratives understand by digital natives. The sample consists of 595 children, which sums up 56% boys and 44% girls, with an average age of 13 (SD=2.2). Highest education level of household (3 point scale, 1= primary or less education, 2= secondary education, 3= tertiary education) was used as a proxy for socioeconomic status. Here, education refers to the highest educational level of the parents in the household, and was chosen because it is a strong indicator of economic inequality and does not suffer from the non-response often encountered in questions regarding income. Furthermore, a dummy variable was created in order

to measure the creative and most advanced step, based on the continuous variable that measures the number of online activities (Total=17), where creative use (more than 13 activities and at least one creative out of the last six from the ladder of opportunities) equals 1 (N=71). It is worth to mention that we have labelled the dummy variable as creative based on the classification of activities counted in EUKO dataset made by Haserbrink et al. (2001). Most probably, we can name other activities as being creative and advanced. However, since we conducted our analysis on this dataset, we are forced to limit the understanding of this concept at the online activities included in the fifth step of the ladder of opportunities.

Drawing on the previous studies, six factors were introduced in the model out of which two are demographic variables (i.e. adolescent’s gender, parent’s education, online experience, time online, private use from own bedroom, digital skills and self-efficacy). Interaction terms among the variables were all entered in the second step, of which only those which contributed significantly were kept in the model. Child’s age was not introduced in the model since it was considered a constant variable (as the sample consists only of 11-16 year olds). Table 2 presents the variables in the model. More details about measures and methods can be found at www.eukidsonline.net (see also Livingstone, Haddon and Görzig, 2012).

Table 2.

**Description of independent factors and dependent variable
(creative Internet use)**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Description
Child's gender (Female=0)	.56		Dummy, Female=0
Parent's education (Highest in the household. 3 point scale)	2.14	0.40	Highest education level of household (3 point scale, 1= primary or less education, 2= secondary education, 3= tertiary education)
Digital Skills	4.49	2.59	Scale variable, Total out of 8
Private use	0.65	0.48	Dummy variable, own bedroom or other private room at home (Yes=1)
Online experience	4.16	2.06	Number of years online, scale variable, Highest=12
Time online	130.27	62.4	Minutes spent online everyday, scale variable, Max=270
Self-efficacy	8.90	3.20	Range 0-4, calculated from responses 'true' at questions 'How true are these of you?'(see Annex 4), scale variable
Creative use (> 13 activities=1)	.13		Dummy variable, more than 13 activities and at least one creative equals 1 (N= 71)

Source: EU Kids Online II dataset, author’s computations. Valid N (listwise)= 595.
 Base: All children, +11 year olds that use the Internet every day (Child’s age Mean=13.62), in Romania.

Results

The first analytical model is statistically significant and explains about 27 % of the variation in the data, indicating a moderate relationship between predictors and dependent variable. However, we have to keep in mind that this R square is a pseudo R square, and it does not have the same significance as the R square in the linear regression. However, the value of Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit (7.764) at a p value .457 indicates the model appears to fit the data reasonably well. Prediction success was overall 86.8%. The second model, where the interaction terms were introduced, explains 35 % of the variation according to the Nagelkerke R Square. As in the first model, Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit (5.764) is significant at p. value .674, which also indicates reasonable fit to the data for the tested model. Both logistic regression models are represented in Table 3.

Table 3.

Logistic regression predicting the odds of adolescents engaging in creative Internet uses

Variables in the Model(1)*	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Child's Gender (Female- reference category)	.63	.30	4.48	1	.03	1.88
Parent's education (Tertiary- reference category)	.25	1.13	0.53	2	.77	1.17
Primary or less education	.05	1.28	0.00	1	.97	1.05
Secondary education	-.24	.35	0.49	1	.48	.78
Online experience	.15	.07	4.50	1	.03	1.16
Time online	.01	.00	10.00	1	.00	1.01
Private use (Own bedroom- reference category)	.43	.30	2.13	1	.14	1.54
Self-efficacy	.20	.35	0.33	1	.56	1.22
Digital skills	.40	.07	33.52	1	.00	1.49
Variables in the Model (2)**						
Online experience	.47	.28	2.81	1	.09	1.60
Private use (Own bedroom- reference category)	3.25	1.56	4.34	1	.04	.04
Child's Gender by Online experience	-.48	.15	9.71	1	.00	.62
Private use by Digital skills	.44	.16	7.00	1	.01	1.55
*Chi-square=83.56, 8(df), Sig. =.00 (Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients) -2 Log likelihood=331.307; Cox and Snell R Square=.148; Nagelkerke R Square= .270, 86.8% correctly classified cases.						
** Chi-square=113.815, 26(df), Sig. =.00 (Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients) -2 Log likelihood=301.053; Cox and Snell R Square=.196; Nagelkerke R Square= .357, 88.5% correctly classified cases.						

Source: EU Kids Online dataset, author's computation.
Base: All children, 11+, in Romania. Internet frequency use: daily

According to the first model, The Wald criterion has demonstrated that boys are 1.8 times more likely to engage in the last stage of Internet use than girls, when all other variables are held constant. Thus, boys, even when age is constant, are more likely to make use of the Internet in a more capital enhancing way, and consequently, in a more gainful way. These results are similar to previous studies. When tested for digital engagement, I have shown elsewhere (Fizesan [Balea], 2012) that boys are more experienced than girls, are involved in more online activities and make use of the internet from more locations. Also, when comparing boys and girls on overall 11-16 year-olds EUKO sample, the results show differences in breadth and nature of use based on gender. In average, boys are using the Internet for a longer time, are more skilled, and undertake a wider range of online activities than girls (Balea, 2012). Haserbrink et al. (2011) also showed in their cluster analysis that girls are less likely to be part of the focused social web-use cluster. According to their results, this cluster consists of most experienced and older users who spend more time online, get involved in the highest risk activities and are most likely to be boys. Moreover, these users are expected to benefit most from using the Internet since they engage in most creative and advanced activities. One of the reasons for these findings can be found if we take a look at the type of activities considered as advanced and creative (step 5 on the ladder of opportunities). We have to keep in mind that boys tend to get involved in more advanced activities when they play online games, for example, while girls incline to social networking activities that don't require high levels of digital skills.

The present findings emphasize that online experience is a powerful predictor since it significantly shapes the way adolescents make use of the Internet every day. According to the Wald criterion, for each year of experience gained, an adolescent has 1.16 more chances to achieve the final scale of the online activities' hierarchy. The same benefits are undertaken if they spend more time online. As the odds ratios shows, each minute spent online increases the chances to become an experienced user. Digital skills also help adolescents to benefit from their Internet use. For each digital skill gained, one is almost 1.49 more likely to belong to the group of digital natives, when all other variables are held constant. Private use is also a very strong and significant predictor. Using the Internet in a private setting increases the odds for a child to become creative user, when all other variables are held constant. Thus, adolescents who do not access the Internet from the privacy of their own bedroom are, in average, almost two times less likely to engage with the Internet in the most gainful way.

Highest education level of household, used as a proxy for socioeconomic status, does not hold for differences in the ways adolescents reach the final step of the ladder of opportunities, when they use the Internet every day. This result

can be intriguing, but if we take a closer look at the characteristics of the sample we can understand why parent's education it is not a significant predictor for reaching the most advanced and creative step of Internet use. First, parent's education average is 2.14 (3 point scale, 3= tertiary education) meaning that most of the adolescents already come from a privileged background. Moreover, according to a previous work (Fizesan [Balea], 2012), parent's education does not hold for direct effects on children's digital engagement (measured as the total number of activities out 17) but holds for indirect effects. The analysis showed that children from higher educational background are more experienced, receive more support from their families and friends, and have more autonomy of use. Further, once a child makes use of the Internet on a daily basis, increases his digital skills and autonomy of use, thus parent's education becomes insignificant. Same analysis showed that older children use the Internet for longer and experience more autonomy of use, which makes them skilled, confident in their actions, and, are engaging in more activities, which explains why SES is not important when it comes to engaging in the most creative and advanced step.

According to the second model, when interaction terms are held constant, some variables lose their significance, while other become significant in shaping the chances for an adolescent to use the Internet in the most creative and advanced step. Online experience remains a significant predictor as in the first case, while gender and digital skills do not. Using the Internet from the privacy of their own bedroom increases the chances for an adolescent to become digital native, when all other variables are hold constant. Thus, for an adolescent who is not using the Internet in a private way there are fewer chances to become an experienced user. Furthermore, according to the Wald criterion, the second model emphasize that digital skills matter more for children with no private use from their own bedroom. Despite the fact that gender does not account for differences on its own in the chances for an adolescent to reach the final step, gender becomes significant when it interacts with online experience. Accordingly, girls need more years of experience in order to become digital natives compared with boys, when all other variables are constant. These results reinforce previous findings, as discussed at the first model.

Conclusions

This paper comes as a continuation and extension of earlier work (Fizesan [Balea], 2012) that argues that the way children make use of the Internet and the gratifications they gain after using it depend on the quality of access, the level of skills, the personal (e.g. Experience, self-efficacy, confidence) and positional

resources (e.g. Age, gender, SES). Accordingly, older children are still more experienced, have Internet access from various locations and devices and exhibit higher levels of digital skills and self-efficacy resulting in a deep digital inclusion. As expected, children from better educated families use the Internet for a longer time, in various locations, develop more digital skills and self-efficacy and engage in more diverse activities. Furthermore, the same work indicates that even when adolescents are using the Internet with the same frequency, i.e. every day, the differences among them remain significant.

Based on this ground and arguing against “digital natives” narratives, the present study aimed to explore the way adolescents in Romania reach the most creative and advanced stage of Internet use. As figures showed, while most of the Romanian adolescents tend to settle for the most common and less gainful use of the Internet, there are some of them who make use of the most advanced and creative online activities. Therefore, the contribution of this paper relies on looking at those young people who engage in creative Internet uses, underlining predictors which push them over the boundaries of common use. Among digital skills, time online and online experience, gender is an important predictor for adolescent’s online experience and for the benefits taken up online. Girls are less likely than boys to engage in a creative and gainful way. These findings are even more important since are focused on 11-16 years old who are online on daily basis. Girls need to work harder, to spend more time online in order to become an experienced user.

Unfortunately, the main discourse of digital native narratives often omits to consider these factors. They assume that children use online information effortlessly, due the fact that they have grown with it (Lorenzo et al., 2006; Green and Hannon, 2007; Kennedy et al., 2008). The present analysis argued against this homogenous view on this entire generation (i.e. Children and young adults) by emphasizing that generalizing the ways in which digital natives cope with these new technologies is a misconception since it fails to recognize the variations in adolescents’ Internet usage. Moreover, this paper supports studies which suggest that the research of the relationship between children and new media should go beyond the basic dichotomy ubiquitous in digital natives’ debate and should focus on developing a more comprehensive understanding of children’s online behaviour (Bennet et al., 2008; Kennedy et al., 2009; Helsper and Enyon, 2009; Bennet and Maton, 2010). Drawing on this academic context, this research tested the dominance of the digital natives’ agenda and turned its attention to the social context in which Internet usage occurs.

The limitations of this analysis touch different levels, some of them being more relevant for the purpose of this study. First, we measured the creative and advanced use using a dummy variable. Defining and measuring it can become

a difficult exercise considering the amount of studies that suggest different ways to approach this concept. Some studies emphasize the importance of measuring it through observations and experiments of online children behaviour in real time. Another notable limitation is given by the type and number of online activities counted in the EUKO questionnaire. This list is not exhaustive and maybe is not the most appropriate for this type of analysis. But considering the fact that in Romania the research and literature on children's online behaviour are very scarce, these results can offer valuable insights about the way Romanian adolescents make use of the Internet. Lastly, the EUKO project has limitations that worth mentioning, and these should be kept in mind when interpreting and using the results. The main limitations refer at sampling procedures the recruitment process may not have reached the most vulnerable or marginalized children, survey context, the fact that it was conducted in homes with parents in the vicinity may have influenced the answers of some children, questionnaire, difficulty to hold children's attention for a longer time, national data, in some countries the national averages might mask quite diverse patterns within the country.

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APPENDIX

Table A1.
Variables used

Digital Skills	%			%
Compare different websites to decide if information is true	58		Delete the record of which sites you have visited	58
Change filter preferences	34		Change privacy settings on a social networking profile	53
Bookmark a website	53		Block messages from someone you don't want to hear from	68
Block unwanted adverts or junk mail/spam	47		Find information on how to use the Internet safely	69
Alpha=.85				
Self-efficacy (A bit true and Very true)	%			%
I am confident that I can deal with unexpected problems	85		If I am in trouble I can usually think of something to do	91
It's easy for me to stick to my aims and achieve my goals	89		I can generally work out how to handle new situations	87
Alpha=.74.				
Digital engagement (Activities online)	%			%
Used the Internet for school work	85		Put (or posted) photos, videos or music to share with others	37
Played Internet games on your own or against the computer	85		Used a webcam	52
Watched video clips	85		Put (or posted) a message on a website	36
Visited a social networking profile	62		Visited a chat-room	24
Used instant messaging	92		Used file sharing sites	17
Sent/received email	65		Created a character, pet or avatar	21

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Read/watched the news on the Internet	38		Spent time in a virtual world	12
Played games with other people on the Internet	61		Written a blog or online diary	12
Downloaded music or films	70			
Alpha= .83				



ELDERLY PARENTS, ADULT CHILDREN AND THE ROMANIAN TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY: AN INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY APPROACH

IONUȚ FÖLDES¹

Abstract. Recent demographic changes such as ageing, low-fertility, and large out-migration from Eastern European countries, brought into discussion the vivid question of the future of intergenerational solidarity within families. In the context of increasing geographical mobility of young people in search for better paid jobs, the unmet need for personal assistance among the elderly, the underdeveloped system of care services, Romania knows new dynamics of intergenerational support. Contrary to perspectives that consider spatial proximity between adult children and their elder parents the indisputable enabling factor for intergenerational support transfers (Rossi and Rossi, 1990), emerging literature on transnational families highlights that such tight kinship relations continue to exist even across borders (Baldassar et al., 2007). Using recent data from the nationwide survey “The Impact of Migration on Older Parents Left Behind in Romania” (2011), this paper examines the complex dynamics of intergenerational solidarity involving adult children as transnational migrants and their elder parents who remain at home. The statistical models used indicate the migrants’ role as providers of remittances, but also the ways in which other forms of support are distributed among the dyads. Despite a possible presupposition that parents who were left at home might only be beneficiaries of support, the data show the opposite: elderly persons, depending on their age, were active providers of help as well.

Keywords: intergenerational solidarity, transnational families, elderly care, population ageing

Introduction²

This study aims to gain better understanding of how geographic distance between adult-children and their elderly parents influence the provision of intergenerational support within the family. Based on a descriptive approach,

¹ *PhD Candidate in Sociology at the Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, e-mail: ionut.foldes@gmail.com.*

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it explores several assumptions related to forms of intergenerational support and to the possible providers and beneficiaries of support in different migration contexts.

The contemporary Romanian demographic context of families, briefly discussed below, raises some interesting discussions about the strengths of family ties. It seems that low fertility rate and the increase of life expectancy at older ages influence the reconfiguration of the traditional family model. It can be easily observed that nowadays extended families are composed of more successive generations than they were in the past (Mureșan, 2012a: 231). Moreover, the increase of the generation age gap led to the reduction of family size (Mureșan and Hărăguș, 2015). The increase of the number of successive generations together with the reduction of the number of children for each generation was translated as the *verticalization* of families (Bengtson et al., 1990).

Migration is another demographic phenomenon which makes our discussion even more salient. Romania is one of the most important countries of out-migration from Eastern Europe to the West (World Bank, 2016). Recent studies about migration emphasize the existence of transnational spaces (social, economic and political spaces) made possible by transmigrants, i.e. social actors defined by their geographic mobility, cross border social relations and networks (Ban, 2012; Basch et al., 2005). Above all, we have witnessed the expansion of transnational families, (Baldassar et al., 2007:14), defined as those extended families whose transmigrant members stay in touch with the non-transmigrant members. International migration is not the only factor influencing the relations between family generations, internal migration holds an effect as well. Consequently, the present paper presents the living arrangements of families and the relationships between parents who remained at home, their adult-children who migrated within the country and those who went abroad.

Before international migration became widespread, Romanians were moving back to rural settlements from de-industrialised cities (Sandu and Alexandru, 2009; Diminescu, 2012). Studies show that internal migration structured remarkably well the patterns of going abroad. Diminescu (2012) revealed the emergence of rural or regional networks of migrants around some representative villages which afterwards have increasingly expanded. Considering these, the paper will provide a comparison in terms of rural-urban differences related to migration status of the adult-children and living arrangements of the multigenerational family.

Moving forward to intergenerational family relations, studies show that there are based on (a) the behaviour that occurs along with the expectation of reward, (b) the result of an altruistic or caring preference and/ or (c) a possible consequence of sharing social norms and values which are culturally built (Bianchi

et al., 2006; Bawin-Legross and Stassen, 2002). Finch's argument concerning the starting point of support relations relates more to a series of commitments negotiated between family members than to a moral imperative (Baldassar et al., 2007: 15). This paper stands on the concept of intergenerational solidarity (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991) as its central concept. This is a multidimensional concept that describes how cohesion and family integration systems operate (Bengtson and Schrader, 1982; Mangen et al., 1988), such as the issue of "intergenerational cohesion after children reach adulthood and establish careers and families of their own" (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991: 896).

The six dimensions implied, are presented in the following table:

Table 1.

Dimensions of intergenerational solidarity

Dimensions	Characteristics
Associational solidarity	Frequency and patterns of interaction in various types of activities in which family members engage
Affectual solidarity	Type and degree of positive sentiments held about family members, and the degree of reciprocity of these sentiments
Consensual solidarity	Degree of agreement on values, attitudes and beliefs among family members
Functional solidarity	Degree of helping and exchange of resources
Normative solidarity	Strength of commitment to performance of familial roles and to meeting familial obligations (familialism)
Structural solidarity	Opportunity structure for intergenerational relationships, reflected in number, type and proximity of family members

Source: Bengtson and Roberts, 1991: 857.

Therefore, considering the demographic context in Romania and the theoretical model of intergenerational solidarity, this study aims to offer a wider description of transformations related to intergenerational family help transfers. Specifically, using a set of nationally representative micro-data for the elderly population of Romania, it shows how old parents and their adult-children are involved in transfers of support according to different migration statuses. The stake of the paper is to put together family studies and migration studies in order to explore the influence of geographic distance on the building and maintaining of kin relationships. This represents the main contribution of the study, given that the topic was little explored in Romania so far.

Transnational family and intergenerational support

According to Basch et al. (2005), transnationalism is based on four premises as follows: (1) transnational migration is inseparable from what we call global capital and it cannot be studied outside the overall relationship between labour and capital; (2) transnationalism is a process in which migrants create social fields that go beyond national borders; (3) the understanding and study of this phenomenon should be made only by taking into consideration the geographic distance, cultural norms and the degree to which the identity has been assumed; (4) by the fact that migrants are living outside of the borders of their country of origin, they take part in the process of nation building for two or more states.

Transnational families can be defined as a specific type of family whose members live separately for a period of time, but which still keep the desire to contribute to the collective wellbeing and to the family unity even across national borders (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 3). Critics of transnational family say that this form of arrangement is a threat to the good management of nation states and that it is a cause of the rupture of family unity which has bad repercussions on individual's wellbeing. As a reaction to such perspective, anthropology sees family and nation as two parallel structures (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 9). Even more, the authors consider family, ethnicity and nation as "imagined communities", because, despite of the fact that individuals are born in certain families and states, their sense of belonging can be developed or negotiated by each (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002: 10).

Lately, the literature has enriched the consistency of a series of studies that treated the issue of transnational families. Most of the studies are the result of long period ethnographies which were taken in various geographic areas. These studies show that members of transnational families are involved in the same types of transfers as families whose members are in spatial proximity. Moreover, the support seems to come from both directions and not only from transmigrants (Baldassar et al., 2007; Baldassar, 2007a, 2007b; Wilding, 2006). An explanation for this is given by Litwak and Kulis (1987), stating that the relation between geographical proximity and offering/ receiving support should not be dichotomous, because there are other factors here, such as the complexity of tasks or constraints and limits determined by the existence of national borders.

These research efforts complement the "new" family studies by considering the cases of transnational families (Baldassar et al., 2007). Rossi and Rossi (1990: 422) state that geographic distance reduces the frequency of social interactions, therefore it also reduces by default transfers of support between the members of the intergenerational family. In contradiction, "modified extended family", another

theoretical approach, sees the family as an agent capable to face the pressures, the effects of modernization (i.e. increasing spatial mobility) (Litwak, 1960). However, time seems to matter. Spending more time abroad diminishes the intensity of parent-child relations of support (Baldassar, 2007a).

The less studied case of Romanian transnational families has high potential due to the complexity of the existing intergenerational relations of support and also the mix of characteristics of developing and developed countries featured by Romania (Zimmer et al., 2014). Here we can mention the cohesive support networks of kinship, firstly based on the sharing the traditional norms related to family obligations and responsibilities, and secondly, based on the existence of a high frequency of co-residence between parents and adult-children (Nadolu et al., 2007). To these one should add the underdeveloped social protection system, and elderly care services more specifically, that are insufficiently adapted to existing needs and cover only a limited segment of the elderly population (Nadolu et al., 2007).

Even if remittances sent home by transmigrants require certain sacrifices, this decision may result from “negotiated commitments” according to the characteristics of family relations, or a response to social norms of filial obligation towards elderly parents (Baldassar, 2007a). In order to reach the material expectations of those left at home, many migrants live in difficult conditions and are deprived from a range of necessities. These all lead to frustration and sometimes to the decision to discontinue family ties (Schmalzbauer, 2004). For Romania, survey data shows that people perceive the long spatial distance from their families as the main negative consequence of living abroad, but they do not necessary report changes in the quality of family relationships, especially regarding disunion of the family (Toth and Toth, 2006).

