ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF SOLIDARITY AND RECIPROCITY

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Alter Political Economy

Peter Simonič

Sociologists such as Simmel, Tönnies, Durkheim, or Weber defined various kinds of solidarity: national, religious, guild, and kinship. In the 19th and 20th century, their ideas and identifications competed in the political arenas across Europe and USA (Stjernø 2004). In their theories, the economy as *social process* was identified with the economics as (socially conditioned) *theory* (Hopkins 1957), and their habitus was nation-state (Graeber 2004; comp. Smith 2010 [1876]). Taking into account the diversity of human natural and cultural environments, and historical shifts in the political and economic conditions, we realize that the phenomenon of stress and group forming, belonging and sharing must be much older and more diverse than the idea of *solidarity,* the promise of the French Revolution.

The concept of solidarity is ambiguous: it includes mechanisms of taxes and redistribution, charity, altruistic contributions

and political support, social policy, concessions, grants, funds, food, clothes, social entrepreneurship, sponsorship, NGOS, etc. Communitarianism, equality and progress are their ideological pillars. Solidarity in mass culture is a form of ideational and tangible redistribution. Sociology based on the Marxist tradition has been rejecting perpetuation and masking of fundamental economic, social and political *inequalities,* but their classless society remained attached to nation-states. Following the game theory in the late 20th century, sociological and economic solidarity became a matter of rational choice among alternatives of group belonging (intentional communities) that could bring the greatest "profit" to an individual (Komter 2005).

Anthropology initially used the expertise of European sociology, political science, law and economics. Anthropologists have reported about internal balance, "social security" and cooperation in a number of non-European and preindustrial *communities,* which have been by default referred in the west as archaic. In the 20th century, anthropology and ethnology remained on the imperial and heritage margins of culture and science.

When Garrett Hardin declared the tragedy of commons (1968), the divide between mainstream sociology, economics and anthropology in the American west seemed to be sealed. His writing was an application of the game theory, with separated, misinformed and mistrusted members of society (methodological individualism). In his view, neither socialist state nor commons were suitable as property owners for environmental challenges of the global future. In time of cold war, such an announcement looked quite logical to western readers and became a common sense among many students and future scholars in ecology and economics.

Persistence of economic and environmental anthropologist at small-scale, face-to-face communities and ethnographic research has reversibly influenced political and economic thought. Elinor Ostrom (2003, 2009), accepted Robert Netting's stance from his book *Balancing on an Alp* (1981), that it is possible and sustainable to practice common (pool) management, especially in areas with small communities. In short, I see at least four aspects of Ostrom's communitarian intervention, important for our understanding of mainstream western political economy. First, Ostrom also used the game theory, but this time to prove quite the opposite as Hardin. Second, she explicitly used Netting's description of management in an (Alpine) community to reintroduce an *alternative* to mainstream economics, but she barely mentioned anthropology in her book (2003). Third, she became and remained the only woman to win the Nobel Prize in economics (2009).

Fourth, western economic theories (mercantilism, classical and political economy) have been standing on influx of various ("unlimited") riches coming from the newly established colonies, emerging world trade system and church-like organisations. Alternative models (heresies) in economics gather momentum and recognition only in times of perceived environmental and social crises.

To overcome subsistential problems after the global financial crisis in 2008, many people recalled and established different communitarian models of production, exchange, distribution, and consumption. The mainstream theory and media called them "alternative economic practices": cooperatives, agrarian commons, immediate supply networks, social enterprises, housing communities, etc. (Simonič 2014a). The recent reinvention and reinforcement of community and resilience in the USA and (southern) Europe pulled anthropological methodology close to this kind of public discussions (Graeber 2011).

Anthropology never definitively adopted the concept of solidarity, at least not in the same manner as sociology and economics. For Mauss (1966 [1925]), solidarity was an ideological side of established social order. Solidarity can arise from either contractual arrangements of individualised types of society and market exchange *or* through gift-giving of mainly non-European, primitive, stateless societies (Kula and Potlach as core examples). Economic anthropology proposed the concept of *reciprocity* – a continuum of moral obligations along the processes of *exchange* (Malinowski 2002 [1922]; Mauss 1966 [1925]; Lévi-Strauss 2015 [1955]; Polanyi 1957; Sahlins 1972). Certainly after Polanyi (1957), economic anthropology readily criticized catallactic fundamentalism in the study of (economic) life of humans. Society and economy are much more complex and cannot be reduced to market merits and objectives (Gudeman 2005; Hann and Hart 2009; Hart, Laville and Cattani 2010). Anthropology added many new examples of human organisations, economies and their indicators: *hunters and gatherers, herders, tribal communities, households, kinship, gender, age, bridewealth, inheritance, magic, all kinds of informal economies* etc. In terms of the history of sociological theory, reciprocity would originally fit within "organic community" (Tönnies, 2001 [1887]) or "mechanical solidarity" (Durkheim 1984 [1893]). The division of labour between anthropology and sociology also looks like the relation between micro level (family, small scale, face-to-face community, etc.) and macro level (nation, international community). A sharp division though is not possible, because of many initiatives from both scientific disciplines to overcome the boundaries: sociologists are concerned with the problems of the family, village communities, and diverse

interest groups, and anthropologists nowadays regularly evaluate nations, administrations, and global dynamics.

Reciprocity has ever since been loaded with meanings and usages. Reciprocity has become a general concept, specific moral obligations of primitive, preindustrial societies, which must be recognised and used in our time. For Mauss, reciprocity was a "third-way" political project as *alternative* to "two extremes": individualist liberalism and collectivist communism (Mauss 1966: 63-69). In this sense, his theory of reciprocity was a successor of the nineteenth-century French *solidarisme* movement (Narotzky 2007). Further, history and epistemology of economic anthropology was explained in relation to *anarchism,* to self-organisation, voluntary associations, mutual aid, likewise rejection of the state and all kinds of structural violence (Graeber 2004: 3). A hundred years after Malinowski and Mauss, and after several decades of neoliberalism (Harvey 2005), the anthropological third-way appeared in the form of *human economy,* related to alter-globalisation movement from Puerto Alegre (Hart, Laville and Cattani 2010; Pleyers 2010; comp. Gregorčič, Babič and Kozinc 2018). In France, the *Mouvement anti-utilitariste dans les sciences sociales* (M.A.U.S.S.) promotes a similar approach. Prior to that *moral economy* dealt with questions of social scope and ethics (Thompson 1971; Scott 1976).

As with solidarity, meaning and experiences of reciprocity are cumulative and ambiguous. As we try to get inside of how reciprocity works, "we get sucked into concrete historical specificity and away from reciprocity as a category – a political category" (Narotzky 2007: 407). From a point of view of economic anthropology, it is worth studying reciprocity and solidarity as forces of integration and group building. They function in households, kinships, fraternities, lodges, guilds, agrarian communities, villages, municipalities, neighbourhoods, states, religious communities, family enterprises, cooperatives, unions, universities, factories, communes, in fair trade, clubs, squats, gardening communities, collaborative consumption, local money, universal basic income, etc. An important part of corporate business is of course based on specific internal solidarity and reciprocity. Some call it "corporate socialism".

Reciprocity, redistribution and market (Polanyi 1957) were intended to describe various forms of exchange and (moral, juridical) obligations. They detected all kinds of circulations of things, concepts and people, and the motivations that drove them. Less attention in anthropology and consequently the anthropological study of reciprocity was devoted to production side and property (Meilassoux 1972; Neveling and Trapido 2015). Mauss was not interested in the production

of valuables, but exchange (sociability) of gifts and visits. Yet, modern farmers' or workers' cooperatives, which Mauss wished to promote, were meant to be self-managed *production, "co-operation"* units (Marshall 2010, comp. Kropotkin 1972 [1902]). Cooperatives spread in the nineteenth century and represented a communitarian response of farmers and workers to an industrialised and financialized states. Cooperatives nurtured solidarity and security for their members, and together they competed with other state and private agents – on the economic and political market. They represented the *intentional* solidarity and reciprocity of groups and networks, distinct to *kinship* based belonging. However, the implementation and the quality of the cooperation, reciprocity, solidarity and belonging vary from case to case.

Due to the ideology of economic growth and mercantilism, commons have been expropriated and adapted (Polanyi 2001 [1944]). Companies like AirBnB or Uber are good examples of modern enclosures. They have both benefited from the digital exchange of information, quite differently from i.e. Linux several decades ago (Bollier 2014). AirBnB stands on the original idea of Couchsurfing, and Uber on the original idea of car sharing. Instead of open-access and immediate sharing of available resources, a third party stepped in and has capitalised on communications and transactions. In capitalism, alternatives or third-way economic ideologies and practices are often transformed into business models, and integrated in state policies. Internet is certainly an important modern tool. Even though our volume misses a separate essay on the topic, modern communication and network technologies are inscribed in many: as a source of reference, as an integration mechanism or as a promotional extension of groups, communities and organisations.

Volume Anthropological Perspective of Solidarity and Reciprocity brings together articles on different kinds of group building and bonding. The authors use various concepts to describe specific scopes of (economic) activities: human economy, moral economy, solidarity economy, even leisure commodity, or higher cause.

The first two articles are historically comparative. Jadran Kale writes about the historical development of three types of *commons* in the Eastern Adriatic. Recently, they became a matter of local identity and political power in the fields of agriculture and tourism. Peter Simonič discuses historical shifts of communitarianism in the Trenta valley and explains them in relation to political economy and ethnoecology of the Alpine region. Family, village, commons, cooperatives and tourism societies are successive and interdependent *institutions* of reciprocity and solidarity.

The second group is the largest and brings together different responses to recent ecological, economic and political crises. The article by Silvia Contessi and Cristina Grasseni looks at the emergence of *re-localised food supply networks* in northern Italy. The authors problematize the often naïve trust and solidarity between farmers and consumers. They point out some inconsistencies in grassroots supply networks. Authors from the Spanish collective Hosaralmo are also interested in local food provisioning. The second example of their comparative discussion is a financial cooperative. They present *cooperative practices* as a place of struggle between life and forces of profit, but at the same time as an object of the capitalist project of integration and social reproduction. Food and community are central also to Valentina Gulin Zrnić and Tihana Rubić. Authors compare several examples of *urban community gardens* in Zagreb (Croatia) in relation to ecological, socio-cultural and economic sustainability. Irene Sabaté thinks about home repossessions in Spain as structural violence of the market against morality and justice. She is curious whether strategies implemented by *mortgage debtors* have a potential to secure domestic reproduction and transform financial capitalism.