It is important to mention that relationship between transmigrants and their parents, as potential beneficiaries of practical support, is not dyadic, but influenced by other factors related to the situation of siblings, such as geographic distance and the strength of the relationship (Zimmer et al., 2014). For Romania, in areas with high incidence of migration, more than one generation cohabit in elderly households. Such living arrangements favour migration, as migrants know that someone from the multigenerational household will be there to take care of frail elderly parents (Pantea, 2011). Moreover, if there are siblings who live in spatial proximity to their parents, they will provide the necessary support, meanwhile using remittances received from those who emigrated (Zimmer et al., 2014). Accordingly, it is assumed that the decision to migrate will be a result of some sort of negotiations between the siblings in order to decide who will take care of their elderly parents and who will go to find better paid jobs and providing financially support.

One of migrants' most widespread practices towards their families left at home are money transfers. According to the World Bank (2016) Romania was in 2015 the third remittance recipient country in Europe and Central Asia (\$3.2bn). Studies about Romanian migrants in Spain revealed that half of them send money consistently, 35% monthly, 16% every 2-3 months and 28% occasionally (Toth, 2009). The same report shows that the frequency of remittances increases with the age of adult migrant children. If among young adults the share is 72%, for those aged over 40 years the percentage increases to 91% (Toth, 2009). Also, the author states that the frequency increases for transnational households (95%), especially when children are left at home (99%) as compared to situations when all family members have emigrated (85%) (Toth, 2009). A number of differences can be observed regarding the time spent in the destination country. As time passes, the amount of money sent home seems to go on a descending line, possibly as a result of various factors such as the relocation of entire households in the country of destination (Toth, 2009).

The remittances sent by Romanian migrants in Spain are used primarily for daily expenses, so that it represents a necessary money supplement in order to cover household expenses (Toth, 2009). Other expenses were the "products for healthcare, personal and work home improvement" and to a lesser extent "durables expenses, children's education, payment of debts or loans, purchase of housing or land" (Toth, 2009). Other expenditures concern healthcare products, personal goods, and house renovation and to a smaller degree durable goods, children's education, payment of debts or loans, purchase of housing or land (Toth, 2009).

Thus, the importance of financial aid offered by adult children who work abroad is considerable. However, this urges to question how international migrant adult-children relate to other forms of intergenerational support and which are the differences between internal and external migrants in terms of the types of support provided. Practical help, for instance, cannot to be totally neglected. In the case of internal migrated adult-children, a balance between material and practical help can be assumed.

The situation of elderly persons left at home

A first aspect to be mentioned when dealing with elderly issues in various situations such as that of transnationalism is that this category of the population includes several generations: older adults (55-65 years), relatively younger elderly (65-79 years) and relatively older (80 and over) (Baldassar, 2007a; Mureșan, 2012a).

Research has shown that norms of obligation toward family members have a predictive value for the actual exchange of care. This form of support is perceived in Southern and Central European countries as a responsibility of the family, meanwhile in Northern Europe this is not the case (Haber Kern and Szydlak, 2010). Moreover, intergenerational care is more prevalent in the first two European regions, where the legislation coerces the family to provide support to the parents in need (Haber Kern and Szydlak, 2010), or where the state evades from its responsibilities of social protection (Isengard and Szydlak, 2012).

Considering these age groups, the degree of involvement and types of transfers between the elderly and their adult-children will vary significantly. Through the influence of age, caring transfers will be provided both upwards and downwards on the generational line. In the case of transnational families, most often elderly will give this kind of support to the younger generation in the early stages of migration, but over time the situation is reversed due to the increasing age and needs of the parents (Baldassar, 2007a).

Regarding gender, when women move abroad for paid labour, their responsibilities from home are taken over by other women, usually by (not very old) grandmothers or other female relatives (Schmalzbauer, 2004). The presence of a partner is another important factor, old widow parents have more chances to receive support from their adult-children. Unfavourable health condition increases the risk of needing support so we expect that it should also increase the probability of intergenerational transfers. Zimmer et al. (2014) shows that along with the increasing of vulnerability of the beneficiary of support, geographic distance becomes less and less important.

When grandparents (usually grandmothers) take into care their grandchildren, some various types of living arrangements have to be considered. Not always the dyads live in the same household. When this happens, grandparents change their residence for a limited period of time in order to be closer to the beneficiaries of support, or if the distance is insignificant, they will shift periodically and for a short time from their home to the place where their grandchildren live (Pantea, 2011). Change of residence abroad, even shortly, causes psychological distress due to the inability to adapt to a totally new environment (Pantea, 2011). In the opposite situation, when grandchildren move into their grandparents' home, the reaction of the elderly, under these circumstances, may range from the creation of an environment fully adapted to the lifestyle of children to a social life strictly subordinated to domestic tasks related to childcare (Pantea, 2011).

Correspondingly, the last assumption that guides this explanatory study concerns reciprocity in the exchange relations. Intergenerational transfers of help are not unidirectional, both adult children and elderly parents provide support to each other.

Methodology

This work is based on data from “The Impact of Migration on Older Parents Left Behind in Romania” (IPIA) survey undertaken in 2011. Data was collected by the Centre for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS) with financial support from the Centre on Ageing, University of Utah (CURS, 2011). The questionnaire follows several topics, such as living arrangements of the elderly, the situation of their household, intergenerational transfers of help, associational solidarity and socio-demographic characteristics. The survey was conducted in 2011 among 1,125 elderly parents aged 60 and above, plus a boost sample of 384 respondents aged 60 and above with migrant adult-children (CURS, 2011).

After computing new variables and composite indexes tested with Cronbach’s alpha³, in the first step of the analysis I used descriptive statistics to assess the differences between diverse living arrangements by migration status. The second step relied on multiple correspondence analyses⁴ for intergenerational help given and received by parents to/ from adult-children.

For the receiving of support from adult-children a new variable was computed with four categories, as follows: (1) material support (money and goods), (2) instrumental or time consuming support (care, household duties), (3) both material support and instrumental support, (4) no help received. For providing support, two different variables were used, one identical with the above mentioned, and the other reflecting child care support, measured on an ordinal scale: (1) no support given, (2) seasonal, (3) occasional and (4) frequent. In order to have a clear image, two control variables were used, one referring to the period passed since the adult-child went abroad and the second to associational solidarity, which was measured by the frequency of conversations between dyads using mobile phones or the Internet.

Descriptive results

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for different types of migration in rural and urban Romania. From the total population, approximately 38% of elderly parents live in the same household with their adult-children. Half of the parents (50%) have internal migrated adult-children, 28% of them moved

³ The Cronbach’s alpha test is the most widely used in order to show internal consistency. Varying from 0 to 1, the more similar the items, the higher alpha is likely to be.

⁴ Correspondence analysis tests the association between variables and gives numerical values to those measured on a nominal scale (Culic, 2004: 215). Each case is represented on a dimensional plan in proximity with the other cases from the same category, meanwhile cases from different categories are positioned as distant as possible one from each other (Culic, 2004).

in another locality and 22% changed their residence in others counties. Less high, but significant, is the percent of parents who have children across national borders (13%). Visible discrepancy between rural and urban settlements can be observed for internal migration in the same county and for the case of no-migration. There are more parents in rural areas whose adult-children moved most probably in the closest city or in the county administrative centre. The highest percentage of parents with adult-children who live in the same locality is found for urban settlements. This can be a hint for saying that adult-children are in search for better jobs, and the cities, obviously, offer more opportunities for employment. Also, these can result from enrolment in higher education of young adults from rural areas, at times followed by the decision to prolong their stay in the city. Considering outmigration, discrepancies between rural and urban are much smaller comparative with the other two situations mentioned above.

Table 2.

**Descriptive results for migration status of adult-children
by type of settlement in Romania in 2011**

		Type of settlement		Total
		Urban	Rural	
Same locality (non-migrants)	Frequency	334	177	511
	Percentage	52%	25%	37.52%
Other locality in the same county (internal migrants)	Frequency	90	284	374
	Percentage	14%	39%	27.46%
Other county/ The Capital (internal migrants)	Frequency	139	161	300
	Percentage	22%	22%	22.03%
Other country (international migrants)	Frequency	78	99	177
	Percentage	12%	14%	13.00%
Total	Frequency	641	721	1,362
	Percentage	100%	100%	100%

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Regarding adult-children living in the same household with their parents (Table 3), 88% have never left the parental household by the time of data collection and 12% have left, but returned. The rate of temporary internal migration followed by return home is higher in rural areas. This may be a result of failure in finding a better job. Consequently, our overall picture indicates that adults living with their parents are not as mobile as those living independently or with their families.

Table 3.

Descriptive results for spatial mobility of adult-children who live with parents

			Type of settlement		Total
			Urban	Rural	
Adult-child lived for at least 6 months in other locality?	Yes	Frequency	40	67	107
		Percentage	8%	16%	12%
	No	Frequency	431	352	783
		Percentage	92%	84%	88%
Total		Frequency	471	471	419
		Percentage	100%	100%	100%

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author’s calculations.

Table 4 comparatively presents the status of migrants for the first four possible adult-children. We see a number of categories that highlight the presence or absence of adult-children in the parent’s household. As we observed in Table 2, 38% of parents have all their adult-children spatially immobile, which is also the modal category. On second place, all adult-children are internal migrants (27%). In the third situation, adult children can be internal migrants and non-migrants as well (22%). An interesting observation is that the highest percentage of international migration is for cases when all adult-children are living abroad. There are very few cases when adult-children have all three different statuses (2.5%). Comparing areas of residence, rural localities register higher migration than urban places.

Table 4.

Descriptive results for migration status comparative for the first four adult-children by type of settlement

		Type of settlement		Total
		Urban	Rural	
All international migrants	Frequency	33	29	62
	Percentage	5.2%	4.0%	4.6%
All internal migrants	Frequency	123	244	367
	Percentage	19.3%	33.8%	27.0%
All non-migrants	Frequency	334	181	515
	Percentage	52.3%	25.1%	37.8%
At least: one international migrant, one internal migrant and one non-migrant	Frequency	8	26	34
	Percentage	1.3%	3.6%	2.5%
All international migrants and internal migrants, no non-migrants	Frequency	12	26	38
	Percentage	1.9%	3.6%	2.8%

		Type of settlement		Total
		Urban	Rural	
All international migrants and non-migrants, no internal migrants	Frequency	25	20	45
	Percentage	3.9%	2.8%	3.1%
All internal and non-migrants, no external migrants	Frequency	104	196	300
	Percentage	16.3%	27.2%	22.0%
Total	Frequency	639	722	1,361
	Percentage	100%	100%	100%

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Similar with the previous one, Table 5 presents the relation between the migration status of the oldest adult-child and spatial mobility of the siblings. If the first born child engages in international migration, then in 24% of the cases his/her siblings are also living across borders. This trend seems to repeat when the oldest adult-child engages in internal migration, as 34% of his/her siblings are internal migrants too. Conversely, almost half of non-migrants older adult-children (41%) have their siblings living in the same locality with them and with their parents. This should be a result of migration based on kin and family networks (Anghel, 2008). If the siblings did not leave the country together, probably the oldest adult child managed, after a period of time, to create work opportunities for his or her siblings and brought them with him or her. Regarding their parents, it is highly probable that they have no necessities in terms of personal assistance, or, if it is the case, another relative will handle the responsibility (probably the spouse or partner).

Table 5.

Descriptive result for the comparison between the migration status of the oldest adult-child and the migration status of his or her siblings

			The oldest adult-children			Total
			External migrant	Internal migrant	Non-migrant	
Siblings	All international migrants	Frequency	25	19	20	64
		Percentage	24.3%	3.4%	2.9%	4.7%
	All internal migrants	Frequency	11	192	105	308
		Percentage	10.7%	34.1%	15.1%	22.6%
	All non-migrants	Frequency	14	105	283	402
		Percentage	13.5%	18.7%	40.7%	29.5%
	External migrant, internal migrant and non-migrant	Frequency	2	2	2	6
		Percentage	1.9%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%

		The oldest adult-children			Total
		External migrant	Internal migrant	Non-migrant	
None non-migrant	Frequency	5	10	5	20
	Percentage	4.9%	1.8%	0.7%	1.5%
None internal migrant	Frequency	4	7	6	17
	Percentage	3.9%	1.2%	0.9%	1.2%
None external migrant	Frequency	5	48	43	96
	Percentage	4.9%	8.5%	6.2%	7.0%
No siblings	Frequency	37	180	232	449
	Percentage	35.9%	32.0%	33.3%	33.0%
Total	Frequency	103	563	696	1,362
	Percentage	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Spatial mobility and intergenerational support

The following tables and figures reproduce multiple correspondence analysis results for intergenerational support from both directions. In order to produce these analyses, new variables were built for the two categories of actors involved in transfers of support (adult-children and parents), which include forms of support mentioned before.

For the best possible data accuracy, I examined the relationship between parents and their oldest adult-child. Correspondingly, for the variable describing the situation of benefiting from the support of adult-children, I used four categories, as follows: (1) material support, (2) instrumental, (3) both, and (4) no type of support. For receiving material support, the following items were employed: "During the past year, has your oldest child given you or your spouse any money?", "During the past year, has your oldest child helped you with food or other goods?", "Has your oldest child ever contributed with a substantial amount of money for improving your house or building a new house?", "Has your oldest child ever bought or given to you a major household item (car, appliance, etc)?".

Instrumental support was measured using the following questions: "During the past year, has your oldest child helped you with housework (cooking, cleaning)?" and "During the past year, has your oldest helped you with your work, business or farm?".

For parents two variables were built, one computed with the categories mentioned above and a second one, specifically referring to care for the grandchildren. This variable has a number of categories based on how often

support is provided (do not offer at all, only seasonally, occasionally or frequently). The questions used for providing material support were as follows: "During the past year, have you or your spouse given assets or financial help (loans) to your oldest child?" and "During the past year, have you or your spouse given food or other items to your oldest child?". For measuring the provision of practical support two items were employed: "During the past year, have you or your spouse helped your oldest child with housework other than childcare?" and "During the past year, have you or your spouse helped your oldest child with work, business or on the family farm?". The last type of practical help is caring for grandchildren: "During the past year, have you or your spouse helped your oldest child with childcare?". When the answer was "Yes, during school vacations", support was considered to be provided seasonally. If help was provided several times or monthly, the "occasionally" category was used, while for help offered almost daily or weekly the "frequently" category was assigned.

Types of support, both given and received, have been treated differently in situations where adult-children are external migrants as compared to internal migrants. This was measured by asking the respondent "Where does your oldest child live?". Internal migration was considered when the answer was the same county, but a different locality within or outside of the county, International migration was considered when the parent declared that his or her oldest child was living abroad.

As an attempt to bring new information and to control the time effect and frequency of contact, new multiple correspondence models were created. The time effect was controlled with the help of a variable measuring the time elapsed from the moment of leaving the parental home. The questions were formulated as follows: "How long ago did your oldest child move away from your household?". The minimum period is one year, and the last grouping interval of the scale is more than 25 years. The second variable measures how much parents and adult-children discuss with each other on the telephone or via the Internet. The variable was computed by taking into consideration the migration status of the oldest adult child and the frequency of discussions (using telephone, email, SMS) from the past 12 months.

In the total sample of 1,509 respondents aged 60 or above, 516 persons have international migrant children, 885 persons have no children abroad and 108 have no children at all. For the analyses data were weighted, therefore the absolute frequencies for all three categories have been changed. There were 103 cases where the oldest adult child is an international migrant. Irrelevant cases (no migrant children or no children at all) were excluded from the analysis (recoded into missing values).

Transnational families

Tables 6.1 to 6.4 and Figure 1 present information from multiple correspondence analysis, the Cronbach’s Alpha test, relative frequency distribution, contribution of variable categories to the two dimensions and the graphic results of the analysis (joint plot of category points) of the variables that describe the intergenerational support between parents left at home and international migrant adult-children.

Table 6.1.

Relative frequency distribution and contribution of variable categories to the two dimensions for benefiting help from the international migrant adult-child

Category	Relative Frequency (%)	Centroid Coordinates	
		Dimension	
		1	2
Material	96.6%	.815	.219
Instrumental	1.1%	-3.695	2.470
Both	1.5%	-4.006	3.776
No help	0.8%	-2.804	-2.647

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author’s calculations.

Table 6.2.

Relative frequency distribution and contribution of variable categories to the two dimensions for providing help to the international migrant adult-child

Category	Relative Frequency (%)	Centroid Coordinates	
		Dimension	
		1	2
Material	15.8%	-2.451	1.405
Instrumental	5.4%	-2.405	2.644
Both	6.7%	-3.993	4.527
No help	72.1%	-1.477	-1.974

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author’s calculations.

As the frequencies from Table 6.1 show, the most frequent type of help received from adult-children living abroad is material. Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 show poor involvement of parents in providing intergenerational support. This can be seen as a sign of deprivation among the elderly people left at home. Poor

health condition and low income makes provision of help to their sons and daughters left abroad almost impossible. On the contrary, in the majority of cases in order to meet their needs, help from children living abroad is requested. When parents have the possibilities to offer support to their adult-children living in another country, the most frequent are material aid and seasonal childcare. Typically during the first critical period of finding work and accommodation abroad, material support from parents can be crucial. Also, when grandchildren are in school vacations, grandparents seem to be the suitable option for childcare.

Table 6.3.

Relative frequency distribution and contribution of variable categories to the two dimensions for providing childcare to the international migrant adult-child

Category	Relative Frequency (%)	Centroid Coordinates	
		Dimension	
		1	2
Seasonal	14.5%	-2.569	1.245
Occasional	2.5%	-3.207	3.744
Frequent	10.0%	-2.992	2.603
No help	73.0%	-1.603	-1.825

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Table 6.4.

Summary of multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with international migrant adult-child

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Variance Accounted For	
		Total (Eigenvalue)	Inertia
1	.861	2.346	.782
2	.672	1.811	.604
Total		4.157	1.386
Mean	.778 ^a	2.079	.693

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Looking at Figure 1, it can be observed how the categories of help were grouped in a two-dimensional plan. One group consists of elderly parents who receive both types of support (material and time consuming) and also who offer material, practical and, occasionally, childcare for their grandchildren. The second group represents the cases when parents offer and receive instrumental help and

childcare is frequently provided. In the third group, this time, parents are only providers of support (material and seasonal childcare). The last group show no intergenerational help transfers. Considering the two dimensions of the analysis, it can be observed that the first one discriminates only the situation when adult-children offer material support. In other words, the primary role of the adult-child who migrates abroad for work to provide remittances is highlighted. The second dimension groups the categories in such a way that short-term reciprocal relationships stand out (Leopold and Raab, 2011). Considering that practical help involves physical contact, while material support does not, we can say that, as expected, face to face meetings are not frequent between dyads. However, when the family reunites, even for short periods of time, both members of the two generations contribute with different types of help.

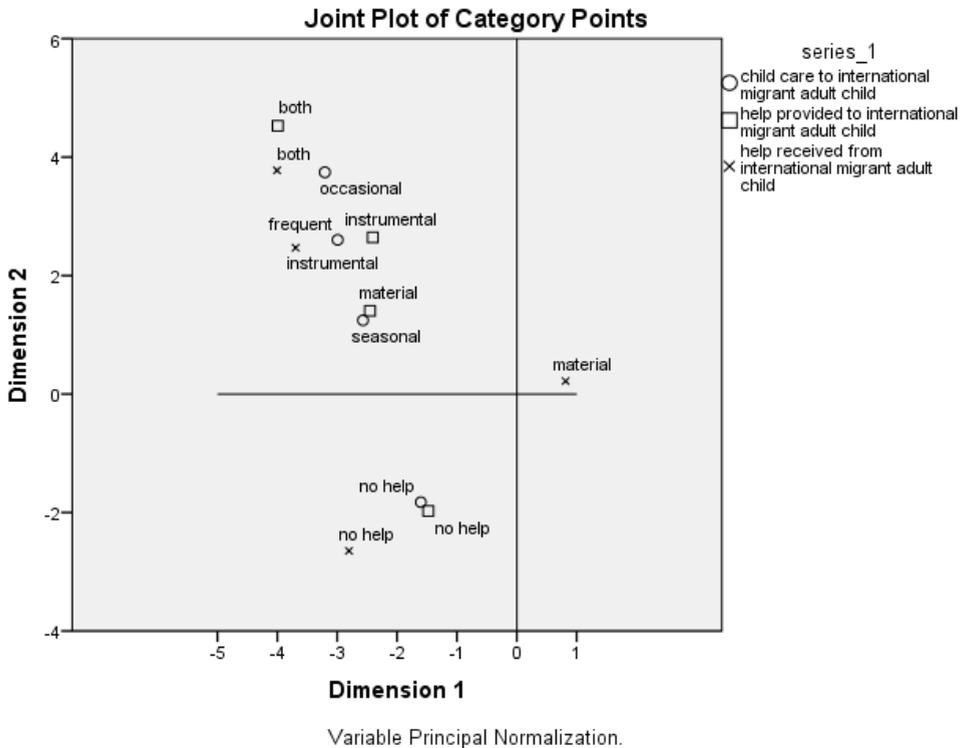


Figure 1. Plot of category points for multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with international migrant adult-child

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Controlling for the effect of time spent abroad among international adult-child migrants and the frequency of contact by telephone or the Internet between adult-children left abroad and their parents in Romania, the multiple correspondence models show, at first sight, intuitive information about the effect of the two new analyzed variables (see Table A1 and Figure A1 from Appendix A). Regarding our time-related variable, the bi-dimensional plot showed that the only category explained by the first dimension is material help provided by adult children who work abroad. The second dimension captures the type and intensity of all other forms of support and also a maximum period of 14 years since the adult child went to work abroad for the first time. Here, groups cannot be clearly identified according to forms of support and the time related variable. However, the categories describing the lack of any transfers seem to be closely related to the very long period spent abroad by adult-children (20-24 years and 25 years and above). This can be a clue of rupture of family ties after a long period of separation. Another possible explanation is related to the characteristics of different migration regimes in Romania (see Horvath, 2012: 199). International migrants who had left the country for more than 20 years have specific mobility patterns, socio-demographic characteristics and family backgrounds, different from later migrant cohorts.

These results reinforce the statement regarding the main role of the transnational migrants. For a relatively long period of time, adult-children contribute financially to the wellbeing of their parents. Other forms of support, provided or received by elderly parents, are more time-dependent than material support. Having children living for more than two decades in another country, intergenerational transfers of support might no longer be present. Because correspondence analysis does not imply causality, the relation between time and transfers is seen as indirect, so that possibly other factors offer better explanation for the change in the support provided. Such factors could be health related problems among the elderly that occur along with ageing, grandchildren no longer requiring childcare, or the fact that adult children established careers and families abroad, turning their full attention to their “new” lives.

The second variable was used to control the relationships of support between generations living apart by the frequency of technology mediated contact (see Table A2 and Figure A2 from Appendix A). As it was the case in previous analyses, the first dimension discriminates only for material help received from adult-children. Very often discussions seem to be in the same group with provision of material support and seasonal childcare by parents. Since the other categories are grouped together, no or rare discussions might be a sign of a weak kinship bonds and consequently an indicator of the lack of intergenerational support. As it was mentioned before, intergenerational solidarity is constructed on multiple pillars. Frequency of help (functional solidarity) and frequency of contact (associational solidarity) in this case are positively related.

Family relations inside the national frontiers

This section presents the results of three multiple correspondence models concerning intergenerational transfers between members of extended families, who are resident in different localities, but in the same country. Regarding the frequency of intergenerational support benefited and received, Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 show the weighted frequency for each category. The highest share of support from adult-children to elderly parents regards care and household duties, which are both time consuming. Compared to parents who receive intergenerational support, it can be observed that very few do not benefit from any kind of help from their internal migrant adult-children. The most common intergenerational downward support is material and childcare offered only once a month or less. As in the previous set of analyses, one can see high frequency of parents who do not offer any form of support to their internal migrant adult-children.

Table 7.1.

Relative frequency distribution and contribution of variable categories to the two dimensions for benefiting help from the internal migrant adult-child

Category	Relative Frequency (%)	Centroid Coordinates	
		Dimension	
		1	2
Material	23.6%	-.833	-.473
Instrumental	49.8%	.456	.593
Both	21.5%	.289	-.257
No help	5.0%	-.448	-.082

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Table 7.2.

Relative frequency distribution and contribution of variable categories to the two dimensions for providing help to the internal migrant adult-child

Category	Relative Frequency (%)	Centroid Coordinates	
		Dimension	
		1	2
Material	46.0%	.080	.804
Instrumental	2.4%	.720	-3.956
Both	13.7%	1.950	-.542
No help	37.9%	-.893	-.619

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Table 7.3.**Relative frequency distribution and contribution of variable categories to the two dimensions for providing childcare to the internal migrant adult-child**

Category	Relative Frequency (%)	Centroid Coordinates	
		Dimension	
		1	2
Seasonal	14.3%	.699	1.028
Occasional	5.0%	2.445	-1.134
Frequent	7.3%	1.370	-1.886
No help	73.4%	-.493	-.026

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Table 7.4.**Summary of multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with internal migrant adult-child**

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Variance Accounted For	
		Total (Eigenvalue)	Inertia
1	.591	1.651	.550
2	.466	1.451	.484
Total		3.102	1.034
Mean	.533 ^a	1.551	.517

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

This time, the first dimension does not discriminate only one category of help. It can be observed that both parents and adult-children have key roles. First group constituted in the two-dimensional plot shows close relation between material support from parents, seasonal childcare and practical help received from adult children. Looking at the second dimension, the proximity of "no help" categories can be spotted. The case of parents who do not take care of their grandchildren is in the vicinity of the case when no support is received from adult children. Also, another group can be observed, formed by two categories: material aid offered by adult children and neither material nor instrumental help provided to adult children. The first group corresponds with a pattern often discussed in the literature, showing that parents offer lifelong material support to their children while they receive instrumental support in situations of needs from their adult-children (Leopold and Raab, 2011; Mureşan, 2012a and 2012c; Földes, 2015). Due to the geographic distance, childcare is possible only seasonally, when grandchildren are in school vacations and working

parents have to require help from grandparents. Material support from the youngest generation members is not related with offering material or instrumental help to adult-children. This may be a hint for the poor economic situation and health condition of parents. Parents are not able to travel long distances in order to visit their adult children and help them with household duties and their limited income increases the need for financial aid from other family members.

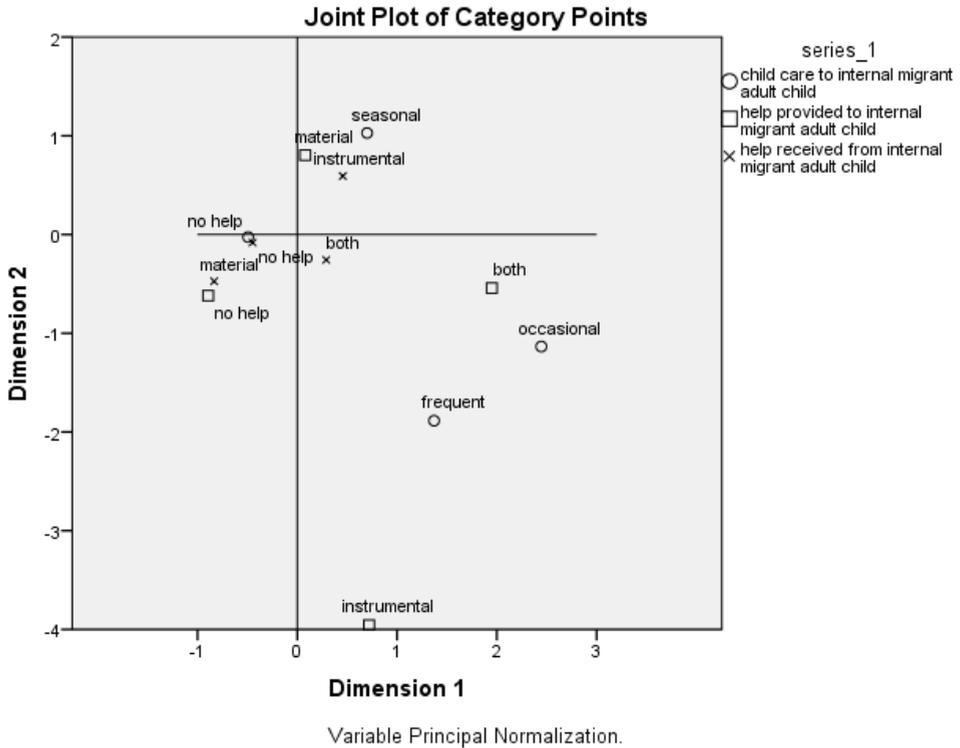


Figure 2. Plot of category points for multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with internal migrant adult-child

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

As in the previous case, two different multiple correspondence models were created which include time related variables and frequency of contact by telephone or the Internet between dyads (see Appendix B). The first joint plot of category points shows that the first dimension brings ahead a group consisted of the following categories: material help received from internal

migrant adult-children, no childcare provided and 25 years and above passed since adult-children left the parental home and moved in different locality. Close to this points is positioned the case when neither material, nor practical help is provided to internal migrant adult-children. Postulating that our time-related variable goes along with ageing, the result supports the interpretation previously provided. Parents' poor living conditions do not allow them to offer any kind of support to their adult children and the needy life requires help from the youngest. Due to the distance and the busy life of adult children, the most convenient type of support is material.

For the frequency of contact mediated by technology, only one category is positioned close to a category describing transfers of help. It is observed that parents receive material and time consuming help (or practical help) if they also discuss often via the phone or the Internet. In addition, the first dimension also surprises the provision of all three types of support to internal migrant adult-children. Another group is formed by frequent discussions, instrumental help received, material and seasonal childcare provided. The second dimension groups the situations when communication occurs rarely and when transfers are just material and ascending. Therefore, it seems that the frequency of indirect contact is related to actual help. Once again, the existence of links between intergenerational solidarity dimensions is evident. Associational solidarity and functional solidarity are positively connected: when the contact is frequent, the provision of help is more visible.

Discussions

The Romanian demographic context, characterized by below replacement fertility rates and massive international migration, produces transformations of family relations, especially regarding intergenerational relations between members of extended families. The rising number of elderly population and youth migration for work abroad raises more and more questions about the ways in which families could ensure welfare for their members, and also about how migration influences the intergenerational transfers of support. Using statistical analyses on the IPIA 2011 dataset, this paper tried to capture an overall picture of this phenomenon. As most of the studies in the field embraced so far qualitative approaches and quantitative data on the functioning of transnational families remained limited, these analyses contribute to the filling in of an important gap.

Results confirm that transnational families keep their unity and continue to maintain relations of mutual support (Bryceson and Vuorela, 2002; Litwak, 1960). All members of transnational families have a special role in terms support transfers and they try to maintain a certain family cohesion, even when separated by long distances and the national borders (Baldassar et al., 2007).

Data shows a significant number of extended families whose younger members are internal or international migrants. The results became more interesting when migration status is compared between siblings. It cannot be neglected the fact that numerous extended families have members of the same generational line with different migration statuses (non-migrants, internal migrants and external migrants). This may be a result of negotiated arrangements between family members (Baldassar, 2007a). When the situation requires, someone will keep living with parents in order to provide the instrumental help required, while others will leave the parental household in search for a better job which could allow contributing with money for the parents left at home. Still, the percentage of all migrant adult children is not to be forgotten. Further analysis considering the health status of parents and their care needs might assure a plus for our interpretation.

As expected, geographic distance is closely related to the type of help provided. Practical support is more common in cases of spatial proximity between households. The main role of international migrant adult-children is the provision of material help (remittances), but other form of support cannot be neglected either. In what concerns internal migrant children, they are far more often providers of practical help than material help (or both).

Parents are not only beneficiaries of support, they are also providers. For both cases of migration, parents were ready to help their adult children. When adult children work abroad, the support provided by parents does not consists of financial aid, but in practical help via frequent contact and shorter periods of separation. In the case of adult children who live in country, the results overlap with previous studies for the case of Romania. Parents receive from their adult children instrumental or practical support, while they offer material support and help with caring for their grandchildren (Mureșan, 2012a: 231; Hărăguș, 2014; Földes, 2015; Mureșan and Hărăguș, 2015).

Even if the geographical distance is not an obstacle for the existence of intergenerational transfers, the situation changes once the time variable is added. Previous studies about transnationality show that spending more time abroad has a “cooling” effect on the intensity of kin relations (Baldassar, 2007a). The same can be observed easily in all analyses presented in this paper. As mentioned in previous section, this is caused by shifting the investment of social, economic and cultural capital from the country of origin to the country of destination. When departure lasted 20 years or more, no transfers at all occurred. However, the data does not allow us to discern whether international migrants used to be internal migrants before. So, leaving the parental home could not coincide with living the country. Moreover, persons who emigrated 20 years ago or before belong to another migration regime, completely different from that after 2000, and this fact makes interpretations difficult.

Other limitation of the present paper is given by the fact that analyses point out only the kin relation of parents with the oldest adult child. Also, because multiple correspondence models do not imply causality, the results could not provide clear information about the factors which contribute directly to changes in help behaviour of the extended family members. Beyond these limitations, this paper managed to reach its objectives of presenting a more complex and up-to-date picture of the growing category of multigenerational transnational families originating in Romania.

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APPENDIX A

Table A1.

Summary of multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with international migrant adult-child and time spent abroad

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Variance Accounted For	
		Total (Eigenvalue)	Inertia
1	.913	3.168	.792
2	.649	1.949	.487
Total		5.118	1.279
Mean	.812 ^a	2.559	.640

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Table A2.

Summary of multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with international migrant adult-child and frequency of contact by telephone and the Internet

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Variance Accounted For	
		Total (Eigenvalue)	Inertia
1	.914	3.176	.794
2	.625	1.882	.471
Total		5.058	1.265
Mean	.806 ^a	2.529	.632

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

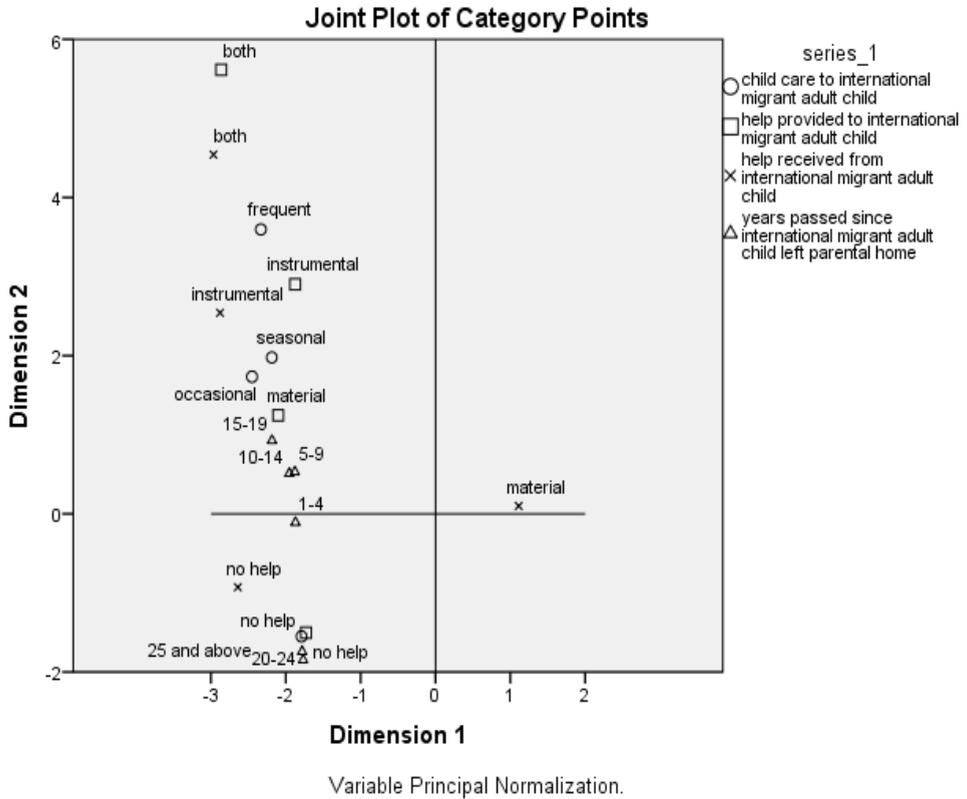


Figure A1. Plot of category points for multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with international migrant adult-child and time spent abroad

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

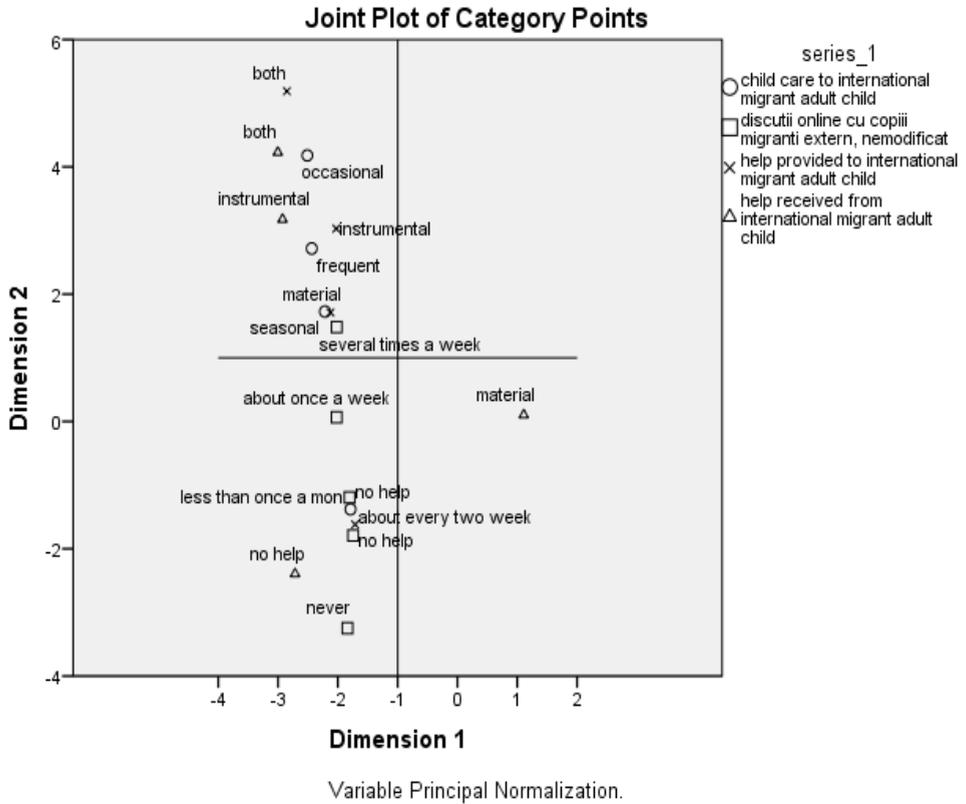


Figure A2. Plot of category points for multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with international migrant adult-child and frequency of contact by telephone and Internet

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

APPENDIX B

Table B1.

Summary of multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with internal migrant adult-child and time passed since living in other locality

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Variance Accounted For	
		Total (Eigenvalue)	Inertia
1	.604	1.828	.457
2	.456	1.519	.380
Total		3.347	.837
Mean	.537 ^a	1.674	.418

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

Table B2.

Summary of multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with internal migrant adult-child and frequency of contact by telephone and the Internet

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Variance Accounted For	
		Total (Eigenvalue)	Inertia
1	.563	1.730	.433
2	.421	1.462	.365
Total		3.192	.798
Mean	.498 ^a	1.596	.399

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.

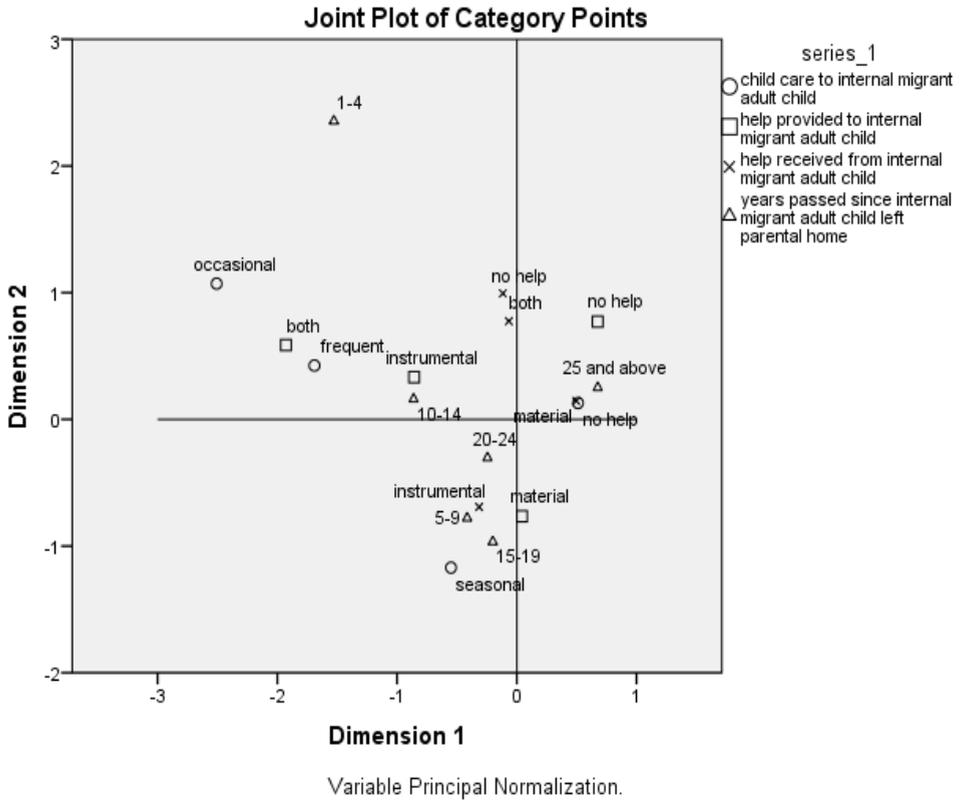


Figure B1. Plot of category points for multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with internal migrant adult-child and time passed since living in other locality

Data source: IPIA; author's calculations.

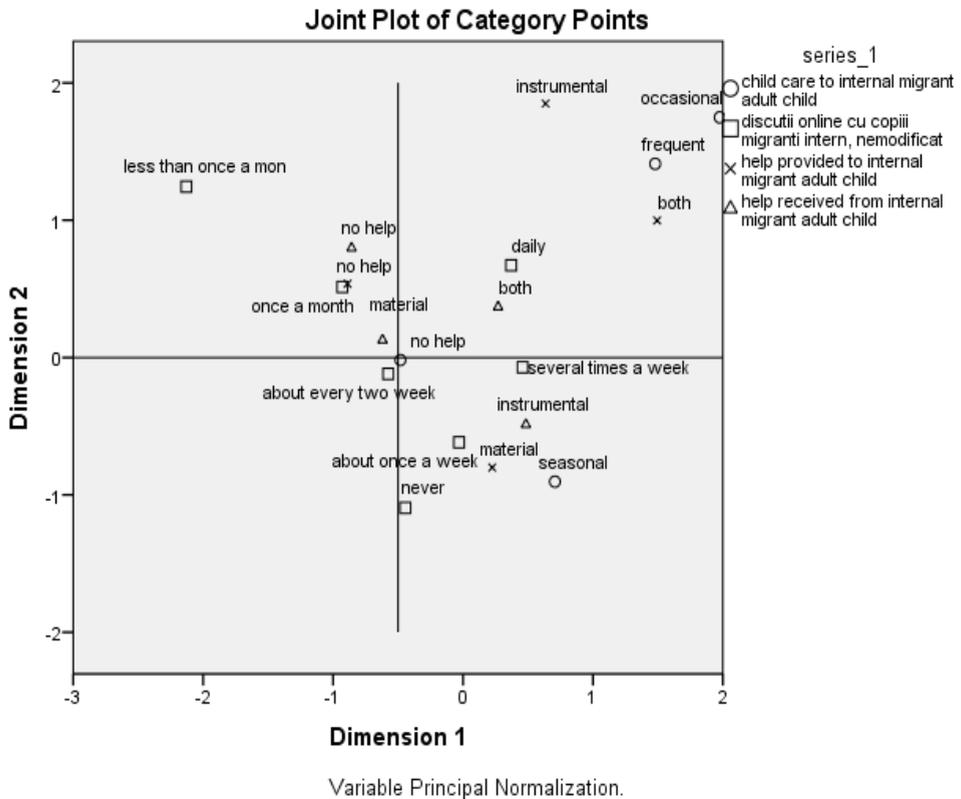


Figure B2. Plot of category points for multiple correspondence model for intergenerational transfers with internal migrant adult-child and frequency of contact by telephone and the Internet

Data source: IPIA, 2011. Author's calculations.