Political scientist Cirila Toplak examines Yugoslavian workers' *self-management;* its ancestors, development paradigms and paradoxes. She calls for the scientific analysis of democratic autonomism instead of its ideological rejection or glorification. Nina Vodopivec offers an ethnographic account on the changing political and economic environment of the Slovenian *textile industry*. Abandonment of self-management, introduction of corporate law, deindustrialisation and precarisation have devaluated work, and diminished self-esteem and the collective efforts of workers. Sociologist Gorazd Kovačič evaluates the causes and practical lessons from *trade union's fragmentation* in Slovenia. He detects reasons in the diversification of working practices and sees only the possibility for contemporary unions to reflect and adapt to internal and external differentiation and competition.

The third part of the book presents two non-European examples. Tanja Ahlin explains the extensive emigration of nurses from the Indian state of Kerala to some western and Arabic countries. The most important driving force for migration is intergenerational reciprocity – *repayment for parents' suffering.* Daughters have become the most important investment and income providers to transnational families. Prof. Eugene Richard Sensenig's contribution presents one of the oldest intentional Christian urban communities. It is the Reba Place Fellowship from a suburb of Chicago. The author identifies the theoretical and social motives for its emergence, leadership modifications,

impacts in the neighbourhood, and finally offers some lessons for personal and societal development.

The last two articles address leisure, art and imagination. Boštjan Kravanja presents the swing dance scene in Ljubljana. In his opinion, aspects of scene solidarity are part of dance *communitas,* rooted in the USA in late 1920s. Internally, members are practicing competition and sub-grouping due to skills, style and achievements. Dan Podjed and Daša Ličen describe a mixture of volunteer and professional activities among bird watchers and ecologists in Slovenia. They propose a new applicable concept or *orgunity* – as the sum of community, network and organisation.

The first version of some articles was published in the Slovenian-Spanish edition of the journal *Ars & Humanitas* (Kravanja 2014, Hosaralmo Collective [Alquézar etc.] 2014, Sabaté 2014, Simonič 2014b, Vodopivec 2014). With the permission of the journal's chief editor, selected articles have been rewritten in English and re-edited. Updated version of one article already appeared in other scientific journal during prolonged arrangements for this book (Gulin Zrnić and Rubić 2018).

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Komunjsko, Skupno and *Seljansko:* Legacy of Eastern Adriatic Commons

Jadran Kale

INTRODUCTION

In this paper we shall offer a short overview of collective rights upon some still existing common lands in the Croatian littoral. Common lands make a property form known as the commons, undivided by individual owners belonging to the same community. Other well researched forms of commons include fishery rights of local communities, communal irrigation arrangements, pastoral husbandry, communal forests and hunting rights. Each among these domains was capable of bringing greater gain if left undivided. Disliked by scholars and despised by administrators (Grove and Rackham 2001: 71), both of them had been describing commons as a backward relic. Commons were denigrated by aristocratic physiocrats of the 18th Century, Marxists of the 19th Century and liberal thinkers of the 20th Century, with

"The Tragedy of the Commons" engraved deeply into the academic mainstream (Hardin 1968). Even the Communist regime had favoured state property over its own communitarian programme of egality and cooperation. Emulation of commons in state-controlled cooperatives had produced a toxic legacy which discourages mere public discourse about modern cooperatives at all.

When ethnological texts are analysed one can clearly observe that communal property usually means either a township or *zadruga*-type of family, leaving actual commons out of sight (Kale 2009: 238-242). Some global concern is been revived due to the preservation of nature (Brosius et al. 2005). In cultural heritage collectively important spaces were included into the 1979 Burra Charter (Silverman and Fairchild Ruggles 2007: 7). From Burra and deliberations about authenticity a way was paved to the internationally conventionalized categories of cultural landscape and intangible cultural heritage, also being a right to collective intellectual property. Finally the human rights themselves established culture, heritage, landscape and property issues "as an inclusive framework for negotiating the rights of local communities and the marginalised" (Egoz et al. 2011: 17). Due to the recent shockwaves of the global economic crises a certain amount of public attitude towards the commons changed (Baden and Noonan 1998), but in the Adriatic we still lack particular studies.[1]

Obligatory nuances include historical legal division of the continental and littoral parts of Croatia. The commons of the former lands were legally transformed into state property in 1913,[2] leaving a small number of latter communal properties temporarily off the hook.[3] *Zemljišne zajednice* ("land communities") were legally formed before the Communist regime, only to be disbanded later, together with the so-called *krajiške imovne općine* ("Krajina inhabitants' land communal properties") from the historical territory of the Militärgrenze. In the south, all Montenegrin common pasturelands (*komunice*) were appropriated by the state (Ćirić-Bogetić 1966: 249).[4]

In the history of the Croatian littoral commons can be followed side by side with *općina* (word derived from adjective „opće"

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1 Overview is given by Tadić 1993.

2 The most usual toponymic reminiscence is term *gmajna,* stemming out from German "Gemeinde". "Plemenita općina turopoljska" ("Turopolje Noble Commune") refers to the local lower nobility, not to their commoners.

3 Oftenly called *muša* or *bušak* (from Italian "bosco").

4 "In Montenegro all land was in tribal property (...), common land of *bratstvo* is in the mountains where katun and common forests are situated – *komun, komunica, zajednica, meteh, begluk, vakam",* Rovinski 1994 [1897]: II, 122 and 123.

which covers public matters), an important concept from the very beginning of Croatian legal history, dating back to The Law of Vinodol from 1288.[5] According to its regulations, općina was a community different from its feudal mastership or royal emissary jurisdiction – for example, while collecting fines (Ch. 14).[6] Session places for assembly deliberations were formalized, either in settlements' centres or under some nearby monumental tree, with typical littoral toponym of *Posoba* denoting session, as well (with small initial letter as in posoba). *Posoba* represented a form of a self-governing community, related to archaisms like *posebina* meaning "res publica" (SER III: 130, 211). Historians warn against the essentialist view of the Slavic *općina* and its historical functions as a gradually diluted relic. They were strongly influenced by Byzantine authorities in the earliest periods of the Croatian state and appropriately used as a legal tool by later feudal masters (Margetić 1980: 157). In the Early Modern Age use of *posoba* was documented by Venetian authorities because they recognized commoners' councils as the best way for recruiting armed bands and whole communities for borderland military duties.[7] Their leaders were awarded with distinctive clothes and adornments, land and lower nobility ranks.[8] Later legacy of the War of Candia served as a symbolic basis for the national revival movement in the 19th Century. National costumes, various traditions and building heritage were founded upon historical borderland institutions. Three examples are presented here: the commons at Lanišće in Istria, Lun on the island of Pag, and commons on the island of Žirje in the Šibenik-Zadar archipelago.

THE FIRST EXAMPLE: LANIŠĆE, ISTRIA

The village of *Lanišće* comprises a greater part of Ćićarija, which are elevated pastures adjacent to the Kras hinterland of Trieste. The Ćići were a historical Vlach seminomadic population in Istria, existing separately in neighbouring Žejane and distant Šušnjevica as specific

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5 The oldest law written in Croatian language (Bratulić 1988: 5).

6 "It seems that some kind of court staffed primarily by locals, whether under the auspices of lords, communes, municipalities or the community of commoners, was the norm" (De Moor et al. 2002: 250).

7 Archival documents of the period take "communal" for denoting municipal meanings, while the Latin and Italian translation for commoners' assembly was influenced with *općina* as "universitas" (reflected back in Croatian usually as *univerzija*). More in Kale 2006: 242.

8 About *posoba* in Čoralić and Vrbanus 2013: 113.

communities with their own languages. The village of Lanišće came into possession of its territorial lands in 1832 and 1833, buying its rights from the state. The cadastre term denoting their possession is *seosko dobro* („village property") with the vernacular expressions of *komunjsko* (adjective) and *komunela* (noun). Collective rights over pastureland were an appropriate means in local sheep-herders communities, dissected by hamlets. There were sixteen of them in 1948, when they struggled against state appropriation (Katarinčić Škrlj 1996: 113). Today, they are organized in six villages with Lanišće as their administrative center.

After legal termination of the commons („skupno vlasništvo", i. e. „group property" under former property law), every village established its civil association for management of the common property („Udruga za upravljanje zajedničkom imovinom") in 1998.[9] They were supposed to delegate and represent local communities in legal matters, lacking specific regulations. Civil associations' leaders acted like former village officials (*župan*) and later politically elected presidents of local communities („mjesna zajednica" – the smallest administrative unit). The commons include buildings, as well, for example the church and the school building in Trstenik. With the abandonment of the dominant pasture economy, these new associations have been serving as village representatives in communications with the state forestry, and were acutely needed when this market enterprise discontinued paying for the tree trunks extracted from village forests. In the Yugoslavian period the state paid for tree trunks and coal, while villages paid their property tax. The forest fees from the period of 1998-2003 were used by civil associations for communal needs, such as repairs of churches and schools.

The civil associations eventually engaged in prolonged trials for establishing their forest utilization property rights. The associations from Račja Vas and Trstenik are additionally registered as private forest proprietors („šumoposjednik"). The role of civil associations is also important in the planning of wind turbine facilities approved by regional authorities. Local involvement in such planning is not just passive. According to the preliminary plans made by local civil associations, villages could act as co-investors with their capital share secured by forest mortgages. Another contemporary issue concerns hunting rights, now functioning without the participation and agreement of the local administrative unit or civil associations.

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9 Each one for villages of Lanišće, Dane, Brgudac, Trstenik, Račja Vas and Brest.

THE SECOND EXAMPLE: LUN, THE ISLAND OF PAG

Lun is a village situated at the northernmost tip of the island of Pag, where the so-called „lunjsko pitanje" („The Lun Problem", Crnković 1988) was a legal anomaly just partially dismantled after the final elimination of feudal types of land proprietorship after World War II. The village was founded by sheep-herders settled there by feudal masters from Rab. However, Lun villagers gradually broadened their economic activities by grafting wild olive trees. Grafting was forbidden because it was overstepping the basic feudal cultivation agreement with masters. When terminating his cultivation contract with villagers, a feudal master was obligated to pay a fair amount for property improvements. Such a regulation was the reason for frantic efforts invested in the dissuasion and blockade of commoners' additional cultivations upon tended land. By the end of the 19th century both commoners and aristocracy fell into a tight knot of obligations, unable to terminate their dependency even after the agrarian reforms authorized commoners to buy the lands they had been working.