THE ROMANIAN PENSION SYSTEM REFORMS: EVIDENCES FROM LEGISLATIVE ROLL CALL ANALYSIS

CLAUDIU BARBU¹

Abstract. There are important differences between all Eastern European countries regarding the implementation of pension system privatization. The differences regarding the political configuration between the countries from Eastern Europe might be a possible explanation for the amount of diversity in this area. The ideology of political parties that form or sustain the government that implements the reform can also be an explanation, but this influence must be studied beyond the cliché that stipulates that the right-wing parties will support the public pension system reform and the left-wing parties will oppose it. Armeanu (2010a) showed that there are countries where privatization was supported by the centre-left coalitions that needed to overpass a strong opposition made by the right-wing parties. Using the Ideal Point Estimation technique within the voting sessions related to pension reform during the last three Romanian legislatures, we will explain the formation of pro and against coalitions regarding the pension reform from Romania during the privatization process of public pension system. We also test the hypotheses of the model presented by Armeanu (2010a, 2010b), model that predicts the behaviour of political parties based on the position they have on a two-dimensional space related to the costs of pension reform.

Keywords: pension privatization, pension system reform, party system, DW-NOMINATE multidimensional scaling, Romania

The privatization of the pension system in Central and Eastern Europe

The privatization of the pension systems represents the mainstream in the field of pension reform, because it is supported by International Financial Institutions (IFI). Still, privatization is not the only method that can be used in order to reform a pension system. The World Bank and the International Monetary

¹ *PhD Candidate in Sociology at the Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, e-mail: Claudiu.BARBU@ubbonline.ubbcluj.ro.*

Fund present the public pension crisis as a macroeconomic vulnerability that can increase the budget deficit of a country (Armeanu, 2010b:3). The IFI's lending conditions are narrowing the range of policy models available for governments from developing and transitional countries (Brooks, 2005), and can convince a government to privatize the pension system. Still, private pension schemes should eradicate the problems faced by the public pension system: the impact of the ageing population on the sustainability of pension systems, the disproportion between contribution and benefits and the underfunding of the pension funds.

But the privatization does not solve these problems, still it creates others. First, the costs of privatization are very high. Privatization means that a part of the contributions of current workers must be diverted from public system to privately administered funds. This operation leaves an economic gap in the public system, a gap that needs to be covered. In Eastern European countries, the contributions are at a high level (35-45%). Thus, increasing them is not an option for the government, who needs to search for additional resources outside the pension system to cover this gap. If the gap is covered from the public budget, then the budget deficit will increase. Most of the countries in the region are already having a negative budget balance, therefore an action that will jeopardize even more the budget balance is not something governments can afford. Myles and Pierson (2001) characterize this problem as "an insurmountable barrier to privatization on the capitalization of existing public pension schemes" (Myles and Pierson, 2011: 313).

Secondly, the private pension system does not ensure greater benefits than the public one. This is because financial markets are underdeveloped in Eastern Europe and unable to take the full amount of money stored in the private funds. Therefore, the private administrators of the pension funds invest in government bonds, offering a smaller profit than an investment on other markets. The high administrative costs of the private pension funds represent another problem that comes with the reform of the private pension system (Armeanu, 2010b:4).

The political consensus regarding the privatization process is difficult to maintain on the long term. Government changes are a common reality in the countries of the former Warsaw Treaty, and this can jeopardize the continuity of the measures that aims to reform the pension system. A new-installed prime-minister can modify, for example, the transfer rate between the public pension fund and the private ones. Lastly, the privatization does not solve the problem represented by the special pensions. There are countries where the privileges were abolished before privatization (Czech Republic, Lithuania and Slovenia) and there are others where the privileges continued to exist after the privatization (Poland, Romania) (Armeanu, 2010b:4).

Therefore, some researchers propose a deep reform of the public pension system which aims to increase the proportionality between contributions and benefits. This objective can be achieved by implementing four types of measures: (1) increasing the retirement age, (2) changing the pension calculation formula in order to reduce its redistributive character, (3) correlating pension amount with prices evolution and (4) renouncing to special pensions scheme. In this way a reformed public pension system will not bear the costs of the transition to private funds, and thus the financial deficit of the privatization will be avoided. Finally, the administrative costs of a public fund will be smaller compared with those charged by the private funds, and this positive difference will be found in the benefits of the retired people (Armeanu, 2010b:5).

There are important differences between the privatization of the pension system implemented by the Eastern European countries. These differences can be observed both in terms of the onset of the reforms and in the output of the process (the output of the reform is evaluated based on two variables: how long the reform did survive and how important were the measures implemented: which percentage from the contributions collected to the public pension system is transferred to the private funds). One possible explanation for those differences is given by the institutional perspective (Lundell, 2005) of path-dependency, which assumes that past choices constrain present options: “(constitutional) choices may be dependent on each other, the choice of one device following naturally from the choice of another device” (Ankar and Karvonen, 2004: 8).

Another possible explanation for the amount of variety in this area is the different political configurations in the Eastern European countries. The ideology of the parties that form or sustain the government that implements the reform can be an explanation, but this influence must be studied beyond the cliché that stipulates that the right-wing parties will support the public pension system reform and the left-wing parties will oppose it. One predictor for the development of the countries from Eastern Europe is the evolution of former communist parties in this region. If an ex-communist party did reform itself at the beginning of the 90's, it is more likely to support a pension reform process or make alliances with liberal parties or other political entities from the right-wing of the political spectrum (Armeanu, 2010b:29). However, for an ex-communist party, a decision to support or oppose a change of policy (like the pension system for example) is taken based on the assessment of his future potential electoral advantages (Rokkan, 2009). But this assessment is not always accurate. The scores of the ex-communist parties in Poland and Hungary, at the elections held at the beginning of the 90's, give us some clues regarding the “unwarranted optimism as well as pessimism” from the ex-communist camp (Lijphart, 1992:214).

Oana Armeanu (2010a) showed that there are countries where privatization was supported by the centre-left coalitions that needed to overpass a strong opposition made by the right-wing parties. The right-wing left-wing dichotomy cannot explain the reality in those countries; a better way to understand the process is to look at the fight between the pro-reform and anti-reform coalitions that are created based on the strategic interaction between the parties (this interaction can take place between the parties, but also between the parties and external environment). This interaction is complementary to the ideology of the parties from the political system. The output of the reform and its sustainability are influenced by the coalitions that are created during the reform implementation. Economic and external pressures do not automatically carry (by themselves) the political solution to the implementation of the reform in public pension system, no matter how acute it would manifest (Orenstein, 2003). Policy change occurs through the creation and dissemination of new ideas. Usually, those new ideas are not adopted before they are tested or implemented in the environments they were created. But sometimes, new ideas are taken without waiting further confirmation about their validity or usefulness. From this point of view, an emergence of a crisis is only necessary but not sufficient for a policy change and the new ideas may come later than the crisis. Still, this theory (the diffusion theory) doesn't explain why or how the innovations are modified during the process of implementation in certain countries (Rogers, 1995). Internal factors are different from state to state; therefore they must play an important role in the implementation of innovation, leaving their fingerprints on the process and outcome of the reform.

Armeanu (2010b) believes that political factors are the one that shape the structural or paradigmatic changes. The features of the parties and the political spectrum itself are variables that influence the way coalitions are created. The outcome of the reform depends on the relative strength of pro-reform and anti-reform coalitions and parties. When political parties decide to join one side or another, they take into account other constraints apart from ideology: maintaining the internal cohesion, the contentment of their own members, the pragmatic opportunity to create alliances (Armeanu, 2010b:7).

A party's decision to vote or not to vote the pension system reform depends on two variables: the diffuse costs and the concentrated ones. The diffuse costs and benefits represent the measures that are not immediately influencing the voters. Creating the private pension systems influences the population, by favouring the individuals with a higher income, but this influence is not immediate; it takes place in time, and also, does not favour a certain category of citizens. The party position regarding these costs is explained by their ideology, the left-wing parties being against the pension reform, while the right-wing parties supporting the privatization. Instead, eliminating the privileges offered by special

pension systems is a measure with immediate and visible impact onto certain socio-economic categories of citizens and this represents a concentrated cost. According to the model proposed by Armeanu (2010b), parties that support the special pensions are parties with roots in the communist era (even if they are reformed nowadays), but this category is larger and it includes the national-populist parties, the ones from the right-wing lot, with an ideology that contains a traditional vision about society, a vision implying that certain professions have a special role for the state (army, justice, etc.) (Armeanu, 2010a).

In addition to the concentrated costs, there are also concentrated benefits. Privatization implies mobilizing an important amount of capital, and only a part from this amount will return to the retirement people (Armeanu, 2010b). Due to the high administrative costs of the private funds, the privatization gives birth to a competition for customers and funds, a competition that take place between different banking institutions, insurance companies, managers or supervisory agencies. In Latin America, the administrative costs for private funds did rise up to 40% of the total amount of contributions transferred from the public fund to the private ones. The interests of the entities listed above may collide with the interests of certain special groups protected by special pension systems. Both those sides have representatives in the decision-making institutions, and even in the same party. Consequently, a certain party can have members both in the pro-reform coalition and in the anti-reform coalition. How the deputies or the senators of a party will vote on a reform proposal for the pension system depends on the way the party can solve the internal war between members from the anti-reform and the pro-reform coalitions (Armeanu, 2010b).

The party's position regarding the two types of costs can be highlighted on a two-dimensional spatial model. On the horizontal axis the diffuse costs are represented, with the extreme attitudes regarding the pension privatization at the two ends of the axis: supporting the public pension system (the principle of redistribution) and supporting the privatization of the private pension system (the principle of proportionality between contributions and benefits). The position on this axis can also be explained by the ideology, more specific by the party position on the left-right continuum. The concentrated costs are highlighted on the vertical axis: at one end are the parties that support the occupational privileges in the special pension system and at the other end are the parties that oppose the occupational privileges in the special pension system.

The positioning in this quasi-Cartesian system can explain the decisions to support or to oppose the pension reform, decisions taken by a certain party. Those decisions are also based on the way coalitions are created, and also on the predicted sustainability of the reform. To simplify, the author (Armeanu, 2010a) puts the status-quo of the pension system (public pension system inherited from

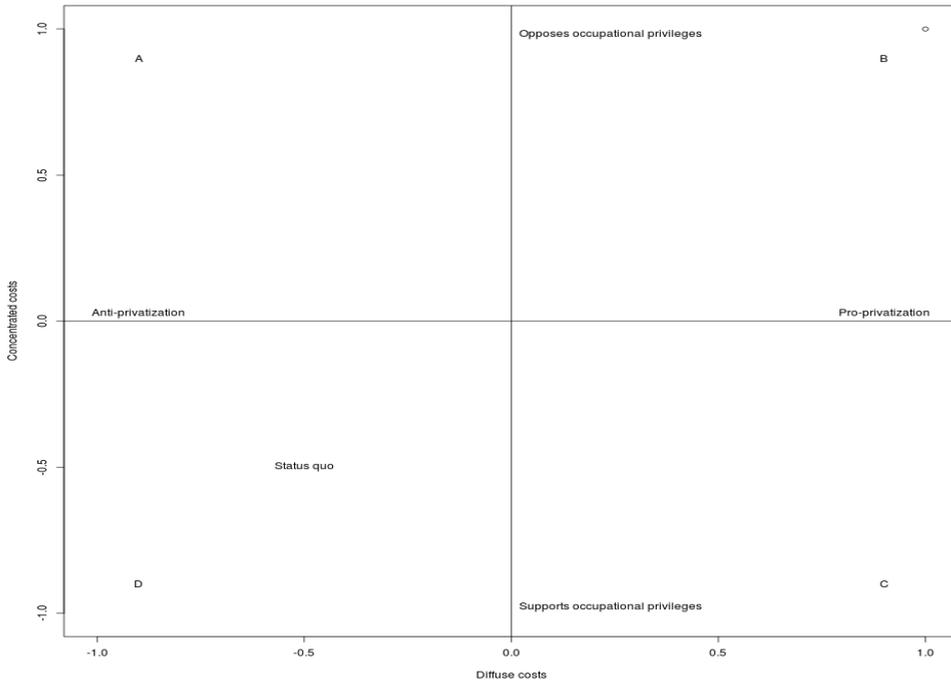


Figure 1. Party positions regarding the costs and benefits of pension reform

Source: Armeanu (2010a)

the communist era) in the lower-left quadrant (the D panel) because the public pension system was based on redistribution and promoted special pensions for certain professional categories. Also, for simplicity, the model assumes the existence of a political system with four parties, each one having the ideal point in one of the four existing quadrants: A, B, C, D. The first party opposes the privatization but also the occupational privileges, therefore its ideal point is situated in the upper left quadrant (A). The second party supports the privatization but opposes occupational privileges therefore its ideal point is situated in the upper right quadrant (B). The third party supports both the privatization and occupational privileges and therefore its ideal point is situated in the lower right quadrant (C). The fourth party is satisfied with the status-quo, and therefore its ideal point is situated in the lower left quadrant (D).

Main objective and hypothesis

The main objective of this research is to test the hypotheses of the model presented above following Armeanu (2010a) on the Romanian experience with the public pension system privatization. Armeanu (2010a) proposed five hypotheses regarding the behaviour of the parties in the Cartesian system, and validate them for the case of Poland. The five hypotheses are the five hypotheses of the present study:

H1: Coalitions dominated by parties who oppose both diffuse and concentrated costs of reform make only marginal changes to the existing pension system.

H2: Parties that accept both types of costs support all pro-reform coalitions.

H3: Parties that accept one type of costs but not the other will support only a reform proposal that brings the pension system closer to their ideal points than the status-quo.

H4: The outcome of the reform supported by a coalition formed by two parties is situated between the ideal points of the two parties.

H5: When a party system contains a large party that opposes both types of costs, there is a high risk of reform reversal.

H6: Sustainability of reform in the medium term is more likely when the reform is a consensual solution among multiple parties than when it is adopted by a two-party coalition.

Data and method

To find out what is the relative position of Romanian parties towards the pension reform, the author of the model (Armeanu, 2010a) used the DW-NOMINATE procedure, a procedure used by Poole and Rosenthal (1984) since the 1980s and improved over the years, with the evolution of computer technology (Poole, 2005). NOMINATE is an acronym: **Nominal Three-Step Estimation**. “Nominal” reflects the fact that the data introduced into the analysis is nominal (binary: “Yes” or “No” answers) and “Three Steps Estimation” refers to the estimation procedure used to calculate the legislator ideal points, the roll call parameters and the extent to which voting appears probabilistic (Armstrong et al., 2014).

W-NOMINATE is a multidimensional scaling method for analysing legislatures and, more specific, for studying the roll call voting. It represents “a random-utility model of Euclidian spatial voting that assumes each actor assigns a utility to each of two options (voting in favour or against). This utility is determined both by the distance between the actor and the options as well as a stochastic error term” (Lupu, 2013: 916).

The method takes into account how a deputy or a senator votes over several voting sessions, in the same legislature or in different ones, and establish his/her position in a two-dimensional spatial model. Basically, the position of a senator or deputy depends on how he/she voted in all the parliamentary sessions he/she attended (Poole, 2005). While it may seem counterintuitive, a two-dimensional spatial model is very effective in terms of modelling the relative positions of parties in the same Parliament. For example, Rosenthal and Voeten (2004) have shown that such a model based on a two-dimensional space correctly classified 95% of the votes cast by MPs in the voting sessions of the French Fourth Republic.

In the same two-dimensional space, all MPs from a legislature can be positioned (even parliamentarians from different legislatures can be positioned), according to the votes they gave during their political career. The analysis starts with the hypothesis that the senators or deputies (the legislators, in one term) have ideal points in a policy space and vote for the policy alternative closest to their ideal point. A roll call vote reflects the distance between a legislator's ideal point and a policy proposal. If the roll call votes are available, the DW-NOMINATE procedure can recover the locations of the legislator's ideal points and the policy alternatives in the latent space (Armstrong et al., 2014:182). To find the position of senators or deputies on a topic of interest, the researcher can select for analysis only the voting sessions for laws related to the specific field of interest.

The first step of the procedure is to compute the agreement score matrix for the legislators. This represents the proportion of times they vote the same way over all the roll calls (Poole, 2005:32). Of course, the agreement score matrix is symmetric, therefore for the analysis we only need a triangle below the main diagonal (all the elements from the main diagonal have the same value =1). The second step of the procedure is creating the matrix of squared distances. This can be done by subtracting the agreement scores from 1 (in the agreement score matrix) and squaring them (Poole, 2005:32). The third step is to double-centre the matrix of squared distances: from each element of the matrix of squared distance we must subtract the row mean, subtract the column mean and the matrix mean, and then divide the result by -2. This operation produces a cross product matrix of legislator coordinates (Poole, 2005: 33). Finally, the fourth step is to "take the square root of a diagonal element of the double-centred matrix and then divide through the corresponding column of the matrix by this square root. Using the first diagonal element produces the legislator coordinates (Poole, 2005: 34).

The analysis made by Armeanu (2010a: 134-137) (regarding the position of Romanian political parties in relation to pension reform) is not very specific. More exactly, the DW-NOMINATE procedure was applied to 105 randomly selected voting sessions from the whole 1793 that took place between 2006 and 2008 in

the Romanian Lower Chamber of the Parliament (Chamber of Deputies). Basically, in the analysis were not introduced the voting sessions on the laws related to pension reform, but a randomly selected 5 per cent from all the voting sessions between 2006 and 2008 (the randomly selected 5 per cent includes voting sessions related to laws from many different fields, not only on pension reform). The DW-NOMINATE procedure was supplemented with the conclusions of another quantitative research: 18 experts in Romanian politics positioned all the Romanian Parliamentary parties by placing them in one of the four quadrants: A, B, C, D. In order to find the relative positions of the parties, a scale with scores ranging between 1 to 20 was used, with questions from 13 areas of interest. But this procedure did not clearly assess the relative positioning of the parties towards the pension reform, because the experts did not classify the parties in one of the four quadrants based on their attitudes related to pension reform, but on 13 general areas of interest.

In order to assess the exact position of parties on a particular subject, Poole (2005) (the initiator of the W-NOMINATE procedure) suggested that in the analysis must be introduced only the voting sessions related to that particular subject, and afterwards, the results can be compared with the general tendency. Therefore, in this study we tried to introduce in the W-NOMINATE analysis all the voting sessions regarding all the laws related to pension reform. These voting sessions took place in the Chamber of Deputies (the Chamber of Deputies is the decisional chamber for social protection policies). We searched the website of the Chamber of Deputies for records of voting sessions for laws related to pension reform in the last three legislatures: 2004-2008; 2008-2012; 2012-2016 and we discovered 44 voting sessions. But this number was insufficient for the W-NOMINATE procedure, which needs a higher number of voting sessions in order to assess the relative position of the deputies and parties in the two-dimensional space. However, there are methods for positioning the parties and the deputies in a quasi-Cartesian space that can be used even with a small number of available voting sessions (44 for example, like in our case). One of these methods is Ideal Points Estimation developed by Bailey, procedure used in this research. The statistical analysis was done using the R statistical package. We also used the code written by Jackman (2009) for Ideal Points Estimation procedure. We applied the Ideal Points Estimation procedure on all the votes casted by the deputies during all the voting sessions related to pension reform held in the last three legislatures (and available on the Romanian Chamber of Deputies website). There were 758 deputies who voted in at least one of the 44 voting sessions from our research: 233 MP's from PSD, 181 from PNL, 156 from PNL, 24 from PC, 29 from PP-DD, 26 from PRM, 16 from UNPR, 41 from UDMR, 16 representing the minorities, other than the Magyars, and 29 were deputies unaffiliated to any party.

Results

In order to find out how many dimensions to estimate for the W-NOMINATE or Ideal Points Estimation, “the most practical approach is to look at the pattern of the eigenvalues of the double-centred agreement score matrix” (Poole, 2005). If we look at the screen plot bellow, we can see that the plot fall steeply and then the eigenvalues fall off fairly smoothly from the 3rd value through the 20th. This is a clear indication that the data is more likely to be two-dimensional. Therefore, the model must be two-dimensional.