The most complex pasture among Lun pastures was *Dudićka kunfina,* next to the Lun proper. There, inhabitants from the hamlet of Dudići (dozen of Badurina families nicknamed Dudići) were shepherding the livestock owned not by a sole feudal possessor, but by Rab city commune and all its members. A legal solution following the laws from Austrian and Yugoslav periods was impossible and the landscape remained undivided. The sole Adriatic forest of wild olive trees exists at *Dudićke krune* (next to the top of cliff, *krune*), and has been protected as a biological reserve since 1963, used only as sheep pasture. In such circumstances, villagers invented a multicellular drystone-walled sheepfold called „Dudićev osik", a landscape tool for flock management between grazing on the undivided, common pasture and daily milking of sheep owned by several families in Dudići.

Keeping an undivided flock on common pasture was called *skupnô* („doing together"). Everywhere else in Lun, villagers enclosed their individual parts of land and had changed from sheep-herders to olive-tree cultivators, but the land is still owned by the state. The distinction between Dudići and all other nearby pasturelands was obvious even in using a sling, because nobody else needed such a tool to direct their flock to wide-open spaces. Eventually, Lun earned a reputation for its multicentennial richly sculptured olive trees, and became a preferred tourist destination. Paths through the landscape were adapted for their new tourist uses, narrative signs were erected, and a reception building constructed. The EU-backed project was planned

by the olive-tree cultivators' cooperative and the city of Novalja, where Lun administratively belongs. After an incident over selling two multicentennial olive trees in 2010, an informal selling ban was agreed between inhabitants.

Recently, the descendants of the original olive tree cultivators changed their lawyers and their opinions wavered over suing the state in 2009, trying to obtain property rights to the land under their olive trees and thereby qualifying for new agricultural incentives offered by the EU. The local community is therefore divided in opinion towards suing the state, and more obviously, in actions towards the local authorities regarding the tourist management of their olive tree orchards. In Dudići, the process of property segmentation started with a state forestry enterprise. It currently advances slowly, due to the private costs that it brought.

THE THIRD EXAMPLE: THE ISLAND OF ŽIRJE

The third existing example of the littoral commons also stems out of historical sheep-herders' economy, situated at the island of Žirje near Šibenik. Žirje is located in the south of the island of Dugi Otok and the Kornati archipelago. During history it was important as an open sea military outpost controlling the Adriatic route. In communal economy Žirje had strictly regulated the vegetation regime because of the typical use of the outer islands as sources of lime. Lime kilns needed substantial masses of wood fuel, which caused pasture zoning in the late Middle Ages and early Modern Age. The use of landscape was communally regulated according to the types of grazing animals; a significant volume of lime was needed in the municipal transformation from a flamable wooden settlement to the more solid one built in stone. These processes lasted up to the Industrial Age, with commoners included as lime kiln masters and manual workers. In pastoral economy sheep husbandry was accordingly small and strictly regulated. A glance at the map of the island can vividly depict the central agricultural field zone (Polje): typically vineyards without grazing access, with adjacent extirpated karstic terrains of olive tree orchards, and the secluded part of the island with wide pastures and no individual enclosures.

The legal nature of this particular collective legacy originates from the 17th century, when the Venetian Republic gave both feudal lord rights and regal rights over the island to the Franciscans. This exceptional award recognized their merit in bringing over a vast

population from Bosnia to revive the coast that was severely hit by the plague, and to fill the ranks of borderland guards during the War of Candia. Due to this award, one of two Franciscan monasteries in Šibenik gained regal rights over the island that were normally reserved for the state. In the 19th century, when the agrarian reform made it possible, the villagers responded and the monks became willing to sell their rights because of the costs that were incurred by trials with commoners under their feudal and regal mastership. By that time villagers were gaining fish storages in Muna harbour. Also they started to exploit nearby coral sites. Therefore, in 1876 the villagers bought the property rights to their island (and the neighbouring islets, used as pastures), as well as the state rights.[10] The vernacular expression for this property is the adjective *seljansko* (property belonging to villagers, *seljani;* Kale 2009).

The best-known local episode from recent history is the intervention of the coastal artillery at Zvizdulje military post, which was organized to save Šibenik from a tank and naval blockade in September 1991. It occurred at the southern edge of the former pastureland that had been closed for any local use since the Crisis of Trieste after 2nd World War. The artillery post itself, originating from the Austro-Hungarian period, has never changed its legal owners – the villagers as a community of the descendants of the buyers from 1876. The cannons were therefore positioned on the commons. Until the Vienna War Archive is researched, one can only speculate that proprietary relationships were complex enough even at the end of 19th century to discourage the state authorities from expropriation. Military presence saved the landscape from uncontrolled saturation of tourist-driven installations that could have been situated in the nautically most attractive part of the island.

The island itself is practically depopulated and its community is nowadays mostly absent, using summertime as a springboard for a modest tourism economy. The reputation of a „private island" is being locally cherished as a legal argument, mostly respecting undivided wide parts of the island, with tolerance for small individual fragmentations needed for the building of secondary houses, also used as tourist apartments. Still, several initiatives are trying to gain wider access to the land in the most attractive places. Different collaboration and resistance strategies can be observed in legal processes, civil activities and small-scale entrepreneurship.

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10 Pasturelands often called *komunada* are regularly state property.

The first common trait is obviously economical: all presented examples derived from former pasturelands.[11] In hilly and windy Lanišće, wind turbines could replace part of former gains. Next to Lun and Novalja, one can nowadays visit Kolan where the best Croatian cheese is produced. Historical sheep-herders became olive oil producers, selling their products in the reception centre of the tourist path, leading through orchards and towards a concert amphitheatre and the multicentennial behemoths, all explained with instructive plaques. The third case, abandoned pastureland in the southern part of the island of Žirje seemed to enclose the attractive Stupica bay with its numerous nautical shelters, saved for aesthetic pleasure due to the camouflaged military presence of the past.

The second common trait concerns the communities themselves. All mentioned villages are now mostly depopulated, nearly empty in all the seasons except summer. At the same time, descendants and inheritors are no more simple village folk. They have remained sentimentally attached, reacting with skills gained in many alleys of life. During local festivities it is possible to meet former mayors, prominent entrepreneurs, scientists, journalists, artists, war heroes, priests, lawyers, even developers – people well aware of administrative procedures, many among them multilingual, routinely hosting foreign guests, and comparing their experiences and reflections. Also newcomers are helpful. They all contribute to the tapestry of the internal dynamics, concerned with the current state of their commons and aware of its new market perspectives. Unofficial communication and civil activism is also important because of destroyed documentation: archival deposits for Lanišće and Lun archives were destroyed by fire and rain, while Žirje documentation is dispersed. Historical studies about Lun and Žirje were written by clerics out of office duties (Badurina Dudić 2006, Soldo 1973).

Finally, all three cases represent isolates. Among Ćići communities in upland Istria you can hear that they do not share common Istrian identity denoted as *Istrijani*.[12] The peninsular elongation of Lun makes a symbolic island inside of bigger island. Žirje is the most

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11 Commons trait upon changed property can be recognized in Bjelopavlići community use of Sinjajevina and Štitovo summer pastures in Montenegro, even after administration borders had left them in another administrative unit (Ćirić-Bogetić 1966: 250).

12 Before democratic changes in 1990 *Istrijani* was socionym used for Istrian Italians, while the one used for regional identity was *Istrani* – now nearly obsolete.

distant permanently inhabited island in the Šibenik archipelago. Isolates address their resources carefully, through a number of strategies (Royle 2001: 60-62, 170). Such strategies are subject to change. The relationship with the state is the regular agency for change.[13] We cannot omit market as a basic denominator of vital opportunities in the commons either. Pasturelands encircled with lime kilns' remnants are attractive today because of their coastal strip, bays and beaches of an open sea island. The road to Lun used to be closed across the pasturelands in the past and there are no gates now. The wind regime represented a basis for cheese making, but now its measurements raise hopes for electricity rent in Ćićarija.

CONCLUSION

The coastal commons are rare and marginal in contemporary society. Each one presented here denotes specific legal anomaly, filtered through a number of unique regulatory circumstances. In Croatia, they are left without associated positive regulations. During the 1990s the lawmakers intended to force such legacy into simpler property institutions. Local communities reacted by civil means, denoting commons as treasures of collective identity, pride and culture along the process. Paradoxically, that enables the commons as cultural capital to engage with post-industrial market forces.

The commons are inherited today by a different kind of "commoners". In modern times of consumption, their guests could be compared with historic aristocrats. Inheritors are not just passive objects of inevitable social forces, just as Lun grafters were not. They actively reformulate their common capital and react to new possibilities. Among the most promising ones (through projects or subsidized investments) is the dialogue with the new high authorities of the European Union, either through the Common Agricultural Policy or through specific regulations towards the commons.

The commons represent a strenuous research issue. Burnt archives, dispersed documents and people engaging dislocated events at moments either rare or unexpected all contribute to a complex fieldwork. An appropriate approach should be executed with nuanced

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13 Some European examples are indicated in "The state and the commons" chapter in the concluding paper written by De Moor at al. 2002: 255-256.

multi-sited ethnography, backed by projects concerned specifically with the commons. Unfortunately, the demanding methodology leaves them at the margins of the research agenda.

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Communitarian Institutions in Trenta Valley

Peter Simonič

INTRODUCTION

The emergence, maintenance and disintegration of various collective, cooperative, communitarian management practices are examined in this article. I trace this stream inside different institutions (Douglas 1986). Households, neighbourhoods, villages, agrarian communities (commons), cooperatives, and tourist associations will be presented as persistent materialisation of the communitarian principle in the Trenta valley in the Slovenian Julian Alps. Persistence suggests that there was no clear historical break from a closed and collective to a rational and individualised society as sociology revealed (Tönnies, 2001 [1887]; Durkheim 1984 [1893]). Instead, everything is latent and total (Mauss 1966 [1925]; Graeber 2004) and most of it is (substantively, contextually) rational (Malinowski 1992 [1922]; Boas 1940). Socio-economic

and socio-environmental relation should rather be classified due to kinship and spatial distance of the people involved (Polanyi 2001 [1944], 1957; Sahlins 1972; Ingold 1993; Narotzky 2007) and their morality (Scott 1976; Widlok 2017). Continuous communitarian institutions in Trenta could also mean that small Alpine valley holds some special features for the maintenance of indirect democracy and far-reaching distribution of resources and incomes, i.e. biophysical conditions and demography (comp. Netting 1981; Viazzo 2015).

Trenta fair – a local market and religious holiday, will serve as "a ritual window", a symbolic code of transition in this Alpine community in the 20th Century.

ENVIRONMENT – ECONOMY - DEMOGRAPHY

Trenta is a long and narrow Alpine valley in the Slovenian Julian Alps. It stretches for about 20-25 kilometres from the southwest to the northeast, and covers about 8 to 10 square kilometres. Arable land is hard to find. Soil is shallow and covered with rock and stones, the terrain often too steep for agriculture. Survival in this surrounding has been quite demanding, depending on smallholdings, but mostly on the pasturing of goats and sheep, and forestry.

Following the peace treaty between the Venetian Republic and the Habsburg Empire in 1520, Trenta belonged to the latter (Panjek 2002; Komac 2003: 21). At that time, the plains of lower Bovec were already overpopulated, which triggered colonisation of the upper valleys. The process of Trenta settlement was also stimulated by the excavation of iron ore.

Historically, the Trenta Valley went through several timely uneven environmental, social, economic periods or strategies. The first strategy was hunting, gathering/forestry and transhumance of post-Neolithic inhabitants until the Middle Ages. The second distinctive and much shorter period (Hapsburgs' era after the 16th Century) still consisted of transhumance, small agriculture, forestry and hunting, but iron forging was also possible after ore discoveries in the Alps (Cole 1972). Discoveries attracted skilled ironworkers from Trentino (today Italy), which was also a part of the Habsburg Empire at that time (Komac 2003: 20). The third period is Austrian and the Austro-Hungarian from 19th to 20th Century with remarkable population growth. The last great narrative is characterised by huge emigrations of people from Trenta ("Trentars"; Slo: "Trentarji") to Slovenian, Italian

or German industrial centres and the emergence of eco-tourism in the valley during the 20th Century (Simonič 2013). Listed periods function as paradigms, exchanging various elements with each other and resetting them through institutions like inheritance and common pool management and ritual. Trenta is a bookcase on increased influence of urban centres since the 16th Century (Bovec, Gorica, Ljubljana, Trst, etc.), and their influence on the transformation of "distant places" into leisure and recreation destinations (see Southall 1998; Boissevain 1996). Locals have used various collective strategies to minimalize social disintegration and maintain some kind of social continuity.

For several centuries one of the basic sources of dairy was goats, which could feast without restrictions in the surrounding forests. Sheep were a subject of seasonal high and lowland pasture (transhumance). The *Law on Forests* in the middle of the 20th Century (Zakon o gozdovih, 1953) had a devastating impact on the local population. In local social memory, the prohibition of goat pasture in the woods marks a traumatic historical break in the agro-cultural model and consequent (demographic) decline. "First, the goats disappeared, then also the sheep," stated an older informant. Due to technological and political changes in the broader society, during the 1970s and 1980s, the valley sunk in apathy. Abandoned and devaluated properties were slowly sold to weekenders, mostly from central Slovenia (Vranješ 2006). Today, they already represent a majority (arr. 330 vocational owners and 230 permanent residents).

Marshall Sahlins (1972: 185-200) proposed a triple scheme of reciprocity. In his opinion, it was kinship or blood distance among people, which decided the quality of their relations: family or household is a setting of almost unconditional, generalised reciprocity. Further, into tribe and village, Sahlins saw "kinship based territorialities", the practice of which balanced reciprocity, trying to build long-term trust and belonging of place and community. The third type, the so-called negative reciprocity or market, is the typical attitude toward strangers. I will try to follow and evaluate Sahlins's classical theorem in the analysis of social life in Trenta.

HOUSEHOLDS

19th Century statistical data reveals that during that same century natality in the villages of Trenta and Soča was the biggest in the Bovec municipality, counting an average of 6 members per household (could

also be up to 15). The central village of Bovec counted an average of three persons per house at that time. Resident population in today's Trenta Valley is just about 1/10 or 1/15 of that in the middle of the 19th Century (comp. Abram 1907; Komac 2003: 41, 132; Statistični urad Republike Slovenije 2002). After the peasant liberation in 1848, many bought off properties, and some of them ended in debts or they lost their property entirely (Rutar 1889: 1580; Abram 1907; Komac 2003: 132). Facing limited natural and social conditions, many people left to work in Italian, German, Bosnian and even North-American forests and mines. Mortality was also still high: accidents among foresters and mountain shepherds were quite often; and less than half of their children reached the age of twenty in the middle of the 19th (Komac 2003: 146).

Approximately eight different family subsistence or income strategies evolved in the second half of the 20th Century. First, again agriculture, horticulture and pasture, but this time combined with tourism and trading of real estate (combined model, suitable only for a couple of larger families). The second strategy was daily commuting to industrial and administrative centres. The third was permanent migration to urban centres. The fourth was several local and seasonal jobs in crafts or the forest agency, natural park administration, guesthouses and cooperative shop, etc. The sixth strategy would be pensions or scholarships. The seventh was the selling of properties to weekenders, and the last permanent or seasonal tourism services and small enterprises.

The first possibility – surviving simultaneously with local resources like meadows, forests, animals, water, and destination – is appropriate only for a couple of remaining larger families. They function as small-family-farm-businesses. This model is work demanding for all the family members and varies due to yearly natural and socio-economic cycles in the valley. Two representatives of this model are the Jelinčič family from Soča and Pretner family from Trenta. The first household counts eleven members, the second six. Jelinčič owns 3-5 hectares of land and rents another 25 hectares from close or distant neighbours. Pretner has approximately 5 hectares and rents another 15. The first has around one hundred sheep, the second sixty. Jelinčič produces cheese, Pretner sausages; they sell the majority of their products to tourists during the summer season. Both fathers are important opinion-makers in "their part" of the valley.

Besides legislative brakes in traditional subsistence and post-war demands for industrial workers, farm and household reproduction in the valley was also challenged by children, who left for secondary and higher education in a greater number – one of the benefits of a

socialist welfare state. The majority of them left for ever. Consequently, "there are more funerals than marriages in the Trenta valley today", one might hear. Due to changes in land ownership and tourism destination development, higher property values increasingly determine the possibilities of younger residents establishing new households.

Technological changes in the second half of the 20th Century – like agricultural mechanisation, personal transportation, telecommunication, managerial reasoning, and ideology of progress have detached former agricultural households. People used to work together. In an old agricultural community, they were unable to survive without cooperation (harvest, woodcutting and rafting, shepherding, etc.). Help among people was more common in the closest gorges, kin or class, not among spatially and socially distant residents (comp. Polanyi 1957: 253). "Today, everyone has a chainsaw. One can cut down a full truck of wood, without needing anyone else," explained an older man. Infrastructure in Trenta today includes water supply, all kinds of machinery, asphalted main roads, Internet connections, frequent two cars per household, etc.

AGRARIAN COMMUNITIES (COMMONS)

The importance of free pasture for goats and sheep made pastoralists reluctant to the individual property of forests and mountain slopes. It would be hard to draw and maintain strict property limits for people and especially for herds. Territory was rather divided into several mountains (pasture and forestry) zones, and managed as land commons, each including around fifteen to twenty households.

Agrarian communities (Slo. "agrarne skupnosti") were formalised in the Austrian Empire at the beginning of the 19th Century to continue the rights of (pre)feudal parishes ("srenje"; Repič 2014: 39). They secured the right of exclusive usage to Alpine pastoralists inside the new state's legal framework. An informant recalled that *before the Second World War* there were eleven such communities in the Trenta valley. Each household owned a herd of approximately 200-300 sheep, and the whole valley counted up to 3000 sheep. Nevertheless, in the 19th Century, this number was considerably larger: in 1869, 357 houses in the valley possessed around ten thousand sheep and goats (Komac 2003: 41).

After the socialist nationalisation of common properties in 1947, agrarian communities re-appeared in 1994 with the *Law on*

establishment of local communities and returning of their property and rights (Ledinek Lozej 2013: 60-61). Today, there are four agrarian communities in the village Trenta (Trebiščina, Zajavor, Zapotok, and Action group of Trenta village), and another two similar communities in Lepena and Soča (Duplje and Plazi). Some of them rent parts of mountains (e.g. Duplje), and income is used by members and local community. Part of the earnings from annual purchase of 1000 to 3000 m3 of wood from the valley goes to the agrarian communities, who now again own fractions of forests. One of the informants explained that every indigenous villager has a right for a portion of wood, being a member of the agrarian community or not (comp. Widlok 2017).

Regardless of legal frames in the last couple of centuries, membership in these commons was guaranteed only to those men who inherited their birth address; entitlement to become a member of the community was strictly limited by primogeniture and the number of peers could not expand easily. It worked as a kind of "closed and homeostatic corporate community" (see Netting 1981). Commons ("srenje") – later Agrarian communities – were originally brotherhoods of patrilocal pastoralists. They took care of fair distribution of high pastures and measured carefully the success of each member: those with the most material advantage in the shape of milk and cheese had to repay their gains with additional work for common benefit (rebuilding roads and shelters, etc.). In the 20th Century and especially after the Second World War, when the majority of people in the Trenta valley abandoned transhumance, this kind of communal cooperation and control was economically redundant, yet left alive as a traditional value system and behavioural code of the inhabitants (culturally distinctive to the values and practices of weekenders; Vranješ 2017; comp. Netting 1981). In the meantime, the inheritance pattern in the valley changed from firstborn heir to divided succession among descendants.

COOPERATIVES

In the 1950's, the first socialist state cooperative was established in the village of Soča to collect and buy cheese and lamps from shepherds. It only lasted for several years, as pasture was already vanishing.

Development Cooperative Soča-Trenta was established by locals in 1990's for the purpose of building the hydroelectric power plant Krajcarca. The membership fee was five hundred Deutsch Marks (approx. 250 Euros), and forty hours of voluntary work. The plant now

earns about 400.000 euros per year. The Development Cooperative also holds concession for parking slots on the mountain pass Vršič and owns a snack bar Kamba in the village of Log. Incomes are invested in other activities and job opportunities, most recently a cooperative shop in the village of Trenta (since 2013), which is quite an important acquisition for *Trentars* – people still distant to commercial centres (Bovec), especially during the winter. The Development Cooperative also plans to help youngsters in resolving their housing problems (due to increased property values).

We can see how the economic basis of inhabitants noticeably changed during the 20th Century, but communitarian patterns of property managements (Netting 1981), (re)distribution (Polanyi 2001) and sharing (Widlok 2017) remained important. Their form has adapted to new political and legal frames, yet local essence of inputs and expectations appeared similar in agricultural and later touristic society. "Kinship based territorialities" have always been an important frame of Trenta's communitarian organisations and their members.

TOURIST ASSOCIATIONS AND NETWORKS

Tourism is the most common subsistence strategy in Trenta today. It is also based on family properties, registered officially as individual, family, or farm enterprises. Many inhabitants sell (market) the valley as a destination, not as an object of plant and land cultivation, pasture, or excavation of iron ore: the emerging ecosystem of 19th-20th Century described above became a distinctive cultural landscape, ambient to experience the Alps.