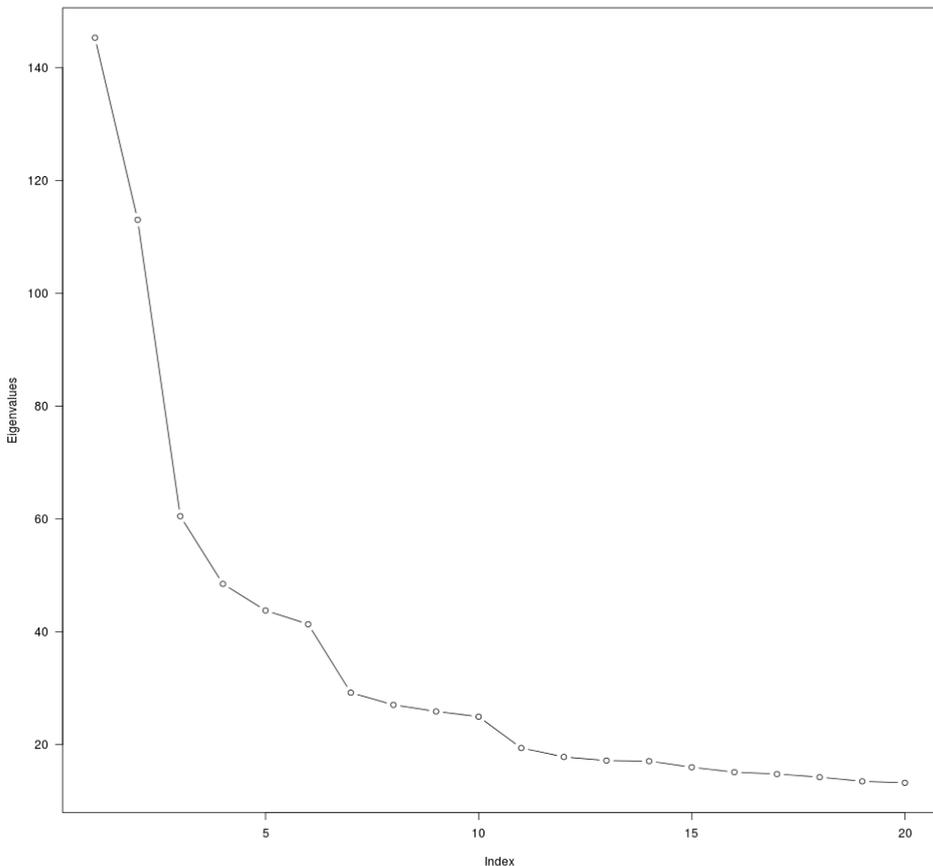


Figure 2. Eigenvalues of the double-centred agreement score matrix for the roll calls included in the analysis

Source: Personal computations based on Chamber of Deputies' records of voting sessions

Analysing the voting sessions for all the 44 laws and amendments related to pension reform in the past three legislatures of the Romanian Parliament, we obtained the relative positions for each party (Figure 3, see below).

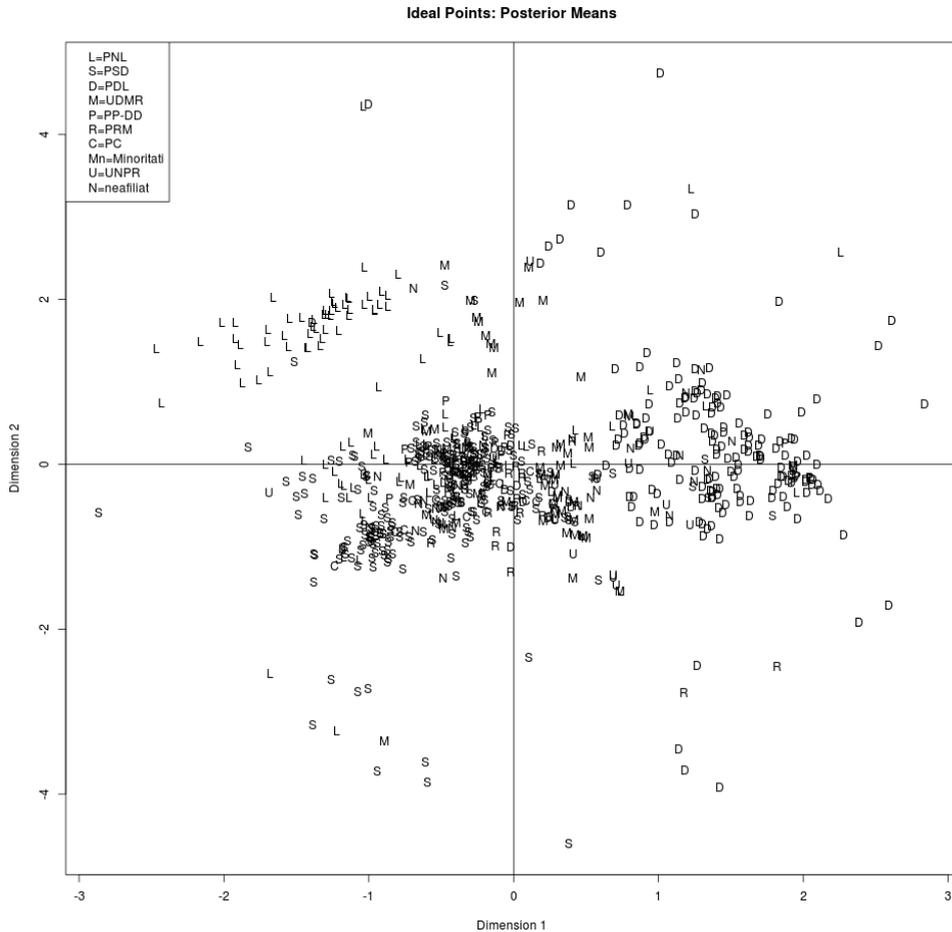


Figure 3. Romanian party's positions regarding the diffuse and concentrated costs of pension reform. Analysis made using Ideal Points Estimation

Source: Personal computations based on Chamber of Deputies' records of voting sessions

The model correctly predicts 97.57% of all the votes casted in all 44 voting sessions introduced into analysis. However, there is a significant difference between the proportions of the “Yea” votes correctly predicted (99.89%) and the proportion of the “Nay” votes predicted (81.34%).

Each point in the graph above represents a deputy who attended one of the 44 voting sessions introduced into the Ideal Points Estimation Procedure. We can observe some compact groups of points having the same letter, this meaning that the political parties have a clear and unified position about the pension reform. The PNL represents an exception: their MPs seem to have different opinion about the concentrated costs. Thus, some liberal deputies seem to be against special pensions, while others have a more reserved attitude towards this field, being closer to the centre of vertical axis. We can also find deputies positioned far from the cloud that represents the general opinion if we are looking at other parties. PSD, for example, has some deputies in the D quadrant – they are opposing both the diffuse costs and the concentrated ones. But the majority of the deputies representing this party are situated on the left side of the vertical axis and near the horizontal one. PDL supports the pension privatization, though there are deputies from PDL who oppose privatization.

Regarding the relative position of the important parties, National Liberal Party (PNL) and Social Democratic Party (PSD) are positioned mostly in the A square (B square for some deputies from National Liberal Party and D square for some legislators from Social Democratic Party). The Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) is positioned in the B and C quadrants. The only party that is positioned almost entirely in the D square (near to the status-quo) is The Great Romania Party (PRM).

Discussion

Looking at the chart obtained by Armeanu (2010b) by using the W-NOMINATE method, and comparing it to the graph we obtained using the Ideal Points Estimation, we can see that there are many similarities between the two bi-dimensional spaces, but also some significant differences. In our analysis, the Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) is situated upper in the two-dimensional space (both in B and C quadrants), supporting the privatization, but having an ambiguous attitude towards the special pensions. The National Liberal Party (PNL) has its deputies located mostly in the A quadrant, on the right side of this panel, opposing the occupational privileges but not having a clear attitude towards the privatization. However, on the graph resulted from the present research (Ideal Points Estimation), the Social Democratic Party (PSD) is situated near the centre of both the horizontal axis (the one representing the diffuse costs), and the vertical one (the one representing the concentrated costs). On the W-NOMINATE output, the same party is situated mostly on the upper left side of the A quadrant. Those differences can be explained if we take into consideration the period of analysis on

both studies. The conclusion of the research made by Armeanu (2010b) are drawn by looking at the votes casted between 2006 and 2008, while the present research takes into consideration the last three legislatures (2004-2016). During this period, The Social Democratic Party moved from the left side of the political spectrum to the centre of it. In the autumn of 2004, the Romanian Government lead by Adrian Năstase, president of the Social Democratic Party at that time, created the second pillar (the mandatory private pillar) of the pension system by persuading the Parliament to adopt the law no.411/2004. In reality, the Government never had any problem convincing the Parliament to vote the law, because the Social Democratic Party held the majority in the two legislative chambers (the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies). Also, in the 2004-2008 legislature, PSD (The Social Democratic Party) offered parliamentary support for the liberal government lead by Călin Popescu Tăriceanu, when the "Truth and Justice Alliance" (who won the presidential election in 2004) broke. The Romanian president at that time, Traian Băsescu, wanted the prime-minister Tăriceanu to resign, but the last one refused to do so, and, as a consequence, the Democratic Liberal Party (a party that was close to the president Băsescu) switched sides by moving into the parliamentary opposition camp.

But those actions weren't the only ones who can prove the PSD's movement towards the centre of the left-right political continuum. After the parliamentary election held in 2008, the Social Democratic Party, led by Mircea Geoană at that time, made an alliance with the Democratic Liberal Party by offering parliamentary support for the Emil Boc government. The Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) leaved the PES group (Party of European Socialists) and moved to the right side of political spectrum by joining the political family of European People's Party. Before the presidential election held in 2009, the alliance between PSD and PDL broke, but the Social Democrats made another alliance with a party from the right side of political system; they formed the parliamentary opposition for the Boc government, alongside The National Liberal Party (PNL). The bond between the two political parties increased, and in 2011 they created an electoral coalition named The Social Liberal Union (USL), who won the local and general election in 2012. However, the coalition split-up in 2014, the year of the last Romanian presidential election. After quitting the Social Liberal Union, The National Liberal Party (PNL) merged with The Democratic Liberals (PDL), and PSD was left alone on the centre-left side of the Romanian political spectrum.

The only party that is situated – in both analyses – almost entirely in the D square (near the status quo) is The Great Romania Party. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis that predicts that nationalist parties are opposing the pension reform more strongly than the left-wing ones. Armeanu (2010b:30) argues that the nationalist parties cannot be assimilated into the left-right continuum;

they represent another pole of power, and they can have either a left or right orientation without necessarily being positioned on the left or to the right side of the political spectrum. The nationalist parties with a left orientation are found in the post-communist countries. In this environment, they create “nostalgia for the communist paternalist system of economic relations” (Armeanu, 2010b:30) and speculate it for electoral purposes. The nationalist parties speculate in their advantage the unpopularity of the pension reform and also oppose to the involvement of International Financial Institutions in the process. The conditionality imposed by the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank were the cause of several attacks from Corneliu Vadim Tudor (the leader of the Great Romania Party) towards the International Financial Institutions, who were seen as hostile external forces trying to impose their will on another nations. Another reason for the nationalist parties to oppose the pension reform is that some of their members held privileged pensions in the communist regime (army workers, former employees in uncompetitive fields of industry). Trying to protect the privileges of their members, the nationalist parties present themselves as the “champions of the general interest, which is being threatened by Western forces through neoliberal policies” (Armeanu, 2010b:31).

The Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) is situated in both in the B and C quadrants, but its position on the horizontal axis (the one representing the diffuse costs) is more on the right side than the position of The National Liberal Party (PNL) – the most liberal party in Romania. This can be explained by the fact that an important part of PNL (leaders like Cristian Boureanu and Theodor Stolojan) decided to quit the party in 2007 and joined PDL. The liberal leader Calin Popescu Tariceanu was the prime-minister at that time and his government lost the political support of PDL. He needed the votes from The Social Democratic Party’s (PSD) in order to survive (recently, Tariceanu formed another party, called The Reformed Liberal Party, that supported the PSD (The Social Democratic Party) government, and in 2016 his party merged with PC and formed the ALDE political formation). After Tariceanu, Crin Antonescu became the leader of The National Liberal Party, in 2009. In 2011, Antonescu and Victor Ponta (the leader of the Social Democratic Party) formed an electoral coalition called the Social-Liberal Union (USL). Those connections with PSD (The Social Democratic Party) can explain the moderate attitude towards the pension privatization shown by the liberal deputies (the position of PNL on the horizontal axis is situated more on the centre left). There are some groups of liberal MPs that are isolated from the mainstream represented by the party’s general opinion towards both the diffuse and concentrated costs.

However, the analysis of Benoit and Laver (2006) on the relative positioning of Romanian parties, made at the beginning of the last decade, and used by Armeanu (2010b) as a complementary method to test her findings, shows

a different configuration than the one obtained by using the W-NOMINATE procedure, or Ideal Points Estimation method. In 2003 and 2004, Benoit and Laver (2006) questioned 18 Romanian experts on Romanian politics, and asked them to classify all political parties (parties that won at least one seat in the Parliament after the last elections) based on 13 relevant dimensions: economy (spending vs. taxes), social policy, privatization, EU joining, environment, attitude towards the former member of the Communist Party, foreign ownership of land, media freedom, nationalism, religion, urban vs. rural interests, decentralization, left/right side of the political spectrum.

The National Liberal Party (PNL) and The Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) are in the same quadrant, namely B, while The Social Democratic Party is situated both in A and D quadrants. In the configuration created by using the Ideal Points Estimation, The National Liberal Party (PNL) is situated in the A quadrant, while The Democratic National Party (PDL) is located in the B and C squares, so not very close to PNL. This can be explained if we take into consideration the period in which the research of Benoit and Laver took place. In 2003-2004, The National Liberal Party (PNL) and The Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) were partners in the "Justice and Truth Alliance"; therefore, the experts rated their positions as being closer to each other and opposing the Social Democrats. However, the experts did not classify the parties based on their attitudes towards pension reform, but on the 13 dimensions mentioned above. So, the attitudes towards a specific policy can differ from the one that a party regularly has on general matters of politics.

We put to the test the hypotheses of the model presented by Armeanu (2010a, 2010b) and we discovered that not all of them can be verified based on Romanian political reality related to votes on pension reform. For example, the first hypothesis, who stipulates that "coalitions dominated by parties who oppose both diffuse and concentrated cost of reform make only marginal changes to the existing pension system", cannot be tested. The only party who opposed both diffuse and concentrated costs is The Great Romania Party, but PRM has never formed a Government (either alone or in a coalition).

The second hypothesis (parties that accept both types of costs support all pro-reform coalitions) does reflect the Romanian political reality: in 2006, the centre right coalition of PNL, PDL, UDMR and PC created the third pillar of the pension system (law 2004/2006 moved the status-quo to the right side of the two-dimensional space).

The third hypothesis (parties that accept one type of costs but not the other support only a reform proposal that brings the pension system closer to their ideal than the status-quo) is partially true: it correctly reflects the PDL case, who voted the law 204/2006, who moved the status quo to the right side of the two-dimensional space, but is not confirmed for the PSD case, who created the

second pillar of the pension system in October 2004 and that policy change did not move the status quo upper on the map (so near the PSD ideal point), but on the right side of it.

The fourth hypothesis (the outcome of the reform supported by a coalition formed by two parties is situated between the ideal points of the two parties) is partially true: in 2006 PNL and PDL created the third pillar, a bill that moved the status quo near the curve uniting the ideal points of the two parties. The second part of the hypothesis cannot be verified, because Romania never had a broad spectrum coalition.

The fifth hypothesis (when a party system contains a large party that opposes both types of costs, there is a high risk of reform reversal) cannot be verified, because Romania did not have a large party situated in the D quadrant (a party that opposes both costs of the reform).

The political reality from the beginning of this decade validates the sixth hypothesis of the model (sustainability of reform in the medium term is more likely when the reform is a consensual solution among multiple parties than when it is adopted by a two-parties coalition): in 2010, PDL adopted the Unitary Pension Act, but after the year 2012, when the coalition formed by PNL and PSD took the power, a partial reform reversal did happen (still, the reform reversal did not move the status quo near the ideal points of the two parties: PNL and PSD).

Conclusions and implications

The external pressure is another fact that may need to be taken into consideration, because it can change the way the MPs from all parties may vote. International Financial Institutions can impose a reform not wanted by the government of a country. They have a large spectrum of methods they can use for influencing the local decision makers, ranging from economic suggestions to sanctions they can impose. These methods have a bigger effect if the IFI are the creditors for the country in which they try to impose a policy change. The level of indebtedness influences the way IFI's recommendations are treated. Whether these recommendations are followed or disregarded in a certain country depends of the level of the indebtedness of the country in cause. Rating agencies include radical pension reform as an advantage in their country-risk assessments (Müller, 2007). The country risk-assessment has an important influence on the access to international credit, and therefore can influence the state's ability to cover short-term debt obligations.

The next studies on this field may answer an important question that this research does not address: the international pressure did change the way the deputies voted on the laws related to pension reform? For example, the former Romanian president Traian Băsescu acknowledged that the implementation of the Unitary Pension Act was a measure imposed by the International Monetary Fund, as a condition to release the next tranche from the stand-by agreement for financial aid.

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Romanian Sociology Today

Editorial Note:

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



AN ALTERNATIVE PERIODIZATION OF ROMANIAN HISTORY. A RESEARCH AGENDA

FLORIN POENARU¹

Abstract. In this paper, I suggest an alternative form of periodization of Romanian history. My aim is not to move around historical posts; rather I propose a different way of understanding Romanian history as such. This is the research agenda. I seek to write a world history from the perspective of a peripheral place like Romania has been. Therefore, this is not simply an attempt to insert a local, neglected, silenced or distorted history into a wider, European, global story (that is, to discover the history of “people without history”), just as it is not another attempt to “provincialize Europe” in favour of a view from its repressed margins. Instead, following Coronil (2004), I believe it is indispensable to globalize the periphery, to understand its worldwide formation. My investigation draws upon the conceptual toolkit of world-system theory and its underlining philosophy of history (Wallerstein, 2011). In the same vein, the guiding principles of my periodization elaborate on Andre Gunder Frank’s insight that the exchange (or rather direct transfer) of surplus between societies is what links regions and societies as whole (Frank, 1978). The focus then shifts from a given society/state and its internal relations to the wider world-system, or world-economy, in which it is embedded. The unit of analysis is not a geographical location, but relations and networks and their historical development.

Keywords: historical periodization, world-system theories, world-economy, Romanian history

Introduction

In this paper, I suggest an alternative form of periodization of Romanian history. My aim is not to move around historical posts; rather I propose a different way of understanding Romanian history as such. This is the research agenda. I seek to write a world history from the perspective of a peripheral place like Romania has been. Therefore, this is not simply an attempt to insert a local, neglected, silenced or distorted history into a wider, European, global story (that is,

¹ *Postdoctoral Fellow at the Central European University Budapest, e-mail: poenaru.florin@gmail.com.*

to discover the history of “people without history”), just as it is not another attempt to “provincialize Europe” in favour of a view from its repressed margins. Instead, following Fernando Coronil (2004), I believe it is indispensable to globalize the periphery, to understand its worldwide formation.

Moreover, this perspective does not only change the way we understand the history of the periphery, by recognizing its embedding in larger structures and wider processes, global in nature. It also challenges the way we understand global history as such. By shifting the focus of global history from the centre to the periphery we get a more acute sense of how global processes nest into and subsequently shape local processes.

By invoking the relationship between centre and periphery, it is immediately clear that my investigation draws upon the conceptual toolkit of world-system theory and its underlining philosophy of history (Wallerstein, 2011). In the same vein, the guiding principles of my periodization elaborate on Andre Gunder Frank’s insight that the exchange (or rather direct transfer) of surplus between societies is what links regions and societies as whole (Frank, 1978). The focus then shifts from a given society/state and its internal relations to the wider world-system, or world-economy, in which it is embedded. The unit of analysis is not a geographical location but relations and networks and their historical development.

It has been argued that this theoretical perspective privileges trade over other key social processes, such as the organization of production and its inherent internal class antagonisms (Brenner, 1977). I leave aside these issues in this paper in order to note that without disregarding either relations of production or class antagonism (but highlighting them when necessary), I organize my periodization around modes of accumulation and surplus extraction. This enables not only a different view of periodization, but also a different problematization of Romanian history.

A new periodization emerges as a dialogue, inevitably polemical, with previous ones, which are, of course, diverse and divergent, imbued by their scholarly and ideological presuppositions and indelibly marked by the historical and political background of their production. In very broad strokes, in the first section of this paper I discuss the main frameworks of periodization of the Romanian history. I also highlight the main points of contention that shaped historiographical debates in the past two centuries. On this background, in the second section, I insert my own periodization, and the reasons for it. The final section traces the historical and theoretical sources of the periodization of world history in use today. I believe such a discussion is necessary in order to pinpoint the fact that periodization is in fact a process of theoretical and conceptual elaboration.

Frameworks of Romanian periodization

Școala Ardeleană [*ad literam*: The Transylvanian School], the school of thought developed by Romanian intellectuals in late-18th century Transylvania, inaugurated the modern practice of writing the history of the nation. It emphasized the Latin legacy of the Romanians and linked the local historical developments with the history of Rome. Historians of this school began their histories in 753 B.C.E. when Rome was founded. Historical time was divided by three key moments: the formation of Rome, the Fall of Rome (476 C.E.) and the Fall of Constantinople (1453). The history of Romania was inserted within this background having as key elements the formation of the Romanian people after the Roman conquest.

The periodization used by *Școala Ardeleană* was still very much entrenched in Christian categories. The national element was invoked only in relation to the legacy of Rome. This perspective shifted entirely once the Romantic national historiography that emerged after 1850s became dominant, and especially after the unification of the Romanian provinces in 1859. Historians, now very much imbued with a sense of mission of building the state and the nation, placed the nation at the centre of the historical narrative. The origins of the Romanian states and their development towards the moment of unification became the main preoccupations of the historians. In addition, the Roman element was displaced in favor of the Dacian legacy. The history of Dacia that predated the Roman invasion and the foundation of Rome became legitimate topics of historiographical research. The origins of the Romanian people were pushed back in time. This introduced a new period in historiography, the very ancient one. With very few exceptions, all histories of Romania began sometimes around 5000 – 3000 B.C.E.

By the end of the 19th century some of the key dates and elements of periodization that will become pivotal in the historiography of Romania were already in place. The moment 1821 (the rebellion led by Tudor Vladimirescu) and 1829 (Adrianople peace treaty) signified the turn towards modernity for Romanian principalities. Michael the Brave reign and short-lived unification in 1600 was inscribed as a key date and an important period. The fight for independence against the Ottoman Empire epitomized the main thread of the historical narrative. The fall of Constantinople retained an important significance, but at the same time history became more focused on the formation and consolidation of the Romanian principalities and their major victories against the Ottomans. For many historians (including Nicolae Iorga) periodization was marked by the succession of local kings and their families. This type of periodization also enabled the “discovery” of a sui generis Phanariot period in the 18th century.

The enlargement of 1918 and especially the annexation of Transylvania altered the historiographical narrative and periodization during the interwar period in significant ways. For historians it became of paramount importance to consolidate and justify the 1918 moment. Already a field imbued with nationalism, history writing moved even more in that direction after Transylvania and Bessarabia became parts of the national story. Questions of origins and language were more important than periodization. Despite the awareness that 1918 was a historical threshold, increasingly the period from 1866 to 1914 – the rule of Carol I – was enshrined as a distinct one. For many later historians (including Keith Hitchins, 2013), 1866 remained a key date separating two distinct periods.

An alternative historical periodization was developed in the interwar period by the textbook of R. David (quoted in Rusu, 2013). David identified five periods: 1) the formation of the Romanian people (from 515 B.C.E, the moment of Darius invasion, to 1241, the Mongol invasion); 2) the formation of the Romanian states (1241-1386); 3) the Romanian people and states in the epoch of rising Ottoman power (1386-1711); 4) the epoch of Ottoman decline (1711-1856), and 5) the formation of the national state (1856-1930). Several elements catch the eye of this periodization. First, the history of Romanian territories is directly linked with the ascension and fall of the Ottoman Empire, thus inscribing their history within a wider structure. Secondly, 1821, 1859 (the unification of the Principalities), 1866 (the enthroning of Carol) and 1918 (the formation of Greater Romania) – key dates for other historians – are absent here. Thirdly, the state is at the centre of historical periodization, not kings or other social actors.

David's periodization was quite unusual for his time when the historical consensus was different. By and large, the history of Romania was divided along these lines: 1) the formation of the people and the state (from the earliest of times until around 1300s); 2) the consolidation and heroic moment of the Romanian states (1386, the beginning of Mircea the Elder's rule and 1504, the end of Stephen's the Great rule in Moldavia); 3) the Ottoman dominance that stretched until 1821, with the important sub-period marked by the Phanariot rule, and 4) the modern times inaugurated by 1821/1829 moment.

Marxist historians shared some of the key elements of this consensus. Their periodization derived from Marx and was based on the modes of production that defined the epochs (primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism and communism). For them the challenge was to identify when these epochs began and finished. For example, for Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu (1969) feudalism began with the formation of the Romanian states in 1300s and ended in 1746-1749 with the abolition of serfdom. What came after was a period defined by the interests of the local landed aristocracy that sought to capitalize on the opportunities offered

by the global market. Indentured labour was meant to extract more labor from the peasants in order to produce grains for export. For Pătrășcanu this process accelerated after the peace treaty signed in Adrianople in 1829, though it was already in place by the beginning of the 19th century. Therefore, for Pătrășcanu, a full capitalist-bourgeois revolution was still needed as late as 1945 in order to erase for good the influence of the landed classes.

Pătrășcanu was in an indirect dialogue with a fellow Marxist (Dobrogeanu-Gherea) and with the bourgeois historians of the time (such as Nicolae Iorga and Radu Rosetti). For Gherea, the emergence of feudalism in Romania was the outcome of the country's insertion within capitalism. According to him, this took place after the Adrianople treaty, but more forcefully so after the 1860s. Neoserfdom was the embodiment of this relation. Henri H. Stahl, about half a century later, took Gherea's idea on board but moved the dates backwards. For Stahl, Romanian feudalism was indeed an outcome of capitalism, but this process began sometimes in the seventeenth century. At the other end, for Iorga there was no feudalism in the Romanian principalities to speak of, at least one bearing the marks of the traditional western one.

This incipient debate about feudalism that will resurface in the postwar period both in the West and in Romania was curtailed after 1945/1948 with the emergence of Romanian People's Republic – that is, the ensuing of state socialism. State socialism altered all spheres of life, including history writing and historical periodization. Mihail Roller's textbook became the norm of the 1950s and its periodization was based on the five Marxist stages. Primitive communism and slavery overlapped in Dacia until the retreat of the Romans south of the Danube in 271 C.E. This marked the beginning of feudalism that lasted until 1821. From 1821 to 1944 was the period of Romanian capitalism, followed, after 23 august 1944, by communism. What needs to be noted here is that despite its radical remaking of the periodization and of the historical interpretation of the Romanian history, Roller was also beginning his history in Dacia and maintained 1821 as the date when modernity ensued.

Following Roller's downfall the historians kept, by and large, the same periodization and maintained the idea of a Romanian feudalism stretching to sometimes between the 1750s and 1820s (that is, between the abolition of serfdom and Adrianople peace treaty). The dates varied according to one's research interest. For those with an eye to labour relations, the abolition of serfdom was the crucial moment. For those more inclined to look at trade, 1774 (the peace treaty of Küçük Kaynarca) or 1829 (Adrianople) became more important dates in the transition from feudalism to capitalism.

Daniel Chirot (1976), working in the vein of world-system theory, designed a *sui generis* periodization: 1) the formation of the Romanian states and the dominance of collective property of land (1250-1500); 2) the rise of the

seigniorial state and the consolidation of the boyar class (1500-1600); 3) the protocolonial political economy (1600-1821); 4) the transition to the colonial political economy (1821-1864), and 5) the development of the colonial political economy and the agrarian crisis (1864-1917). Chirot established his periodization at the intersection between modes of production, modes of ownership, state forms and colonial relations. This resulted in the eclectic tableau presented above. It alternates between longer periods (1600-1821) and very short ones (1821-1864), which ultimately deems the model quite untenable.

The later stages of state socialism brought about an increased nationalization of the historical discourse and also subtle changes. The Marxist-inspired historical periodization was still nominally in place. Historians, however, gradually developed a different language. Primitive communism and slavery were replaced by ancient history. Feudalism became the Middle Ages. Late 18th century and early 19th century became early modernity, while the period after 1848 until 1944 was considered to be the modern period. 1944 inaugurated the contemporary epoch. This change was not accidental, but it reflected a move away from Marxism towards bourgeois and national categories, sometimes directly borrowed from the interwar scholarship.

This trend that begun before 1989 continued afterwards and introduced a new form of historical periodization. Today, the mainstream historical narrative operates with the following periodization. The starting point of Romanian history is located sometimes around 2500 B.C.E with Burebista (if not earlier for some historians). This ancient period stretches until 271 C.E. when the Romans moved south of the Danube. The millennium that followed (until the Mongol invasion of 1240s) is usually glossed over because of lack of solid sources but it is nonetheless characterized by a series of violent invasions. For some historians (see Georgescu, 1992) this was the period of local feudalism.

This dark period was followed by the luminous moment of the formation of the Romanian states in the 14th century. Up until the ensuing of the Phanariot period at the beginning of the 18th century, this 4-century period is usually subdivided according to key kings, especially Mircea the Eldest, Vlad Țepeș, Stephen the Great and Michael the Brave and their battles with the Turks. Constantin Brâncoveanu and Dimitrie Cantemir constitute new additions to this gallery of important figures.

Traditionally, the Phanariot period has been seen as a dark one, the moment of direct, brutal Ottoman exploitation. For some historians, however, this period also nested the seeds of modernity (Georgescu, 1992; Hitchins, 2013).

There is a well-established consensus that modernity ensues sometime between 1821/1829, even though some historians suggest the 1740s (the abolition of serfdom). Whatever the precise origins, there is a wider agreement that 1944

represents the end-point of this modern period. Communism inaugurated a new dark age and 1989 brought the country back to a „normal” path of development. Communism has also been subdivided, most commonly into three periods: 1) the Stalinist early period (1944/1948-1964); 2) “the thaw” period (1964-1971), and 3) the dictatorship of Ceausescu (1971-1989).

On this background of evolving and overlapping forms of historical periodization in the next section I propose a different one and the reasons for it.

An alternative periodization of Romanian history

The formation and consolidation of the Romanian principalities (1240-1500)

The Mongolian invasion curtailed the eastern expansion of Hungary and pushed the declining Second Bulgarian Empire south of the Danube. The retreat of Mongols following the invasion, not before imposing practices of extracting tribute, emboldened the local chieftains and military rulers – usually the intermediaries through which the tribute was collected – to exert their own influence and to keep the tribute for themselves. With the Mongols in retreat, Hungary also made claims for the territories east of the Carpathians and this brought the Crown and the local populations into conflict. However, the Crown was unable to occupy militarily the territories and by 1300 local chieftains refused to pay tribute to the Crown. This was also the case with Basarab, a ruler descending from a family of contentious warrior clan. As a result, the Hungarians invaded the country in 1330. Basarab emerged the unlikely winner and as a result crowned himself as the new king of Wallachia.

The formation of Moldavia was even more the result of struggles for monopolizing the tribute. The rebellion of the local rulers against the representatives of the Hungarian crown (stationed there as a form of defence against the Tatars and the Poles) enabled Bogdan to crown himself king in 1359.

The formation of the two principalities was strongly connected to another outcome of the Mongolian retreat to the North of the Black Sea. There they offered Venetian merchants the possibility to conduct trade on the Black Sea to the benefit of the Hoard. This led to the establishment of two important trade routes: 1) from the Black Sea to the Danube and then on land to Hungary; 2) through the Danube Delta and then up north through what is now the South of Bessarabia and all the way up to Poland. Both Romanian principalities emerged as attempts to tax the trade going through these routes. A century after their formation (for Moldavia in fact until the early 1500s) this constituted the main source of revenue for the Romanian states.

The social structure of the newly formed states was quite simple: free peasants living off collective land. They were pastoralists and lived mainly in the mountains and in the hills. They had to pay tribute as communities to the military rulers and then to the state representatives, but the amount was small and did not generate changes in the mode of production or accumulation.

Tribute towards the Porte and the formation of the local land-owning class (1500-1700)

The Ottomans struck Constantinople for the first time (1356), as the Romanian principalities were in the process of formation. By 1459 much of the Balkan Peninsula was conquered and by 1479 Albania too. More significantly, strategically and symbolically, in 1453 Constantinople fell. In 1476 the Ottomans entered both Wallachia and Moldavia (after previous incursions north of the Black Sea) and obliged both states to pay tribute.

Concomitantly, the Ottomans engaged in warfare in the Mediterranean with Venice (1463-1503). This pushed out the Venetians from the Black Sea, which fell entirely under Ottoman control. As an outcome, the trade routes that the Romanian states taxed were disrupted and subsequently the revenues were dramatically reduced. With the tribute rising, the fiscal crisis of the states was inevitable. The states were thus forced to turn inward in order to generate funds.

The need for cash created a tension between the kings and the class of nobles/boyars. This was a class in the process of consolidation, which initially emerged out of fighting wars and collecting tribute. Faced with the prospect of dwindling revenues due to the requirements of the Porte, the boyars sought to weaken the central authority of kings in order to keep the largest part of the revenues for them. This aligned their interests with those of the Porte against the kings and in favour of extracting more surpluses from the local populations.

Hence, increasingly after the 1550s, when trade became largely oriented towards the south and skewed in favour of the Ottomans, the boyars began to acquire not land as such, but villages. While the land theoretically remained communal (or at least the parts of it that were not bought by the boyars), villages and villagers could be bought and sold by the boyars. Such villages became un-free. They could gain their freedom only by paying a sum of money to the boyar or by offering products in exchange (usually a number of horses, which point again to the pastoralist nature of the agriculture).

However, population deficit, the persistence of pastoralism and the existence of unused land (or the possibility to expand lands through deforestation) made the process of village acquisition a tenuous one and allowed villagers significant space of manoeuvre and meaningful strategies of resistance to boyars' encroachment.

In 1600 Michael the Brave, a former merchant and the biggest single owner of villages at the time, attempted to unite the three Romanian provinces in one state, independent from the Ottomans. This was a premature attempt of the local boyar class to territorialize its power into an independent state. The project failed, but for the next 100 years, just as the boyars were acquiring more wealth and the Ottoman tribute was growing harsher, the boyars continued to harbour the same dream. Constantin Brâncoveanu was the perfect example of this confluence. A high boyar, his family was one of the wealthiest in the region. As king he sought to disengage Wallachia from the Porte in order to avoid paying tribute and thus to safeguard his (and his family) immense fortunes. Similarly, in Moldavia, Dimitrie Cantemir – also from a wealthy boyar family – sought to align the principality with the interests of the emerging Russian Empire, Europe-oriented under the leadership of Peter the Great. Brâncoveanu was beheaded in Constantinople and Cantemir was forced to flee when the Russian troops were defeated in the 1711 Russian-Turkish war.

The boyars sought to consolidate their class interests within the state and to align the countries with European interests in order to get rid of the Ottoman tribute. This was in keeping with a wider European transformation: the formation of the modern interstate-system following the peace treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The Romanian boyars sought to join this revolution, but failed, largely due to their overall weak class position and the absence of Romanian principalities from the consolidating capitalist world-system.

Meanwhile, the Ottomans were defeated in their last surge on Vienna (1683) and thus their European expansion blocked. They began retreating from Central Europe in favour of the Habsburgs. The 1711 war with Russia was the signal moment of Russia's western and southern expansion, at the expense of Ottoman's presence in the regions surrounding the Black Sea. This was the confluence that brought the Phanariot class to power in the Romanian principalities.

Imperial domination (1711-1859)

The Phanariot ruling in the Romanian principalities generated class struggle between them and the local boyars. The Phanariots were vehicles of extracting even more wealth at the expense of the local classes. Their goal was, however, undermined by the fact that in early 18th century the Romanian principalities became battlefields of the wars between Russia, the Ottoman Empire and the expanding Habsburg Empire. This led to severe population shortages and the impossibility to develop crop agriculture. Pastoralism continued to dominate the economy, despite the attempts of the Habsburgs to switch to grain production during their occupation of Oltenia and Bukovina.

Russia's southern expansion towards the Black Sea – in its quest to become a naval power and reach the Mediterranean Sea – accelerated after the 1750s. The Ottomans were faced with the increasing dominance of rapidly industrializing Britain and her dominance of trade routes in the Atlantic and increasingly in the Pacific and Middle East. Just as the Ottoman Empire was drawn into the expanding capitalist world-system after the 1750s, its hold of the Romanian principalities was severely weakened. The defeat in the 1776 war with Russia marked the de facto transfer from Ottoman to Russian and Habsburg subordination. The Russian Empire got the upper hand during and after the Napoleonic wars (in 1812 Russia annexed half of Moldavia) and reached a status akin to occupation in the 1830s.

Russia tried to organize the principalities politically and economically in order to make them producers of grain for its expanding armies. This was the role of *Regulamentele Organice*, the first constitutions of the Principalities. The most significant change was the expansion of corvée labor, already in place in the second half of the 18th century, which marked the transfer from pastoralism to systematic grain production. The number of mandatory days of work (*claca*) was increased and peasants were restricted from buying their work through money as before. Moreover, advances in the quality of grain production and the decreasing number of wars led to an unprecedented population growth. By the second half of the 19th century labour supply in the countryside became for the first time in history in excess, which further diminished the resistance options of the peasants.

Peasants did not own the land and they had to work for the landlord in order to gain access to it. The increase in population deprived the peasants of one weapon of resistance (that of moving to areas where the labour was in short supply) and the stringencies of crop production limited the efficacy of making land available by deforestation. However, the boyars were not de jure owners of the land and they also lacked the wherewithal to efficiently mobilize peasant labour in order to extract significant surpluses.

However, at the same time, Russian imperial interests were curtailed by England. Russian expansion in the Romanian territories and then in the Balkans signalled an attempt to reach Eastern Mediterranean. This would have transformed the Russian Empire into a naval force of global capabilities, a situation England was keen to avoid. This brought England into the Crimean war (1853-1856) on the side of the Ottoman Empire and against the Russians. The unification of the Romanian states as a buffer zone and western outpost in the region emerged as a solution after the war. This solution was also favourable to the interests of the Romanian boyars who understood that they could benefit from the free trade imposed by the global hegemon. They pushed for the unification in 1859, amid other competing political solutions in the region.

State-building and nation making (1860s -1980s)

Alexandru Ioan Cuza, the first leader of the unified states, was a reformist. He introduced private property relations in agriculture, among other sweeping changes. While peasants become proprietors, the main beneficiaries were the land-owning boyars who became de jure owners of about 70% of the land. They were thus incentivized to rationally exploit the land in order to make profits. To do so, it was crucial to extract labour from the peasants at a low cost. The new land-owning relations helped in this respect. Peasants acquired enough land to ensure only a modicum of existence, but not more than that. Therefore, they had to seek work on boyar's land in order to compensate. The time spent working on the boyar's land constantly increased towards the First World War. The great peasant revolt of 1907 was testament to the levels of exploitation the peasants were subjected to in the new configuration.

The political and economic dominance of the landed aristocracy retarded the development of cities and industry, albeit not entirely. In the second half of the 19th century the landed aristocracy ceased to live on their rural domains and moved into the big cities where they spent their proceeds from agriculture on real estate, industrial goods (usually imported) and cultural consumption. Moreover, the need to move the grains efficiently abroad led to the development of an important railroad network, which subsequently accelerated horizontal and vertical industrial processes, albeit on a small scale. In addition, land was exploited not only in relation to agriculture but also for its underground resources. Extracting metals, coal and oil became important sources of revenue, albeit the state had its own shares in these areas.

The dominance of the landed aristocracy was not as strong as it might appear. The global crisis of 1873-1896 led to a downturn in agricultural prices on the global markets. This in turn dwindled state revenues in a context in which the war for independence and the constant expansion of bureaucracy demanded more state income. The fiscal crisis was averted through borrowings, first from Austria and then from Germany. The creditor countries pushed for free trade agreements so that their industrial products could flow easily into the country. This double dependency on the world market solidified the need for more protectionist measures and for the development of a local industrial sector. The state bureaucracy, the segment of the boyar class that also held industrial interests and the emerging financial elite saw their class interests aligned in this direction. Politically they converged in the liberal politics of sui generis industrialization announced as early as 1905 (*prin noi înșine – through ourselves*).

The full implementation of this program came only after 1918, when, at the end of WWI, the local aristocracy lost its lands and its political clout.

Land was redistributed to restless peasants. The reform bought the social peace (in the context of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution), but economically was completely inefficient. Albeit Romania gained significant territories after 1918, her agricultural output sporadically reached the pre-war levels only in late 1920s. For a while in the 1920s, Romania had to import grains and food in order to cover the internal demand.

The agricultural reforms of 1918 split the land into small plots owned by increasingly large peasant families. The size of the plot led to diminished returns, prevented the economy of scale and left the peasants without the means for technological investment. Inheritance customs further fragmented the size of the land, just like the practice of selling pieces of it during really bad times. This led to internal differentiation within the peasant class, which prevented a new 1907 moment in the interwar period. Also, the surplus of labour and the dire conditions of the countryside provided the bodies for the incipient urban industrial sector, even though commuting between the industrial and the rural sector was still common.

The cooperativization of agriculture as a solution to the crisis emerged in the 1920s and developed in the 1930s, but it was forcefully imposed top-down only after 1948 by the Communist Party, when large estates were also confiscated. By late 1980s however this mode of agricultural production was also in crisis.

While the agricultural production sank into misery and low levels of productivity for the better part of this period, certain urban and industrial areas prospered and expanded. The main actor of this process was the state. It bought the large part of the domestic industrial output and it also controlled key industrial sectors and extractive industries. Prior to 1945 this process was led by the class alliance of state bureaucrats, domestic and international industrialists and the financial bourgeoisie. After 1945, it was led by the cadres of the Communist Party. Centralization, planning (already introduced in late 1930s) and the vertical political control of production and investment accelerated the industrial development after 1945 to the extent that Romania had one of the biggest industrial growth rates in the world in the 1950s and 1960s.

When the internal sources for development were exhausted (sometimes at the end of the 1960s), the Party had to borrow on the global financial markets. The initial sheltered industrialization fuelled by the interwar legacy and the post-war soviet inputs was also reaching its limits and therefore the continuation of the industrial efforts required technological upgrades as well. Starting in the late 1950s, but increasingly so in the 1960s and 1970s, Romania opened up to the global market for technology and hard currency. This brought in patents and loans but also linked the country's economy to the fluctuations of the global market. The second oil crisis of 1979 and the overall neoliberal

policies it signaled brought to an end the era of cheap money. Borrowing countries like Romania entered fiscal crisis and became insolvable. This marked the end of the developmentalist ambitions, best embodied by the end of the expanding industrial program in the early 1980s.

The neoliberal peripheralization (1980s - 2009)

More than 1989, the austerity politics of the second half of the 1980s brought to an end the developmentalist goals of the 20th century and with them of the communist party itself. The industrial program, both before and after 1945, was seen as an imperative in order to catch-up with the developed West. Communism never contradicted this presupposition; it only offered a different political form for organizing this effort. This aspiration started to wane in late 1980s and completely disappeared afterwards.

After 1989, paradoxically, just as the mainstream discourse was claiming the return to Europe, in practice the country was sliding towards a new form of peripheralization, similar to that of the 1830s. The gap was widening, not narrowing. Export-oriented economy of raw materials, low-skilled production based on cheap labour, and immigration became the main features of the new economy. The former bureaucrats and technocrats drove this process to their own benefit and managed to control the key political functions of the state. While the social functions of the state were weakened (and its entire legitimacy as a social actor), its repressive institutions were enhanced. The neoliberal ideology became the norm and its main function was to normalize and justify the rapidly increasing internal differentiations brought about by the “structural adjustments”.

EU accession meant integration into a German-dominated, hierarchically organized European market, while NATO membership reaffirmed the geopolitical role of the country at the margin of the US Empire (just like in the 1830s). These processes led to the formation of distinct segments of class. Their interests were aligned with those of the international structures and sought political representation against the monopoly of the ex-communist bureaucrats. The crisis of 2009 first deepened these features, but the long-term outcome is yet to be configured.