Scientific and adventurous curiosity of the Alps has set the path to future development of Trenta as tourist destination. Reports on Bovec and Trenta multiplied in the second half of the 19th Century, in times of the invention of nationalism, leisure and spa. Štefan Kociančič published several articles on Bovec and Trenta in 1854 in Zagreb; Baron Karl Czoernig von Czernhausen included notes on Bovec in *Das Land Görz und Gradisca: mit Einschluss von Aquileja,* 1873. Morelli di Schönfeld wrote *Istoria della Contea di Gorizia,* 1855–56; Simon Rutar published *Zgodovina Tolminskega* in 1882. Later contributions included brilliant Josip Abram (1907), and Viktor Dvorský (Studie ku Geografii Slovanských Sídel: Trenta, 1914) (Marušič 2002; Komac 2003; Kozorog 2009). The dawn of the 20th Century was "a golden age of discoveries in the Julian Alps," and promoter Dr. Julius Kugy

became "a father of Slovenian alpinism« (Wraber 1980; Komac 2003; Šaver 2005). In this respect, the Triglav National Park (1996) just institutionalised an already existing web of *natural sciences* (geology, botanics, and health), *national ideology* and heritage (Alpine myth of pristine culture and Slovenian evangelisation) and *market* (tourism). In the longer term, this also led to a change in land ownership in the valley: its "abandoned", "distant" and certainly peaceful surroundings started to attract Slovenian city dwellers, among them many respected intellectuals, politicians, etc., who visited the place and eventually bought property there (see Celec 2014).

The nearby Alpine centre Bovec and the ski resort Kanin became state development priority in the 1970s-1980s. The municipality and the ministry strongly encouraged daily arrivals of people from Trenta to work in this new resort, offering them in return quite a high material standard of living, compared to their previous agro-cultural subsistence. Let me underline, that Bovec and Slovenia also practiced Yugoslavian socialist self-management at that time. A great number of people from Trenta became members of different professional groups outside their valley, learning alongside the skills of tourism marketing and arrangements. Local success in tourism (private accommodation and services, also during socialism) encouraged many people from the region to support the transition to a market economy in the 1980's, wrote ethnologist Dunja Miklavčič Brezigar (1988).

Two tourist associations are active in the valley today: Trenta and Soča-Lepena. The second emerged in 2005, as some (returning, pensioned) residents from Soča and Lepena felt they deserved bigger share of investment in the local tourism planning. Latent rivalry between villages was recorded during the research, yet competition never seriously hindered social relations among the people (marriages, masses, infrastructure, etc.). The entrance point of the Triglav National Park – Infocenter Trenta – offered a great advantage to the village of Trenta in the 20th Century, while the village of Soča was most important in the 19th Century (post, school, more households, etc.).

Today, tourists can choose between six camps, twenty-five apartment and room providers, three tourist farms, and seven mountain lodges. Facilities are completely sold-out in July and August. There are also four inns, two snack bars, and two congress halls. The number of daily Trenta visitors or passersby reaches up to 250.000 per year, I was told in park management office.

Among measures to stop emigration in the 1980s, a youth club was approved in an old building on the site of later TNP Infocentre

in Trenta. Youths, predominantly from the village of Trenta, could socialize, practice self-management and plan various social and cultural events. The current layer of active residents in the valley is very thin, counting maximum 10-20 people and many of them used to be members of that club. The majority of inhabitants are over 65 years of age and prefer to stay at home or offer sporadic help. A small group of organisers uses different institutions to support their development projects: cultural societies, tourist associations, hunting societies, peasant women associations, municipality, TNP, church, etc.

TRENTA FAIR AND ST. ANA

The Trenta fair (locally "Trentarski senjem") is a great indicator of the structural changes in the valley. On the level of performers and their backstage social drama (Turner 1967; Boissevain 1996), as well as on the level of symbols (Cohen 1998 [1984]) and spatial and temporal structure of the "ritual" (Gluckman 1940), we can notice a shift from an agro-cultural (transhumant) to an eco-touristic type of communitarianism. We can also identify major state interventions in that process with the blocking or stimulating of various practices and customs.

Traditionally, up to the first half of the 20th Century, the Trenta fair -Trentarski senjem - was held on 8th September, the Nativity of the Virgin Mary. The fair was intended to trade breeding livestock, the most important source of subsistence at that time. After the First World War and Austrian defeat, the new Italian authorities forbade gatherings and public life of Slavic inhabitants in general. Fascism after 1923 was especially harsh in this respect (Dolenc 1988). Political pressure hindered the exchange of livestock. Another historical misfortune regarding the fair was socialist aversion to religious holidays after the Second World War. Exchange of animals was again influenced by political ideology.

A hundred years later, the Trenta fair is alive again, yet different. It is now a series of cultural events, including art workshops, concerts, exhibitions, hikes, etc. The greatest effort to "revive" the Trenta fair was made by a younger local couple. The first modern version of the fair appeared in 1996, in the same year as the Infocentre of Triglav National Park was opened. The plateau in front of the Infocentre offered an excellent setting for public events. Today, the Triglav National Park is actually host of the fair. This traditional event is used for social integration of the valley and as a tourist attraction.

THE PURPOSE OF COMMUNITARIAN INSTITUTIONS IN TRENTA

I have tried to show how collective initiatives were present in many spheres of social life in the Trenta Valley: in households and kinship, as inter-neighbourhood help in gorges and villages, in pastoralist ownership structure (transhumance, agrarian communities), cooperatives, tourist associations and (traditional) festivities they stage. Communitarianism is a historical fact, appearing in different times, shapes, and under different names, but constant in this Alpine community.

We can identify with Hardin's idea (1968) that the management of commons is related to demography: small communities, dependent and scare natural resources (and on breeding animals) are likely to perform inclusive and egalitarian behaviour, and we may doubt about their eco-logical performance: brotherhoods themselves did not prevent the huge deforestation in the 19th Century. Besides, after decades of emigration and the individualisation of properties and services, many former plains are overgrown, and the microclimate is cooling down. Local communitarianism and egalitarianism certainly have not secured natural or social sustainability or durability in the 19th Century, yet we should not neglect the broader political and economic pressures on the local management and resources.

The State was namely always a decisive element in local decision-making (Hapsburg, Austrian-Hungarian, Yugoslavian, and Slovenian). It is not the same if the State and markets are interested in iron ore or wood, or they prefer to see the valley as a recreational resort. The Trenta community and institutions were part of "imagined" social solidarity, reciprocity and redistribution: monarchism, nationalism, socialism and self-management, social welfare state, nature protection, etc. Crossings between community and states (as "societies of exchange and redistribution"; Graeber 2011) could be devastating. Yugoslavian *Law on Forests* (1953) and later *Law on Triglav National Park* (1981; Peterlin 1985) therefore mark two milestones of transition from an agro-cultural to an eco-touristic social organisation and the branding of Trenta. The first law disabled the past and the second law codified the new future of the valley.[14]

I prefer to frame a series of presented organisations in Trenta as communalisms, since they practiced indirect democracy in a small

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14 Along with interventions of the state, other stresses have made life in Trenta harder: earthquakes, hunger and poverty, dangers of travel and work in the mountains and forests (Rutar 1889).

and sharply defined geographical and social space (Alpine valley and primogeniture/kinship). Like states, communal local institutions have been interested in wood, but they have also been interested in pasture, water, and recently in local youth. Many *vital resources* of the Trenta valley became a subject of various historical "commons" (comp. Bollier 2014).

After the incorporation of the valley in the Triglav National Park (1981), Trenta's communalisms collided with the ecological turn in contemporary society (comp. Pálsson 1996: communalism as the third mode of political economy of environment, connected to "deep ecology"). Eco-tourism represents a new front stage synthesis (Boissevain 1996): tourism facilities are actually individually owned yet coordinated through local tourist associations. Behind this public appearance of services and experiences, commons in the shape of agrarian communities or cooperatives still take care of (traditional) shared resources. It would be certainly inappropriate to describe village life in Trenta as a case of mechanical solidarity (Durkheim 1984 [1893]), with inert rules and institutions. Historical adaptations of the communitarian principle shows quite the opposite, that people from Trenta used all possible knowledge and consciously manipulate available material and symbolic resources (biophysical environment, cultural heritage, spa, etc.). The organic division of labour has been familiar to them since at least the 16th Century, and later under the Hapsburg absolutist state.

I would like to bring forward another idealisation or simplification of communitarian institutions: overlapping of theoretical/ideological and practical/factual equality. Ancient herders' commons were *fraternities* with common possessions in forests and mountains. A small group of people, mostly men, also manages contemporary institutions (tourism society, cooperative, and agrarian communities) (comp. Mauss 1966: 63; Godelier 1986 [1982]; Narotzky 2007). About twenty "younger inhabitants", mostly men (10 percent of the valley population, average age 30-40) are responsible for different institutions, public life, and development strategies. Knowledge and power *of* and *in* various communitarian institutions has never been equally distributed among members of these village communities. Additionally, social hierarchies in commons corresponded with other individual possessions of a member – and, of course, his/her family lineage in the valley.

Today, there are not many traces of market relations between members of the Trenta society, or at least they are not preferable. One can notice "generalised reciprocity" among family members and

balanced reciprocity inside all described communitarian institutions ("kinship-based territorialities"). Market relations (in the continuum toward so-called "negative reciprocity"; Sahlins 1972) are oriented toward strangers: tourists, trekkers, weekenders, forest service, municipality and state, etc. (comp. Sahlins 1972: 191-204; Vranješ 2017). In this sense, the local subsistence ethics still cherishes communitarian management and (re)distribution of basic resources, even though in the 20th Century inhabitants was severely disrupted by politics, law, war, emigrations, many new owners, etc. "Thus, the argument runs, the more communal the village structure is, the easier it is for a village to collectively defend its interest." (Scott 1976: 242). These structures address biological, material and ideological aspects of social reproduction (from forest and goats to ritual and myth).

Communitarian institutions have different titles and face different historical challenges. I think we must study them together as various socio-historical formations of communitarian or communal morality. Spatial or biophysical limitations (Alpine valley) and demography (small population) makes it easier for us to acknowledge and describe these connections.

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Co-Producing Participatory Guarantee Systems – Limits and Potentials

Silvia Contessi and Cristina Grasseni

INTRODUCING GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES FOR LOCAL PROVISIONING

The last five years have seen the impact of global financial crises come to a peak in Europe. As the Euro zone trembles and the economies of Southern Europe grind to a virtual halt, scholarly interest in alternative provisioning methods and the solidarity economy movement is building. At the same time, policymakers wonder whether alternative food networks (such as Community Supported Agriculture schemes) might be scaled up to provide a viable model of food sovereignty, scholars of political activism debate whether such programs constitute a truly post-capitalist social movement, and philosophers consider whether such economic behaviour is morally grounded or is to be dismissed as the latest feel-good foodie fad. Diverse social and economic

actors converge on food re-localization, including a wide palette of provisioning activists, from Slow Food to seed-saving groups, from religiously motivated radicals to affluent and discriminating buyers. They creatively fill the space left void by global food systems, which are accused of justifying collective imaginaries of pending dooms by systematically withdrawing relevant information in exchange for marketable sound-bites.

Grassroots initiatives for local provisioning are proliferating, and have been identified as a social movement for a "new economy" (Alperovitz 2012). In their majority, they focus on alternative food networks (though increasingly also on non-food provisions such as clothes, shoes, detergents etc.; or on access to land, energy, insurance, and credit). Several groups and networks are growing, often without reciprocal knowledge or coordination. In particular, 'Alternative Food Networks' and 'Civic Food Networks' have been read as novel socio-economic grassroots circuits that experiment both reflectively and practically with the food system (Forno, Graziano 2014, Goodman, Dupuis 2002, Grasseni 2013, Renting et al. 2003, 2012). In particular, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in the United States, the French *Associations pour le maintain d'une agriculture paysanne* (AMAP), and the GAKs (*Grupos Autogestionados de Konsumo*) in Spain directly sell farming produce to their membership, sometimes employing agroecologic models and seed-saving, often – but not always - in the name of practicing alternative forms and models of the economy (such as Solidarity Economy, Economy of the Common Good, or Degrowth Economy).

In September 2012, the theme of "De-Growth" provided a provocatively counter-intuitive focus to the national assembly of Italy's Solidarity Purchase Groups, a network of critical consumers that pledge to purchase collectively as many goods as possible directly from producers and in *solidarity with them* (Grasseni 2014). In the run-up to the conference, the Italian Ethical Bank magazine, Valori (values), devoted a special issue to *The Forthcoming Middle Ages* (Baiocchi 2012). The controversial cover story upheld "forced degrowth" as a politically viable scenario and profiled alternative food networks as a new dark age, characterized by more Internet surfing and less gasoline-guzzling travel, greener technology and more localized economies. With fewer and more modest salaries available, female unwaged work (the publication suggested) could be productively returned to homesteading, traditional self-provisioning, and seasonal harvesting. This greener patriarchal society would be based on autarchy, a return to locality, and ultimately an extremely

conservative reinvention of both family and community. This journalistic stunt summarizes the ambivalent promise that alternative provisioning networks embody.

In Italy, faced by the environmental, financial, and social unsustainability of the global economy, provisioning activism is actually moving beyond consumers' ethical choices, which have been interpreted as a "political consumerism" informing a variety of lifestyle choices that may include vegetarianism, preference for organic food and ethically branded goods, or the Fair Trade circuit (Stolle et al. 2005). Critiques include the recognition that such role of "consumer-citizens" (Mol 2009) actually entails a great deal of consumer deskilling, and advocates more engagement through "civic agriculture" (Lyson 2004) or "food justice" (Alkon and Agyeman 2011).

A burgeoning interest for *urban food gardens* also falls within this framework, with various motivations: increasing the sustainability of urban food procurement, improving urban health with more fresh foods, and seeking religiously or culturally appropriate foodstuffs (Cangelosi 2013). This can facilitate or induce communities of practice exchanging experience, seeds, advice or help. In Europe and beyond, urban food gardens continue to be important forms of family sustenance.[1] Urban food gardening is increasingly looked at by municipal administrations as a way to encourage active citizenship and social cohesion as well as to make urban food procurement greener. In Italy, the municipality of Turin (a city of about 900,000 inhabitants in the middle of a wider urban area of more than 2 million inhabitants) is encouraging collective management of the city's allotments, by making it mandatory that only associations of citizens (rather than private individuals) can bid for access to city allotments.[2] Even in smaller cities, municipal administrations are increasingly interested in urban food gardens. For example in Bergamo (Lombardy) a new regulation has been issued in 2016 to lease 18 small parcels of publicly owned land to citizens or associations who wish to cultivate it – binding them to specific modes of cultivation.[3] On the spur of Milan's 2015 Universal Exhibition devoted to the topic *Feeding the Plant* an "urban food policy pact" has been signed by one hundred world-cities.

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1 As for example in Nairobi, Kenya https://nairobiplanninginnovations.com/2015/12/23/the-case-for-more-urban-farming-in-nairobi/ (last accessed 13.04.2016 but also and commonly in post socialist Poland: see Giedych, 2013).

2 See the regulation at http://www.ortiurbanitorino.it. This has stimulated some projects for collectively managed, open food gardens (*OrtiAperti*).

3 See the regulation at http:*www.comune.bergamo.it › Regolamenti.*

Fluid alliances of social, economic, and institutional actors are being read as instances of new economic sovereignty, social resilience, or inclusiveness – exercised through alternative provisioning. This follows a long anthropological tradition of understanding economic practice as embedded in relationships (Gudeman 2012, Polanyi 1968). In Italy, Solidarity Purchase Groups and Solidarity Economy Districts (Grasseni 2013) coexist with the cooperative model (Borzaga and Defourny 2004). The Ireland and UK-born Transition Network fosters reskilling and self-sufficiency since 2006, to tackle climate change and peak oil, showcasing Totnes and Bristol successes. In Germany, both a 'Solidarity Agriculture' (SolidarischeLandwirtschaft) movement and the Transition Movement are present (the latter with 142 initiatives), sometimes synergizing with the Austrian "economy of common good" (Felber 2010). In France, where Europe's first minister for social and solidarity economy was appointed in 2013, the grassroots agro-food networks AMAP are debating scaling-up (Dubuisson-Quellier 2014).

SOME EXAMPLES FROM FIELDWORK

Among documented cases of alternative provisioning moving beyond "ethical consumption" are Sicilian Solidarity Purchase Groups and anti-mafia activists joined to buy-cott (namely buying preferentially) "mafia-free" products (Forno, Gunnarson 2010). The UN Research Institute for Social Development petitions scholarship on such "social and solidarity economies" as models for socio-environmental resilience (UNRISD 2012). To gain a sense of how fast growing this type of provisioning activism is, Bergamo University ran a first census of active groups of solidarity purchase in the Bergamo area (a province of about 1 million inhabitants) in 2010, and mapped about 30 such groups. In 2011 we ran a second mapping effort and identified more than 60 active groups. About one thousand groups were censused nationally, but we mapped about 450 in Lombardy alone (a region of about 10 million inhabitants out of Italy's 60 millions).[4]

However, there is currently no single master narrative for how alternative provisioning should work. The common understanding is that provisioning activism is particularly popular during economically

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4 This was part of a collaboration among a developing network of solidarity purchase groups and CORES LAB, a research group on sustainable economies co-funded with sociologist Francesca Forno and economist Silvana Signori at Bergamo University.

troubled times. The media underline how it allows families to secure quality food at affordable prices, providing networks of mutual help amongst peers, while simultaneously supporting proximal producers. Such groups can be difficult to count because they tend to be informal, proliferating at the grassroots level but keeping very much "under the radar". This poses a number of questions about how actually transformative they are in the context of regional economies and whether they can have an impact on policy-making in rethinking global food systems. Ethnographic evidence shows how laborious it is to coordinate amongst different groups and across diverging political sensibilities, both at local and at national level (Grasseni 2013).

Increasingly though, networks of provisioning activists understand themselves as a social movement. There are two international networks of solidarity economy and of community-supported agriculture - RIPESS and URGENCI - that overlap and converse on many topics. This is just one manifestation of how specific driving themes and shared repertoires cross-cut many different activist networks. For example, as explained in the incipit, in September 2012 the theme of "De-Growth" was the focus of the national assembly of Italy's Solidarity Purchase Groups. These phenomena strive towards a new "econo-sociality" (Gibson-Graham, Roelvink 2010) that would seem to thrive on the re-localization of supply, on face-to-face relationships as a return to reciprocity and the gift as basic movers of economic transactions, and by relying on self-education and communication as important aspects of provisioning. While applauding such aspirations, ethnography unveils a variety of structural and social impediments to realizing such goals in practice. Mapping oneselves is key not only to creating local economic circuits but to achieving a critical mass for political representation. Nevertheless, it is unclear whether GAS provisioning activism is actually building up into "consciously formed associations with the goal of bringing about change in social, economic, or political sectors through collective action" (Stevenson et al. 2009). An apt example comes from the uneasy relationship that GAS has with policy-makers and politics in general (Grasseni 2014b).

Promising qualitative research has gone as far as transnationally comparing "civic food networks" (Renting et al. 2012) as catalysts for novel governance. Among these are community-supported agriculture schemes that use participatory certification, a self-certification device ideated by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM 2011). The solidarity economy movement in Italy is complex and multi-faceted (Grasseni 2013), but we can consider the participatory certification as one of the most advanced attempts of the

solidarity economy movement in contemporary Italy to build 'networks of networks' and to coalesce the myriad of Solidarity Purchase Groups (GAS) that organize networks of family for responsible consumption into a higher-order project, which would articulate and mobilize discourse and practice through collaboration with local farmers to effect a real impact on local economies. The participatory guarantee project *Per una pedagogia della terra* (For a pedagogy of the land) unites organic farmers and members of Solidarity Purchase Groups in the Lombard provinces of Como, Varese and Monza Brianza. The goal of the project is to establish a partnership between producers and consumers whereby the consumers recognize the quality of the produce through a *Participatory Guarantee System* (PGS).[5] In other words, crop quality is collegially certified following the same standards and criteria as organic agriculture, as regulated by national and European law, but without the intervention of a third-party certifier.

PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEMS AS GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES FOR LOCAL PROVISIONING: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Silvia Contessi has focussed in particular on *soil* as a key element of these experimentations, which can be analysed from the point of view of a professional vision (Goodwin 2003). Soil has come to the fore in recent news about global land grabbing, but it has always been a key factor for the politics of *agro-business* – in particular, soil quality or environmental degradation should, but not always is, normatively defined. For example in Italy the law does not regulate soil quality for agricultural use (Contessi 2014). Soil is a complex system (Haussmann 1964, 1986, 1992) whose knowledge is necessary for multiple disciplines and practices: forestry, agronomy, viticulture, urban planning, and archaeology, building engineering and environmental management. Nevertheless, in common sense language soil is associated with dirt (the common word for soil in American English is in fact *dirt*), while in fact all food depends on soil and its interaction with water and seeds. Do alternative food practices change this disconnect?