Theory and history of historical periodization

I believe that the periodization of Romanian history I proposed above has certain merits. First, each period brackets a certain *longue durée* historical process. Thus, periods reflect larger trends rather than paying homage to certain key events or dates. Secondly, I renounce the practice of labelling epochs either by

the nature of historical time (Middle Ages, modern, contemporary etc.) or by the nature of the mode of production (feudalism, capitalism). Rather, what becomes important is the nature of social processes in their context. From this perspective, for example, it is quite irrelevant whether Constantin Brâncoveanu was an early modern leader or an early capitalist. Important are the social mechanisms that made possible the accumulation of his huge wealth. As such, thirdly, this periodization recognizes the fact that major transitions cannot be expressed by clear dates. Therefore, it makes no sense to identify the emergence of capitalism in Romania in 1776 or 1829. Consequently, this type of periodization rests on theoretical and methodological assumptions about historical time and social transformation.

In this section, I expand on this point in order to highlight the theoretical role of periodization for history writing and to underscore some of the main tenets of historical periodization as they developed in the process of periodizing European history.

Historical periods are intellectual abstractions. Periodization is, therefore, a matter of historical theory, which makes it the fulcrum of the politics of writing history. There is no neutral way of periodizing history, just as it is impossible to write history without sequencing it first. What appears to be a simple matter of convention, a tool in the toolkit of the historian, periodization represents in fact the *apriori* of historical investigation. It is the unstated ideological background that guides the formation of historical knowledge and research. The process by which the historian carves out historical periods also presupposes a very clear dialectics: that between continuity and change. Historical periods are characterized by long-term continuities, internal homogeneity and recognizable substantial features that allow the historian to retrospectively identify a period as such. Similarly, the historian needs a theory of social change in order to be able to identify transitions, the dissolution of the old relations and the birth of a new period or epoch.

Religious, that is, Christian concepts of historical time guided the understanding of history up until the 14th century. In this account, sacred and secular time coexisted, denoting two interlinked histories. The classical formulation of these imbrications was the work of St. Augustine. The sacred history was derived from the Bible and had as its starting point the Creation and its ending point the Second Coming. Between these two landmarks, major events (such as the Great Flood, Christ's resurrection and so on) separated distinct epochs (Green, 1992).

On the background of this divine history, the secular history of kings and events took place. After the Christianization of the Roman Empire, the Fall of Rome in 476 became a crucial moment in the history of Christianity.

Historians in the Holy Roman Empire sought to magnify the importance of this historical event. They presented the Empire as the de facto successor of Rome and the embodiment of Christianity against barbarity.

This triumphalist narrative was first contested by the Italian poet Petrarch in 1330 who coined the phrase Dark Ages to refer to the period between the fall of Rome and the year around 1000. A century later, in 1439, the Italian historian Flavio Biondi used for the first time the well-known phrase the Middle Ages. For Petrarch, Biondi and other Italian humanists, the fall of Rome put an end to the classical civilizations of Antiquity. What followed was a period of darkness and barbarity, a discontinuity. The Renaissance movement was supposed to revive the legacy of the classical civilization, to bring it to life again in a new context. In 1860 Jacob Burckhardt explicitly identified the return to classical antiquity by the Italian Renaissance as the moment of birth of modernity. However, this awareness was absent in 14th century for the humanists: rather than looking forward to the future, they were looking backwards to the splendour of classical civilizations.

The reaction of the Italian humanists coincided with the ascension and then the decline of the Italian republics from the late 13th to 15th centuries in world trade and finance (Arrighi, 2010) and it was directed against their northern rivals, the German-based Holy Roman Empire. It was an ideological movement that emerged at the end of the Guelph-Ghibelline wars (about 1330s) and reached its nadir during the prolonged Italian wars at the end of the 15th century.

Similarly, the Lutheran Reformation was a reaction rooted in the political economy of the 16th century Europe where Habsburg Catholic Spain, financed by the Italian city-states, was seeking the formation of a European empire. On the terrain of history, the Reformation agreed with the Italians that the fall of Rome inaugurated a Dark Ages. However, for them the main culprit was not German leadership, but papal corruption. Catholicism as such was identified with the Dark Ages and the solution was a return to more religious piety. Luther and his followers explicitly re-affirmed the presence of God in history and considered the task of the historians that of making this presence explicit. While the Reformation ran counter to the main tenets of the Renaissance, it also posited the existence of two distinct epochs: before and after the fall of Rome.

This dualist understanding of history started to gain ground after the end of the Thirty-Years' War in 1648 when Catholicism was defeated and with its pretences to continuity. In addition, the establishment of the international system of states following the peace treaties of Westphalia strengthened the central authority of the monarchs. Their actions, deeds and historical accomplishments became the subject matter of history and the focal points of historical periodization (by reigns and heirs).

The religious history was rapidly losing ground in this context. Moreover, the history was firmly divided between an ancient past (before the fall of Rome) and a modern period stretching into the present, with no other major discontinuities. This was reflected for example by the institutionalization of history in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge in 1720s when the Chair of Modern history dealt with everything that happened after the fall of Rome. Bernard Lewis noted wryly the absurdity of this situation today when the departments of Modern History in Oxford and Cambridge deal in fact with what other departments consider being, without a doubt, Medieval History (Lewis, 2009).

Meanwhile, however, the tripartite system that is now widely in use was slowly making its inroads into European consciousness as well. Cellerius, a German philologist, offered the first clear formulation in late 17th century when he explicitly identified a “middle history” between the ancient and modern periods. For Cellerius, 1500 marked the threshold between the middle segment and the modern period (Green, 1992). According to Reinhart Koselleck, the concept of Middle Ages became accepted only in the 18th century when it still retained a pejorative meaning. In the 19th century it became a definitive historical period (Koselleck, 2002).

The Enlightenment played a crucial part in this transformation. Immanuel Kant was one of the first to object to the manner in which history was arranged according to pre-given (religious) chronology. He advocated for historically immanent temporal criteria. For Koselleck, this was the *saecula*, or the *Jahrhunderte* (Koselleck, 2002). The century (which etymologically bears the mark of secularism) became the new criteria for historical periodization and unit of analysis from the 18th century onwards. The invention of this unit – the century - accelerated the tendency towards historical periodization and fragmentation even more, thus enabling the discovery of a “century of Enlightenment” for example and, more generally, of the modern age as such.

The sweeping economic, social and political transformations inaugurated by the Industrial and French Revolutions cemented the belief by mid-19th century that this was a distinct, new and substantially different period in the history of mankind. The existence of the historical period imposed itself on the historians and their task became that of tracing the exact moment of its emergence. I mentioned above that Burckhardt by 1860s in Switzerland, but also Michelet about the same time in France, identified the Renaissance as the precursor of modernity. For Republican historians, the French Revolution prefigured by the Enlightenment was the undisputable moment of rupture. In England, the industrial revolution beginning in the 1750s and the transformations it brought in production was the key moment.

There was no dispute by this time about the tripartite division of history: ancient, medieval (middle) and modern. The only question was that of setting the boundaries between them right. Between the turn of the 19th century and the ensuing of WWI, especially in British academia, the key moment of transition to modernity was identified in 1500. This was the time of Columbus, Erasmus, Machiavelli, Copernicus and Luther as exponents of sweeping changes in all essential domains of life. During WWI, in a POW camp, Ferdinand Braudel came up with the idea of how to organize his dissertation on the history of the Mediterranean: around the reign of Philip II, thus setting his plot also around 1500s. Braudel's work became hugely influential after WWII in French historiography and in the US academia where Immanuel Wallerstein developed his world-system theory based on Braudel's insights.

The postwar period stabilized the tripartite periodization of European history, which was always stretched to cover the world history as well. Today it is still very much in place. While variations and contestations exist (most notably Frank's 5000 year macro-period), this framework is constantly reinforced by existing institutional and ideological settings of worldwide academia and the formal and informal consensus of professional historians.

The type of periodization I suggested in this paper, from the periphery and open to wider political and economic structures might be helpful also for rethinking this European-cum-global framework of periodization and its long-held assumptions. Let me end by way of an example. How to characterize the 1750s in the Romanian Principalities from the perspective of this European periodization? Depending on one's framework they were on the verge of modernity, in the Middle Ages, in feudalism or in some unspecified form of Ottoman dominance.

Even if we enlarge the framework a little, contradictions still persist. Since they were under the influence of the expanding Habsburg and Russian empires, the Principalities were peripherally participating to the early modern transformations. Seen from the perspective of the Balkan peripheries of the Ottoman Empire they appear closer to what was called Medieval Islam. The same ambiguity holds for the Ottoman Empire itself. For some historians, the 1750s represent the moment of its incorporation into the capitalist world-system. Others noted by contrast the strengthening of the feudal relations in the Empire's agricultural areas at the same time.

Persisting with classical categories such as ancient, middle and modern in order to characterize historical time might lead to more ambiguities than clarity. Similarly, Marxist-derived categories relating to modes of production (slavery, feudalism, capitalism, etc.) have lesser analytical value than it was once thought, especially for peripheral places like Romania that do not neatly

fit the 5-stage model. In this paper I suggested that historical periodization and historical analysis based on relations of accumulation within broader political units offer more analytic clout for understanding historical transformations.

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Critical Reviews

Editorial Note:

This section provides reviews and critical reflections upon recent evolutions in social research, with focus on changing societies and current dilemmas.

BOOK REVIEW

Plante exotice. Teoria și practica marxiștilor români
(Exotic plants. The Theory and Practice of the Romanian Marxists)

by Alex Cistelean and Andrei State (eds.).

Cluj-Napoca: Tact Publishing House, 2015, 357 pages.

Sociologia istorică a lui Henri H. Stahl

***(The Historical Sociology of Henry H. Stahl)* by Ștefan Guga.**

Cluj-Napoca: Tact Publishing House, 2015, 387 pages

ÁGNES GAGYI¹

In 2015, two books appeared at Romanian publishing house Tact that engage with the history of 20th century Romanian Marxist thought: an edited volume on the theory and practice of Romanian Marxist theorists, coordinated by Alex Cistelean and Andrei State, and a book on the historical sociology of Henri H. Stahl by Ștefan Guga. In the local context, the project of intellectual engagement with Romanian Marxist thought is not a mere analytical effort. The exercise of the authors, as well as that of the publisher, is also a performative gesture aiming to disrupt what they see as a dominant post-1989 taken-for-granted in the social sciences: relating to Marxism through the condemnation of communism. It is a constitutive gesture to simultaneously establish intellectual predecessors and open up a debate on local applications of Marxist social theory within the small but growing intellectual new left in Romania.

I join the row of the books' commentators with a specific aim: to broaden the debate on the last aspect, which I see as a major stake in both books, yet tends to remain implicit both in the books' argumentation and in their reception. It is the stake of recuperating local Marxist thought not only as intellectual heritage or source of legitimation for the contemporary left, but as part of a broader effort to understand the region's development in terms of the global history of capitalism, an effort that also implies an engagement with the history of local social thought in terms of the epistemic conditions of such an understanding. The tension between the formally declared aim of a better, non-ideological description, and the performative gesture to recuperate local Marxist heritage invited comments that addressed either one or the other dimension.

¹ *New Europe College, Bucharest, e-mail: agnesgagyi@gmail.com.*

One of the strongest debates within leftist circles around the volume on Romanian Marxist thought addressed the lack of women authors and the issue of gender in general in the book, reacting to what was perceived as the book's intention to represent an agenda within the contemporary field. Călin Cotoi's review (Cotoi, 2015) pointed out that while Guga focuses on reconstructing Stahl's Marxist thought as different from the agenda of the Gusti School, the School's relation to contemporary Marxism and Stahl's own adherence to the School cannot be edited out from the understanding of Stahl's intellectual biography. This comment reacted primarily to the call for a better intellectual history, and not to the agenda of reconstructing the internal logic of Stahl's historical sociology as part of an intellectual effort for which Stahl's own work (and its fate) is a relevant input. In my understanding it is the latter that drives Guga's emphasis on differentiating between the approaches of Stahl and the Gusti School.

Beyond the above two aims, considering the heritage of local Marxist thought from the perspective of a contemporary Marxist understanding of the region has also been an aim declared by authors. At the Bucharest launch of the book, Florin Poenaru claimed that the main aim of the edited volume was not a history of ideas, but to show that a Marxist understanding of local society is possible, and to ask what it takes to think about the region as part of global capitalism. Ștefan Guga, both in his book and his chapter in the edited volume provides summaries of Stahl's historical sociology as an exemplary program for what local sociology could do.

As this third type of agenda remains largely implicit throughout the books, an engagement with it implies artificial reconstruction of a space of debate, based on the books as a whole, going beyond programmatic paragraphs that speak to this direction. In sticking to one level of argumentation from among the complex levels of arguments addressed at multiple audiences within the books, my comments will follow a line of coherence that is an artefact from the perspective of the books' actual structure. In that respect, the present commentary is less of a review of the books as they are, and more of a constructive effort for the solidification of the debate on a territory to which, in my view, both books contribute significantly.

Exotic Plants

In their preface to the edited volume on Romanian Marxist theorists, Alex Cistelean and Andrei State set the scene for what I understand as the performative gesture of the book. They identify a paradox in the reception of Marxism in Romania: a communist period lacking Marxism, and a post-communist period when communism is analysed without Marxism, compounding the continued exclusion of Marxist theory from social analysis. The volume, they say, is to fill this

void, and demonstrate the existence of a heritage of veritable local Marxist theory. It is also to demonstrate the international integration of local Marxist theory, in contrast to its local marginalization. The argument of the preface, thus, focuses on the performative stake of the volume's gesture: to bring back Marxism into present discussions.

If one is looking for methodological cues in the preface, some indications are woven between the arguments: the recuperation of Marxist theorists will involve the analysis of the relationship between their theory and their practice, and of their position within contemporary international debates. In the formal sequence of the argument, that methodological option follows from the logic of the performative effort – it will do what is necessary in order to make Marxism present, given the conditions that make it invisible in the contemporary field. The reader may suspect that the simultaneous attention to theory and practice or to national and international context may follow not only from strategic necessities in contemporary discursive struggles, but also from the internal logic of a Marxist methodology. Some remarks also suggest a positioning of the editors regarding method in historical research (e.g. delimitation from a decontextualized, factualist, moral approach in posthumous analyses of the communist period, see Cistelean and State, 2015:5-6). Such traces, however, remain implicit. The preface does not provide an explicit argumentation about the book's methodological and theoretical framework, as it would be defined from its own perspective, and not from the perspective of approaches in which Marxism is invisible. It does not speak about how the volume conceives of writing intellectual biography from a Marxist perspective, or of the stakes of the theoretical debates it describes. Certainly, such a conceptualization cannot be expected from a volume that primarily seeks to provide material for beginning such debates. In the present form of the preface, however, the focus on approaches that exclude Marxist perspectives seems to eclipse from discussion the book's own perspective on its own project.

As I see it, this effect follows not merely from the choice of editors to leave key questions unanswered in the preface, but is also inherent to the nature of the volume's effort to both speak and create the space for its speech. In what follows, I trace how the chapters' own analytical agendas communicate with each other from the perspective of a potential debate over Marxist analyses of local society, rather than evaluate the individual contributions.

The chapters by Andrei State and Costi Rogozanu keep closest to the volume's agenda in terms of the performative aim explicitly expressed in the introduction. State speaks about Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea, the author whose heritage suffered the least, as his work on neoserfdom stood at the centre of cross-ideological debates at the beginning of the century (Dobrogeanu-Gherea, 1920). Thus, State chooses simply to articulate the main threads in Gherea's work, place

them in the context of corresponding claims by Marx, Brenner or Chirot, and concludes that Gherea's work is a durable local contribution to Marxist sociology. Rogozanu speaks about a more problematic figure, Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu. Sentenced to death and killed in a show trial in 1954 under Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, and rehabilitated in 1968 by Ceaușescu, Pătrășcanu's biography remained a much discussed issue after 1989. Pătrășcanu is a classic case of the effect of effacement through communist and post-communist memory – as Rogozanu puts it, through his trial, his rehabilitation, and his post-1989 memory, the content of Pătrășcanu's work, too, was executed. To recuperate Pătrășcanu's work from under the multiple layers of political evaluations of his biography, Rogozanu discusses his books, journalism, speeches, and offers comparative biographical excerpts. The chapter provides not only an insight into Pătrășcanu's work, but also a sociological commentary on his reception, adding up to a historical essay on what it takes for a communist biography to be constituted in the second half of the 20th century in Romania.

In their co-authored chapter, Dan Cîrjan and Adrian Grama, writing about social democratic thinkers and politicians Șerban Voinea and Lotar Rădăceanu, propose a program that goes beyond the question of effacement in the recuperation of Marxist intellectual heritage. They advance a specific agenda for interpreting social democratic political thought, with implications to both the understanding of interwar social democracy, and to the methodological and political self-understanding of the interpreter. They forward the term "strategic Marxism" for the period's political thought, deeply ingrained in political strategy and practice. The key contribution of such a strategic practice of Marxism, they claim, is to be sought not so much in the theoretical context, but in its structuring effect of the contemporary workers' movement. Cîrjan and Grama maintain that the contribution of this type of Marxist thought is impossible to retrieve through an intellectual history of Marxism, detached from the social history of socialist parties, the workers' movement, and its political culture at the time. Without due attention to aspects of social history such as the institutionalization of Marxism in the social practice of the workers' movement, the transformations of waged work in the era, or the diversity of local workers' traditions, the history of Romanian Marxism risks to fall into the trap of idealism, reducing the history of local Marxism to a timeless dialogue between a handful of men – i.e. those addressed in the chapters of the volume.

This claim of the authors is a strong proposal not only for the method of historical recuperation, but also for a contemporary understanding of what a Marxist standpoint would be. Regarding the latter, the article's agenda is bound by the paradox that the contemporary position of the authors does not have the sort of contextual rootedness in an on-going social struggle which such a Marxist

thought rooted in praxis would require. That paradox, a general problem of contemporary social science taking a left position, is worth mentioning here because it points to the spot where the authors' preoccupation with their analytical agenda intersects with question of the performative agenda of the book in its contemporary context.

Cîrjan and Grama comply with their own analytical agenda as they provide a reconstitution of the political and social context of Voinea and Rădăceanu's arguments. However, what they actually find is that the strategic thought of the two remains uninformed by a sociological knowledge of the masses they address, and leads to a theoretically overcomplicated and politically ascetic gesture that could be summarized as calling the workers' movement to defend capitalists from the workers themselves (in the conviction that only the development of capitalist democracy could produce the necessary strength and maturity of the workers' movement). Cîrjan and Grama evaluate that stance as mistaken: asociological, productivist and orientalist. They conclude that politically, Voinea and Rădăceanu cannot be recuperated. What remains implicit is the ground of that political and theoretical evaluation. While in certain academic and activist circles, productivism and orientalism are notions of criticism, the article does not specify which thread of criticism the authors align with, or which sections of audience they address by quoting that criticism as self-evident. Compared to the various audiences addressed in other parts of the volume, that is a specific targeting which raises the question of the contemporary connection between analysis and the normative viewpoint of a social struggle.

Within the book, that question marks out a space where the substantive debate on the main stakes of a Marxist understanding of local social development could happen. Substantively, all authors discussed deal with the questions of how local development relates to paradigmatic descriptions of capitalist modernization, as well as the political consequences of that relationship. Modifications of Marxist paradigms of development from the perspective of non-core social experience, as well as the political and epistemic conditions of such modifications, are issues of key importance within that space of debate. Why local social democrats were asociological, productivist or orientalist are questions at the root of that problematic, regarding Romania's historical position within capitalist development, and the conditions of epistemic and political responses to it. While Cîrjan and Grama rightly argue for the importance of social historical contextualization of social democratic thought, when they move beyond analysis to evaluate that thought from the perspective of a Marxist view on local history and theory, they enter a ground that cannot but be set by an explicit re-actualization of that debate. It is the ground of a collective effort that gives a written text its social meaning – just as Cîrjan and Grama argue in their claims against reductive intellectual history.

The chapters by Florin Poenaru and Alex Cistelean make the book's claim to recuperate effaced Marxist thought into their method of interpreting intellectual biographies. Poenaru writes about Miron Constantinescu, a communist intellectual who occupied key political positions after 1944, was marginalized from political positions to academic ones after 1957 due to clashes with Gheorghiu-Dej, and rehabilitated in 1968 by Ceaușescu, regaining some political positions. Regarding the question of recuperating Constantinescu's intellectual heritage, Poenaru proposes a specific perspective. He claims that Constantinescu's social thought came to be ignored not because of its content or because of his political adherence to the communist party. Rather, says Poenaru, it was the central principle of his thought that made it essentially inconceivable for later approaches which did not share that principle: the idea that sociology is a tool of cognition and of social transformation at the same time. As such, sociology is conceived as standing at the centre of class struggle, not only in the sense of a tool of empirical cognition and expert governance in the service of the party, but also in the philosophical sense of a Leninist or Althusserian "avant-garde of the avant-garde", where the conceptualization of class struggle in the light of socialist political theory is conceived as prior to revolutionary subjectivation (Poenaru, 2015: 259).

Poenaru claims that the incoherence between Constantinescu's theoretical sociology, and the empirical expert work carried out under his leadership in the service of the apparatus lies in the contradiction between that principle of sociological avant-garde and the fact that the communist party Constantinescu adhered to as the manifestation of revolutionary subjectivation was, in fact, governing not a socialist revolution, but an authoritarian integration into the capitalist world. Poenaru points out that while in Constantinescu's theory class struggle remains a central concept, the issue of class struggle is eliminated from empirical research, and transformed into a statistical measurement of social stratification based on profession, which was in line with the Stalinist dogma of no class conflict in socialism, and also similar to the empirism of American sociology of the 1960s and 1970s. Poenaru sees that contradiction as a specific consequence of the tight party adherence of Romanian sociology under Constantinescu's academic leadership, which did not allow for critical stances similar to contemporary class-based critiques of really existing socialism in Yugoslavia, Poland or Hungary.