A preliminary answer can come from ethnographic analysis of the Lombard PGS project (Contessi 2015) from both a technical and

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5 Following the model and protocols provided by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements: see http://www.ifoam.bio.

anthropological point of view. Contessi argues that *both* 'traditional' organic certification systems *and* participatory guarantee systems are lacking knowledge measures and intervention capacity with regard to soil pollution, which in northern Italy, as elsewhere, is a very real condition. For example, organic certification stresses all the practices through which soil fertility can be maintained and focuses on reducing chemical substances such as synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, synthetic plant protection products and biocides, while a chemical inspection of the soil is left to self-control. Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) adopt the organic production protocol from the law, and thus reproduce this veritable blind spot. PGS articulate relationships of trust and knowledge exchange between producers and consumers, which can facilitate both social and environmental resilience (where by resilience we take its most common interpretation as capacity to withstand the shock of change). However, both in traditional and in alternative organic certification systems, soil contamination consistently eludes the field of vision of both third-party and participatory certifiers.

In particular, in the PGS case studies by Contessi the preference for organic and local food is not founded upon environmental or agronomic expertise. This is unfortunately in no way an exception. Short-chain organic food can also be produced in contaminated land, or with polluted water (Contessi 2015: 107-112). Even social agriculture (namely working in the fields with disadvantaged workers) has been observed to be carried out in contaminated areas (Contessi 2015: 113-115).

However, it is precisely from a social point of view that the Lombard PGS is significantly innovative. It connected three existing DES – Districts of Solidarity Economy – in Como, Varese and Monza-Brianza, bringing their engagement to a further level of maturity. Together they elaborate an independent model of certification that critiques agricultural standardization. Taking example from the Brazilian network Ecovida, they nevertheless differed from it, since the Brazilian project was devised by a network of producers while the Lombard project was initiated, entirely organized and carried out by a network of consumers. At its outset in 2011, the project involved 16 farmers (namely 11 vegetable and fruit growers and 5 animal breeders) and the members of the Solidarity Purchase Groups involved in the three DES. The organization involved a members' assembly, three local committees, as well as *Gruppi di visita* (inspection groups) and a guarantee committee (*Commissione di Garanzia*), both including volunteers from the producers and consumers stakeholders as well as an agronomist. While inspection groups carried out on-field visits, the guarantee committee evaluated the reports from the visits and authorized the certification.

The project's documentation included a Charter of values, a Declaration of intents which the producer signs to become member of the system, a Protocol of organic vegetable cultivation and a Visit's guidebook to structure the field inspections. At the time of fieldwork, a protocol for animal husbandry and its Visit's guidebook had also been drafted. Drafting and discussing these documents was an important element of the working group's activity: the rules they codified served the purpose of making explicit in which direction this project wanted to go with self-certification, and their deliberation aided the group's internal cohesion. The field visits were then a concrete opportunity for the consumers involved to get to know the reality of farming first-hand and to acquire a more technical awareness of agronomic language and practices. It should be noted how the characteristics of this project were the informality and accessibility of both the language and the procedures involved: the meetings, the field visit reports and the committee's evaluations were made available to all members of the project (and to the anthropologists following it). Similarly, the field inspections were structured in such a way that it was the farmer who leads the visiting group showing the rationale of his/her work, instead of being questioned by the visitors to check punctual normative requirements.

The philosophy underlying the field visit is thus that of a knowledge exchange: the visiting group *learns* from the farmer what he/she does, so that *together* they can deliberate what might need changes or adjustments. This control mechanism is founded on the assumption of reciprocal trust and in particular on the sincerity of the producer. Contessi's 3-year long observation of the PGS circuit thus confirms Grasseni's fieldwork with Solidarity Economy networks, namely that knowledge-socialization, face-to-face meetings and personal trust are the building blocks of this organization. However, reciprocity and trust are both the potential and the limits of the PGS system. Trust can be an ambivalent mode of knowledge-sharing. For example, field inspections do not have the objective of detecting specific problems in a punitive logic. Personal knowledge of the actors involved in the system can and does determine how the field visits are conducted and how favourable the determinations of the guarantors are. While this can be commendable in the sense of supporting local farmers or appreciating the good will of social enterprises, it can also deter from the objectivity of the evaluation. In one case for example it appeared that the farmer being inspected had used bean seeds that had been pre-treated with Thyram (this is a standard plant protection product used in seed treatment) instead of organic seeds as per the cultivation protocol. The

inspection committee appreciated the honesty of the farmer and accepted this as a mistake that would not be repeated; so did the certifying committee (Contessi 2015: 192-194).

Thus trust brings producer and consumer closer, but this reciprocal support does leave some leeway for tampering with the standards of the food which is ultimately consumed by the network's members. On the other hand, the very flexibility of the protocol allowed making room for liminal producers who would not otherwise have benefited of any quality certification. Similarly, when a lack of volunteers brought to a standstill in the field visits, these could be rescheduled in such a way as to continue with the project instead of discontinuing it. All these adjustments were communicated and shared within the group, so that the organizational hurdles and the need to expand resources were also socialized – which ultimately led to the PGS system being expanded to other provinces in Lombardy, applying for additional third-party funding.

Similarly to PGS, urban food gardens represent a promising field of future research attention. Their micro scale includes important dimensions of sociability both in urban and peri-urban areas. However, in these heavily urbanised contexts, public and private land is exposed to illegal waste disposal practices, the deliberate interment of dangerous waste, pollution from sewage and leaks, adjacency to ex petrol stations or dismantled industries, heavy traffic, carbon emissions, cement and tarmac covering, or use of herbicides in parks and roadsides. Each of these impacts the environment with specific contaminants including heavy metals, hydrocarbons, particulate and fine dust, solvents, volatile organic compounds and chlorinated compounds. To this we should add industrial emission, which easily moves across space. Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) are a group of toxic chlorinated compounds that resist chemical, biological and biochemical degradation and thus accumulate in the food chain (they *bio-accumulate*), including pesticides such as Lindane, Aldrin, Dieldrin, DDT, Mirex and other industrial products such as PCB, Hexabromobiphenyle, with their undesirable sub-products Polycyclic Hydrocarbons, Dioxins and Furans. The Unintentional Persistent Organic Pollutants(U-POPs), which originate from metal works combustions, and waste combustion are being studied for their effects on health as they (together with POPs) are fat-soluble and accumulate in both vegetable and animal fats, thus bio-magnifying their presence in the animal and human food chains (Spezzano 2004). These challenges are currently overlooked both by professional operators working in conventional agriculture and in neo-rural food activism.

We suggest that this awareness is currently lacking from many alternative economic models that currently invest on community-supported agriculture movements and on local food in particular (whether through urban gardens or alternative food networks and participatory guarantee systems). However, the multiplicity and variety of experimentations currently undertaken offer many opportunities for enhancing socio-environmental resilience (Adger 2000, Folke 2006). Even though they do not do better than conventional agriculture in facing up to the environmental challenges of urban agriculture, these models at least posit food quality as a condition for rethinking the food system and would thus benefit from increased awareness of its technical aspects. If food sovereignty and health go hand in hand with citizens' participation in solidarity economies, more space can be devoted both in research and in dissemination to a social understanding of the technology of food production, which is increasingly dependent on our understanding of our inhabited environment as a complex and delicately balanced system.

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Cooperative Practices: Survival Strategies, "Alternative" Movements or Capitalism Re-Embedding?

HOSARALMO Collective[1]

COOPERATIVE PRACTICES IN A CAPITALIST WORLD

Cooperative practices are the backbone of social reproduction in human society. Notwithstanding neoclassical discourse - accompanying the propagation of capitalist market economy - has overshadowed the importance of these practices. The enthronement of the 'homo economicus' disguises the existence of other kinds of logics, practices and subjectivities which challenge the very axioms of this scientific

1 We have decided to publish this paper as HOSARALMO Collective in order to avoid the competitive academic guidelines and maintain certain coherence with the contents of the research. It is a pen name shared by the four authors with the same representativeness for all of them: Patricia Homs, Diana Sarkis Fernández, Raquel Alquézar and Núria Morelló.

paradigm: maximization of profit, individual choice and competition for scarce resources.

Nevertheless, human history is full of examples where reciprocity, cooperation and/or solidarity are at the core of economic practices aimed at ensuring the livelihood of the people and, in more abstract terms, the reproduction of life. Economic anthropology has deeply analysed this topic, questioning the reification of the "rational man" and underlining the existence of other logics of exchange and circulation different from "competition" in the so-called "free market".

Two prominent figures of economic anthropology, Mauss (2005) and Polanyi (1994), focused their studies on reciprocity, redistribution, communitarian systems, non-capitalistic markets and the historic evolution of the capitalist system. Different studies on the coexistence of different moral frames, rationalities and forms of relationship between economic praxis have been carried out by authors such as Gudeman (2001), Gibson-Graham (2008) and Laville (2013). Other authors, such as Godelier (1967), Narotzky (2004), Narotzky and Smith (2010), Roseberry (1989), and Lipietz (2002) have continued this debate, highlighting the conflict between opposed historical economic logics, as well as the dialectic relationship between this conflict and the accumulation of capital. Moreover, Federici (2013), a radical Marxist feminist, proposes to understand the cooperation and solidarity amongst the subalterns classes as forms of resistance to capitalist subsumption.

From an ethnographic perspective, we have Lomnitz's (1975) classic study on the survival strategies of the excluded sectors in Mexico City, or Stack's (1975) ethnographic work on afro-descendant poor neighbourhoods in the USA, which showed how reciprocity and exchange networks between kin and neighbours constituted real economic forms driven by logics of collective and moral obligations, solidarity and mutual support to make a living.

Our contribution to this long debate considers the creative and conflictive dimensions of practices documented in the current social context from an ethnographic approach. In this context, while the ongoing capitalist restructuring in terms of accumulation/dispossession (the so-called crisis) strengthens many forms of cooperation which are essential for people's daily lives, certain institutional discourses celebrate this expansion and claim a "re-embedding" of economy (see for instance the United Nations literature on sustainable

development).[2] On the other hand, other organisms such as the World Bank have incorporated the concept of social capital in their economic analysis in order to highlight the importance of social networks in 'fighting' poverty.[3] In this sense, in the last years we are observing an institutional recovery of "extra-economical" aspects in order to integrate poor and excluded populations. More recently, even the World Bank is trying to integrate the *social and solidarity economy* approach in its interventions.