Poenaru's argument has a certain dialectical neatness, as his effort to recuperate Constantinescu's intellectual views from being obliterated and replaced by the memory of political opportunism only culminates in the claim that Constantinescu's choices were in fact guided by a solid Leninist type of Marxist theory, yet this was completely inadequate to the reality of actual capitalist integration. Poenaru connects that paradox in Constantinescu's biography to the general tragedy of faithful communists in really existing socialisms. However, this

explanation seems to be based solely on the contradiction between the content of a Marxist theory and a non-Marxist historical reality. That contradiction does not explain the more immediate details of the historical conditions of Constantinescu's sociology – for example, the difference between the historical conditions of the legitimating function of stratification sociology in Romania, and the use of the same methods for a dissident argumentation in Poland or Hungary. In Poenaru's account, the divergence between theoretical Marxism and American-type empiricism in subservience to the party correspond to the contradiction between the rhetoric of socialist ideology and the historical truth of capitalist adherence. Yet, both the usage of empiricist methods and the routes towards capitalist integration seem to provide a more complex picture in the region, a picture that disturbs the basic contradiction in the dialectical explanation Poenaru offers. Beyond the rhetorical strength of the argument for the explanative power of theory in Constantinescu's case seems to lie an implicit potential that the article also touches upon: that of a substantial debate on the nature of capitalist integration and institutional-epistemic conditions of intellectual reflection in the region's socialist history.

Writing on Pavel Câmpeanu, Alex Cistelean sees the worth of Câmpeanu's contribution to Marxist theory in his elegant and concise dialectical thought in historical analysis. From the perspective of that contribution, Cistelean is interested in Câmpeanu's trilogy on the Stalinist social order (Casals, 1980; Câmpeanu, 1986, 1988, 1990), and does not deal with his work as a sociologist of mass communication as a director of the Office of Studies and Polls of the National Radio and Television.

In a nutshell, Câmpeanu's trilogy on Stalinism follows the logic of a desynchronization within what, in a stagist conception of Marxist theory of history, should be successive stages in historical development. Câmpeanu starts from the assumption that in the second half of the 19th century the imperialist phase of capitalism disturbs normal historical development, bringing about a necessity for revolution in regions which have not reached yet the full development of a bourgeois society. The October Revolution turns the historical logic of that situation of tension upside down: it imposes relations of production ahead of their time (socialist) upon forces of production behind their time (feudal-agrarian). Stalinism emerges as the consequence of the contradiction within that situation: the structural incoherence of post-revolutionary social structure will invite the constant intervention of a power centre for the sake of stabilization. The crisis of Stalinism follows from the effects of that contradiction: it cannot be solved by reforms within the system, as it is the effect of objective conditions of historical development overcoming subjective effort.

Cistelean praises Câmpeanu's trilogy as an exemplary case of Marxist dialectical thought, which conceives of history as a dynamic and structured totality, where the logic of change is driven by the inherent tension between its

elements. There seems to be a point where Cistelean's understanding of Câmpeanu's work seems to coincide with his own historical-methodological agenda and understanding of Stalinism: in Câmpeanu's dialectics, Cistelean says, it is the syncretic nature of Stalinism (following from its role to perpetuate a historical anachronism), that "dictates" the method of investigation (Cistelean, 2015: 299). Yet, Cistelean also adds some critical remarks. He finds that Câmpeanu uses a historical model of Stalinism, but contrasts it to an ideal, a historical concept of capitalism. He also notes that Câmpeanu's explanation of the internal logic of Stalinism could not foresee, or even detect, the dissolution of that structure due to external forces. As Cistelean puts it: Câmpeanu's focus on internal interdependence made his theoretical system extremely vulnerable in the face of geopolitical changes. Cistelean states that his critiques do not aim to refute the basic logic of Câmpeanu's dialectic, but rather ask for its further development, with regard to both communism and what came next.

It seems, however, that if we extract the elements criticized by Cistelean from Câmpeanu's model, the model's neat dialectic form falls apart, as it loses its external (capitalist) pillar for the symmetric comparisons it makes within what it conceives of as two versions of the realization of the same rules of historical development. When Cistelean criticizes Câmpeanu for contrasting the historical model of Stalinism to an ahistorical model of capitalism, he seems to follow not so much the logic of Câmpeanu's model, as that of a potential conversation with postsocialist liberal interlocutors. In that discussion, he places the emphasis on refuting the idea that on the opposite side of an imperfect socialism, there is the possibility of a perfect capitalism. Cistelean quotes arguments from the Marxist tradition on how capitalism produces the internal heterogeneity of centre and peripheries, from Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky's uneven and combined development to postcolonial thinkers and world-systems analysis. From a substantive point of view, however, those arguments are in contradiction with Câmpeanu's models of both capitalism and socialism.

The stagist conception of the necessary conditions for revolution has been one of the most contested ideas in the history of Marxist thought and politics, from Bernstein's intervention and the Bolshevik-Menshevik debates to renewing discussions over the Marxist interpretation of transition between social formations, including the interpretation of really existing socialisms. Within the space of those debates, a stance that presupposes an impact of developed capitalist countries on less developed ones only in the moment of imperialism is a very curious one. Beyond Cistelean's own citations from the debates, the volume *Exotic Plants* comprises various substantive arguments about the integration of Romanian modernization into wider relations of the capitalist world, from Gherea's early intervention on interpreting 19th century feudalism with respect to capitalist

penetration, to Poenaru's allusion to the role of Western economic integration in Ceaușescu's politics, or the evaluation of Stahl's long-term historical sociology in the light of Marxist understandings of the capitalist world-system by Guga. Câmpeanu's argument seems to fall outside the space of those debates, and rather provide a comparison of the two systems as closed ideal-types, where the dialectical elegance of the argumentation rests on a reification of an ideal, mechanistic concept of history, debated within the Marxist tradition for decades at the moment of his contribution. In this sense, Câmpeanu's model resembles rather the dualistic comparisons between capitalism and socialism in the classic canon of Cold War epistemics. His contrasting description of crisis in Stalinism vs. in capitalism, a *tour de force* demonstrating how the theoretical idea of syncretism is able to grasp a row of empirical characteristics in both systems, resembles what David Stark (1986) termed the method of mirrored opposition: a method contrasting symmetric ideal-types of two independent, closed systems. Cistelean quotes Szelényi's evaluation of Câmpeanu as the main critical theorist of Eastern Europe in the 1980s – yet that evaluation does not necessarily refer to Marxism as critical theory. Regarding Szelényi's own concept of social criticism of that time, he emphasizes that instead of a Marxist critique, he was looking for an immanent critique of socialism, close to Foucault's method, combined with a cross-systemic comparison of ideal-types (Szelényi, 2002).

Câmpeanu's relationship to Marxist understandings raises questions not only of ideology or theory, but also of basic ontological presuppositions in the analysis of Romanian history. Among the tasks the chapter undertakes on multiple levels, that question remains in the background. However, from the perspective of a possible wider debate on Marxist understandings of the region, it seems to be an extremely productive one, as a treatment of the differences of methodological presuppositions and historical findings between Câmpeanu and other authors discussed in the volume could certainly set the stage for a debate over contemporary perspectives on those issues.

Ștefan Guga's chapter on Henri H. Stahl is the most explicit one in the volume in terms of the author's own relationship to the intellectual heritage under analysis. This might have to do with Stahl's work being the most voluminous and intellectually complex among the ones discussed in the volume, and also the fact that Guga's contribution is set against the background of a larger research and a monograph on Stahl published in the same year as the edited volume. Guga's chapter first places Stahl within the history of Romanian and international Marxist thought, and then summarizes Stahl's method of historical sociology as a possible model of a Marxist sociology. Regarding Stahl's contribution to Romanian Marxist debates, he points out Stahl's modification of Gherea's theory, claiming that Romanian social structure has been affected by the integration into the historical development of capitalism not in the 19th century, but from the 16th century on.

On the level of international debates, Guga points out how Stahl's research on the historical sociology of Romanian social development integrates into the debates over transition from feudalism to capitalism, the question of modes of production and their interrelationship, and the concept of the world-system as a differentiated, but interconnected whole. In terms of Stahl's movement background, Guga emphasizes that in the interwar period the direction of Stahl's questioning (on the conditions of transition from feudalism to capitalism in Romanian villages, first started as a field research within the institutional framework of the Gusti School) was driven by experience and political interest, while his later studies which integrated him in the Marxist debates of the 1960s and 1970s were conducted within the confines of academic Marxism. Finally, Guga summarizes what he sees as Stahl's Marxist sociological method for a structured understanding of history, comprising economic, political and other aspects in a broad perspective over the totality of social interaction. That totality is understood as a complex, structured and differentiated whole, dynamized by the tensions generated by the unequal development of its substructures. It is a concept of social dynamics which, in research, necessitates a synchronic and diachronic comparative perspective, and constant attention to the researcher's own position within those dynamics.

In this summary, Guga merges his own program for a locally relevant Marxist sociology with his analysis of Stahl's work and its integration in the main Marxist debates on history. That merger effaces the traces of the fine-tuned work he does in the monograph to draw out those principles from Stahl's writing, together with the traces of the context of Marxist thinking referred in that process (e.g. Althusser's influence on the method of Guga's own reconstruction of the generative principle of Stahl's work, and on the explicit conceptual formulation of that principle). By covering those traces, the chapter's choice to summarize the conclusions of the book in a concise and explicit form has the effect of sealing down the edges of its own argument in face of a potential debate within the volume about the stakes and methods of reading Marxist texts across the different chapters. Even so, because of the range of Stahl's own substantive arguments and because of Guga's explicit programmatic positioning, this chapter provides probably the largest surface for a collective dialogue over the relevance of the authors discussed by the volume for a contemporary Marxist perspective.

The Historical Sociology of Henri H. Stahl

Ștefan Guga's book on Stahl is built around the core argument that Stahl's main intellectual project is a historical sociology, understood as a Marxist theoretical and methodological engagement with the historical formation of local social structure as part of the uneven history of capitalism. In terms of the audiences,

fields and stakes of the argumentation of the book, that core claim has three aspects. First, it refutes Stahl's assigned position in post-socialist Romanian sociology as a methodological expert of the Gusti school, together with what Guga sees as the effacement of his true Marxist intellectual interest through biographical suggestions of political dependence and censorship during the socialist period. Second, Guga provides a minute reconstruction of Stahl's intellectual project as Marxist historical sociology, based on the whole of Stahl's oeuvre, together with the reconstruction of its embeddedness in Marxist debates throughout the decades of Stahl's long biography. Third, the refutation of Stahl's misinterpretations, the criticism of what Guga sees as inadequate methods of writing intellectual biography, and the reconstruction of what he deems the relevant core of Stahl's work, dovetail into a third aspect: that of Guga's own perspective on what is a relevant contemporary perspective on sociology, and how, in that respect, a history of sociology should be done. Those three aspects of argumentation are bound together within the book's self-presentation as an insertion of Marxist sociology into the contemporary field of sociology. The emphasis on that gesture results in a situation similar to the one *Exotic Plants* struggles with: that the book's argument needs to start from what it would deem irrelevant later, and build up its treatment of its topics against their own grain. That effect engenders a complex interpenetration of the three aspects in the structure of the argumentation, something that I will, again, artificially sort out in order to target the focus of the present discussion.

In terms of his own reconstruction of Stahl's work, Guga claims that there is a coherent engagement in Stahl's work with the transformation of the Romanian village and its larger context from the perspective of history as the transformation of social organization. From his early work on the penetration of capitalism in Romanian villages, Stahl proceeds to construct a model of the historical development of the social, political and economic organization on the territory of the Romanian Principalities, reaching from the withdrawal of the Roman troops, through the fiscal regime of exploitation set by nomadic conquerors, to the occupation of those exploitative functions by local aristocracy, and the apparition of exploitation through production for the market by aristocratic households from the 16th century on.

Arguments dealing with the book's stake to refute the way Stahl is remembered interweave with Guga's substantive arguments on Stahl's work and its context all through the book. Guga demonstrates that Stahl's main interest is in historical sociology, not in the sociographic method. He points out that Stahl's treatment of the Asian mode of production, and his divergence with Miron Constantinescu on the interpretation of feudalism followed not from the political pressures of the time, but from the genuine interests of his thought, in line with the international debates of the time on those topics. Similarly, Guga points out

that Stahl criticized both the official version of dialectical materialism and the uncritical import of Western frameworks, from the perspective of what he conceived of as historical sociology.

From the point of view of local debates, Stahl modifies Gherea's argument on neoserfdom, claiming that the effects of capitalist penetration appear in the Principalities not in the 19th century, but from the 16th on, and that what Gherea terms neoserfdom does not correspond to a second instance of serfdom, but to a new type of relations of production. At the centre of that modification stands Stahl's problematization of applying the notion of feudalism to local forms of social organization in the Middle Ages. It is here that empirical research on local history intersects with the stakes of conceptualizing not only social formations as stages of history, but also the notion of history itself. Guga demonstrates at length that within that problematic, Stahl's research integrates into the Marxist debates of both the interwar period, when the question of transition from feudalism to capitalism had an immediate political stake, and the later waves of academic Marxist debates in the 1960s and 1970s. He points out a chain of references between Gherea's conceptualization of social organization in Romania as part of the larger social organism of the historical era of capitalism (Guga, 2015: 221), Stahl's idea of "historical era", made up of societies at different levels of development within the same "area of contact", subordinated to the laws imposed by the most advanced ones (Guga, 2015: 218), and Wallerstein's conceptualization of the world-system as a unit integrating various social forms (Guga, 2015: 217).

When examining Stahl's thought *vis-à-vis* the context of subsequent waves of Marxist debates on feudalism/capitalism, the Asian mode of production, or the articulation of modes of production, Guga's argument does not focus on theoretical or empirical details of debates or historical context. Rather, the guiding line of his analysis seems to remain the general question of what could be (and what becomes, through the debates he follows) a synthetic perspective on history and social organization in a Marxist perspective. I see that focus as an element of the third aspect of the book: Guga's own perspective on doing sociology. That perspective seems to fall closest to the arguments he describes when he concludes Althusser's conceptualization of history.

From Althusser's structuralist systematization of a Marxist conception of the historical organization of society, Guga highlights the definition of social formation as a complex and hierarchical whole, comprising various modes of production, united by their subordination to a dominant mode of production. That concept of social organization provides a perspective on historical time different from that of a continuous timeline consisting of periods of linear time which could be identified with some sort of essential characteristic of an epoch. Rather, Althusser proposes a differential notion of historical time, understood as a complex whole

compounded by the interrelationship of different histories of relatively autonomous sub-structures. That notion of historical time has sweeping consequences from the perspective of the major issues in Marxist (and non-Marxist) debates on Romanian history, in that it places the questions of development, underdevelopment, backwardness etc. within one coherent framework, where „developed” and „backward” elements appear as part of the same interconnected, yet differentiated social formation. It is a heuristic contribution that, once taken seriously, changes the whole field of debate over the main questions that local authors discussed in *Exotic Plants* and Guga’s book address.

Within the discursive space set up by the two books, that perspective on history does not become a focal point to the extent of its potential. In Guga’s own argument, it remains implicit. The emphasis on the analytical consequences of the idea can be felt in its presentation, but Guga does not emphasize its consequences to a larger contemporary debate. Rather, he proceeds with the historical narrative to the decline of the structuralist school in the debates of the 1970s, and Stahl’s position within that process.

In the conclusion, the three aspects of the book’s argumentation come together in a dense flight of argument where Guga speaks of Stahl’s contribution both in the sense of reinstating its rightful interpretation against the faulty, and of pointing out its characteristics in line with Guga’s own agenda of a good sociology. In addition, Guga defines the place of the book within the program he proposes for a history of sociology for the Romanian context. Here, again, the conclusions from the three aspects of the argument are woven upon each other so tightly that it becomes difficult to see them separately.

Guga proposes a program that would examine the conditions of production of sociological knowledge, an effort that could not only avoid, but also explain the effects that led, among others, to the effacement of Stahl’s work. Guga designates the place of the book as a contribution to that effort. That definition concludes the book in terms of what it does within the contemporary field of sociology: recuperating Stahl’s heritage. Yet the same definition rests upon the principles Guga developed in the book through explaining Stahl’s writing. The history of sociology he proposes would investigate the conditions of sociological knowledge production in a situation that he defines (for the period after 1965) as one of dual dependence of socialist satellite countries, a definition coined by József Böröcz (1992) within the same tradition that Guga mobilizes in his explanation of Stahl: that of a Marxist understanding of local reality as part of a complex historical whole. The conclusion defines the book as a history of sociology; yet the epistemological base of that history is the perspective which is brought to light by its own act of history-writing.

In light of the capacity Guga mobilizes in the book for presenting and applying that perspective, one might ask what would have happened, had he inverted the logic of argumentation, and simply written a book about the relevance of Stahl's heritage to a contemporary Marxist perspective. Part of the struggle and achievement of the book seems to lie in the fact that the logic of argumentation could not be inverted: it is a circular structure, designed to sustain itself as a contribution to a field that does not contain the main stakes of its own argument. From the perspective of a potential for a contemporary debate on doing Marxist sociology, that character of the book's effort sometimes has the effect of relegating key elements of its argument to the implicit, or scattering them across other levels of argumentation. In spite of that, Guga's book contains a solid proposal over what the assumptions, principles and tasks of a local Marxist sociology could be, and as such, could serve as a cornerstone for further debates.

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THE AUTHORS OF THIS ISSUE

BIANCA BALEA is assistant professor at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. She received her doctoral degree in 2012 with a thesis on the digital inequalities among children. She participated in national and international research projects, among which EU Kids Online, 2009-2014 (dir. Sonia Livingstone and Leslie Haddon, LSE), and Net Children Go Mobile, 2012-2014 (dir. Giovanna Mascheroni). Her current research interests are focused on social and digital inequalities, children's use of new digital technologies, friendship and privacy on social media.

CLAUDIU BARBU is a PhD student in sociology at the Doctoral School in Sociology, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. He holds a Master in Human Resources and a Bachelor degree in Psychology. His research interests include public pension reform in Eastern Europe and electoral systems. In 2010 he published a book on the interactions between the electoral systems and the institutional environment.

PEDRO CANDEIAS is a PhD student in the ICS, Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon, and associated member of SOCIUS, Research Centre in Economic and Organizational Sociology, Lisbon, Portugal. He holds a Master and a Bachelor degree in Sociology. He collaborated in research projects and publications on topics such as Portuguese Ciganos, migration and drug abuse.

IONUȚ FÖLDEȘ is a PhD student at the Doctoral School in Sociology and researcher assistant at Center for Population Studies, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. He earned his bachelor degree in Sociology (2013) and a master in Advanced Sociological Research (2015), both at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Babeş-Bolyai University. His current work concerns intergenerational family relations in the context of international migration and the situation of elderly left at home in Romania.

ÁGNES GAGYI is a social movements researcher focusing on Eastern European politics and social movements in long-term global historical perspective. Her PhD, defended in 2011 at the University of Pécs, analysed the Hungarian and Romanian branches of the alterglobalization movement, with a focus on the effects of hierarchical East-West relationships. She is Adjunct Professor at Eszterházy Károly College, Eger, and presently a research fellow at New Europe College, Bucharest. She is a member of the Budapest-based Working Group for Public Sociology "Helyzet".

OLGA MAGANO is assistant professor at Universidade Aberta – UAb (Portuguese Open University), Department of Social Sciences and Management, teaching courses on Introduction on Social Sciences, Contemporary Social Theory, Methodologies of Social Sciences and Social Exclusion. She earned a PhD in Sociology (2011) and a master in Intercultural Relations (2000), both at Open University, Portugal. She is a researcher at CIES-IUL (Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology of University Institute of Lisbon) and at Centre of Studies on Migration and Intercultural Relations at Universidade Aberta – UAb. Her research interests include Gypsies/Roma populations, social mobilization, social identities, social integration, miscegenation, intercultural relations, cultural mix, spatial and social segregation. She did several researches on Portuguese Gypsies. She published a book on social integration of Portuguese Gypsies (*New Perspectives and Challenges in a Plural Society in Transition*) and co-edited one on Portuguese Ciganos (*National Study of Roma Communities*). She is a member of the Portuguese Association of Sociology and of the Romani Studies Network.

MARIA MANUELA MENDES is a sociologist, researcher at University Institute of Lisbon, Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology [CIES-IUL], Portugal, and Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Architecture, Lisbon University [Faculdade de Arquitectura de Lisboa], Portugal. Her PhD in sociology, defended in 2007 at the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon, analysed the representations against discrimination constructed by the Russian and Ukrainian immigrants and the Portuguese Ciganos in the context of the Portuguese society. Her research interests are focused on ethnicity, Ciganos studies, immigration, city and diversity, social and spatial exclusion, local development, and disqualified territories.

FLORIN POENARU received his PhD in anthropology from Central European University. He was a Fulbright Junior Fellow at City University of New York and a CEU Teaching Fellow at Babeş-Bolyai. He works on issues related to class, history of capitalism and ideology.

ANNEMARIE SORESCU-MARINKOVIĆ is an anthropologist, researcher at the Institute for Balkan Studies in Belgrade, Serbia. She earned a master in Literature and Mentalities at the West University of Timișoara (2003) and a PhD in Folklore at “Babeş-Bolyai” University in Cluj-Napoca (2010). Her research interests include language acquisition, multilingualism, language policies; language and folklore; migrations, spatial displacement and segregation; interethnic relations in multilingual settings; transborder media; Romani studies. She did extensive research on the Romanian speaking populations outside the borders of Romania. She published a book on the Vlachs of Eastern Serbia and their folklore, edited one on the Romanians in Vojvodina, and collaborated in research projects on the Bayash populations from the Balkans.



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51 B.P. Hașdeu Street, 400371 Cluj-Napoca, Romania
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