At the same time, in the terrain of theoretical discussions, the epistemological paradigm of economic pluralism (Gibson-Graham 2008) tend to confront the neoclassic perspective by representing cooperative practices as "other economies" or "diverse economies" which coexist with the capitalist world. In this article we interrogate some of these perspectives from two approaches:

1) Are these practices merely reactive and functional responses to the growing precarity and the shirking of responsibility by the state?

2) Can the different forms of cooperation that emerge from unequal positions be standardized under academic and institutional rubric of "diverse economies" (Gibson-Graham 2008) or "plural economies" (Laville, 2013)?

We will respond to these questions through the analysis of two ethnographic cases in Catalonia (Spain). The first case examines the discourses and practices that emerge in local food provisioning networks around economic exchanges between the consumers' food cooperatives and the small-scale organic food producers. The second one examines a financial cooperative, Coop57, and its organization structured by values that promote labour relations based on the principles of autonomy and participation of workers in the production of goods and services.

We defend that none of these cases can be understood solely in terms of mere survival strategies in times of crisis, neither in terms of a functional response to institutional discourses trying to integrate these practices in the dominant socioeconomic structure. Finally, we argue that these cooperative examples actually show the impossibility of coexistence of diverse economic praxis in a real world which is violently "capitalocentric".

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2 For a "friendlier" discussion of Human Development approach, see Elson (2001).

3 For an institutional approach, see Bebbington, Guggenheim, Olson, Woolcock (2004) and for a critical approach, see Fine (2001), Bretón (2010) and Narotzky (2010).

LOCAL FOOD PROVISIONING NETWORKS: CONSUMERS' FOOD COOPERATIVES AND SMALL-SCALE ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCERS

The first case analyses local food provisioning networks composed of consumers' food cooperatives and small-scale organic food producers where different forms of cooperation and reciprocity articulate socioeconomic exchanges.

Although there is a wide variety of consumer food cooperatives, this study refers to relatively small collectives, composed of approximately 15 to 30 consumer units. Each of these units can be a family, a group of friends, people who might not know each other, and so on, and on average they are composed of three people. These food cooperatives are set in an urban context, they are self-managed, and everyone may participate in the decision making through assemblies. The study also examines small-scale organic farmers who cultivate vegetables in peripheral urban areas, and organic artisan bakers. All of these projects are organized horizontally in teams of approximately three to six people.

Farmers cultivate small amounts of land –some two to three hectares–and distribute their production directly in vegetable boxes, which they often call "closed boxes". With this strategy, consumers cannot decide what they want to acquire weekly, instead, the farmers decide the quantity and diversity of the content of the boxes. Moreover, "closed boxes" have a fixed and stable price over time. This is a way to ensure that there are no surpluses in production and that farmers receive a fair amount of money throughout the year, independently of possible seasonal or accidental variations in food quantity and quality. With a similar objective, bakers propose equal prices for different kinds of breads to promote the consumption of old varieties of wheat. These breads would be more expensive due to the laboriousness involved in sustaining old varieties of wheat in a low biodiversity agricultural landscape, and as a result of the lower productivity of these varieties. In addition, bakers pay a fixed and stable price for flour all year round, thus ensuring a stable income for cereal producers. These kinds of strategies guarantee that there are no surpluses and that capitalist accumulation is avoided.

Within these food networks, producers and consumers maintain close and direct relationships, with no intermediaries, based on commitment and trust. Farmers and bakers distribute their products directly to the food cooperatives and decisions are made collectively between producers and consumers.

The economic aspects are intimately linked to the social relationships existing between all the participants. Therefore, this is a consciously embedded economy that subverts the neoliberal fallacy that renders economy and society as separate spheres (Booth 1994: 661).

A specific example of this conscious embeddedness is the co-determination of prices through member assemblies. In the establishment of prices, agents take different factors into account: the incomes, the number of people working, the surface of the cultivated land, the number of boxes distributed, the economic difficulties among consumers, the investments on land, the tools or other inputs such as fuel, rotation of crops, and so on. All these factors can be understood as environmental, social or economic aspects, and each of them contributes to the global "viability" of these socioeconomic networks. "Viability", as informants define it, is a wide and dynamic concept which is constantly being redefined among the participants. Hence, it includes more items than just mere market economy factors, although these are not totally absent.

Furthermore, relations of production are consciously considered in these provisioning networks. Thus, contrary to what occurs in a capitalist market, where commodities seem to have their own life and the labour that has produced them is ignored or hidden, in these experiences, products reflect the labour of the farmers and the bakers, as well as the relationships that exist between them. Moreover, the relationships established with nature are also considered throughout the production-distribution-consumption cycle (Garrido Peña 2007: 36).

Marx defined commodity fetishism as the perception of the social relationships involved in production as merely economic relationships among objects, between commodities, rather than relationships between people (Marx 1999 [1867]: 36-47). Therefore, we argue that these provisioning networks subvert the commodity fetishism.

If we shift our attention to the political aspects of these socioeconomic networks, we see that there is no uniform political positioning. However, politicization processes often emerge organically in relation to collective practices rather than as an a priori individual abstract framework. Therefore, these groups do not present an alternative model for social change. Instead, practices change people and transform such daily activities as eating, buying, decision making, and so on. One of the most relevant changes among the consumers participating in food cooperatives is a modification in their personal motivation for participation in these collectives. Indeed, most people get involved in a food cooperative in search of cheaper and healthier food. Nevertheless, after some time as members of the group, they redefine

their motivations and interests in political terms, with regards to the kind of relations of production or the importance of collective self-provisioning of food.

The subtle political dimensions of these collectives include specific strategies for "growing", that is, for expanding the scope of the practices. The collectives "grow" through the multiplication of groups rather than through enlargement. Every project studied has a maximum number of participants which has been decided depending on multiple factors: the size of the room, the number of members, the cost of the rent, and so on. Therefore, the "model of growth" is based on supporting the creation of other autonomous groups and resisting capitalist accumulation. Finally, the uncertain legal status of the majority of food cooperatives, and the rejection of official certification of their organic farming, can be interpreted as an opposition, a resistance to processes of expropriation, bureaucracy and standardization of these projects. Often, formalisation processes are perceived as specific strategies to ensure integration of these groups into the dominant agro-food system.

Nevertheless, organic farming has already been totally integrated into hegemonic agro-food systems and these provisioning networks try to resist the interstices of the capitalist market.

COOP57, A COOPERATIVE OF ETHICAL AND SOLIDARY FINANCIAL SERVICES

Coop57 is a cooperative of financial services located in Barcelona whose members are local cooperatives, associations and charities who ask for credit to finance their activities. The money for these loans comes from the savings of the entities who are co-owners of the cooperative and the people engaged ideologically with the project. While the funds are managed according to ethical principles based on the transparency of the origin and the destination of the money, and on values such as solidarity or self-management, it is a small cooperative which currently reunites 700 members and 3,358 savers, and has about 30 million Euros in funds, out of which 11 million are deposited in loans.

Coop57 was created in the context of the economic crisis of the 1980's, when Spain suffered a restructuring of the productive sector that provoked a high unemployment rate. A group of workers started a struggle within their enterprise, which ended in the court. With the

money that they got as compensation for their protest they created a financial tool aimed at the workers who wanted to start a self-managed cooperative. This idea of collectivizing the monetary outcomes of their struggles with the aim of financing small self-managed cooperatives (which have always had problems in getting credit), illustrates the ideological position of this financial cooperative, coinciding with the principles of the Social and Solidarity Economy.

An ideological position which involves an attempt to finance those entities that organize their activity with other logic than the capitalist one. In this sense, Coop57 does not prioritize entities working with the logic of maximization of benefits, growth and competition, but rather entities which focus on *work* (understood as value)[4] to support their economic viability. The majority of these entities are small[5] and cooperate with other small enterprises based in the local area, they are managed through praxis guided by socioeconomic principles such as: collective ownership, assessments taken by assemblies with equal rights of participation and election, absence of discrimination based on reasons of gender, age, origin or handicap, and redistribution of the earnings, usually reinvested in the cooperative.

Nevertheless, Coop57 is aware that the financed enterprises sell products or services within the conventional market. The intention of Coop57 is thus to put limits to the logic of accumulation. In this vein, it only finances enterprises with collective ownership where participation is not based on the investment of capital but on the investment of work or services, and where the redistribution of profits is between all the shareholders, a practice which breaks with the principle of the individual accumulation of the capitalist system. This focus on the redistribution of wealth creates a space of resistance within the capitalist market; a space where the quality of work relations is more important than the pursuit of growth and maximizing profit. The most visible example of this attitude can be observed during the periods where the cooperative has been exposed to growth in terms of funds, savers or members. For example, in 2005 the financial

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4 Here we turn to the Marxist idea of a continuous tension between capital and work, where work generate value which is appropriated by the capitalist. In the case of the cooperativism, the figure of the capitalist is replaced by the collective legal structure of the cooperative). Coop 57 focuses on the work of judging the viability of the activities that it finances, stressing the post-Fordist paradigm where productive industry displaces speculative activities (Harvey 2007; Castillo 1998; Ferrer 2009; Hart 2000; Graeber 2001).

5 Although the majority of the financed entities do not have more than 10 members, some of them, such us charities or cooperatives of 2nd grade, can rise big structures of up to 50 members.

cooperative refused to start a process to grow and become a bank instead of a cooperative: Coop57 decided to remain a cooperative under the local laws of cooperativism and not to lose their values of autonomy and self-management, which would have been a direct consequence of accepting the state laws for banking under the central authority (the Spanish Bank). However, Coop57 established a commitment of cooperation with other entities that were working to become banks, such as FIARE. That is the meaning of the concept of cooperation for Coop57. Another example that can help us understand Coop57's logic of "resistance" is the fact that since the beginning of the global crisis in 2008, Coop57 increased their capital fourfold. Meanwhile the cooperative realized that growth only in structure implies a decrease in some values such as participation, cooperation and proximity of the members. Therefore, Coop57 decided to limit the income money, but not the number of members, and reinforced the funds of the cooperative to secure the availability of money to finance the entities' needs.

These examples show us that the aim of Coop57 is to operate inside, or in the interstices of, the market but with other values and principles than accumulation and growth; namely those of the reproduction of life in an expanded sense, based on the quality of work as the centre of the generation of value, and hence as a kind of "resistance" against the pure logic of accumulation of capital dominating the hegemonic socioeconomic system.

However, the values that make up the praxis of Coop57 are also claimed by the conventional financial entities. Values such as solidarity, participation or trust, are used as strategies to increase the sale of products or campaigns. The big enterprises use this 'social side' of the capitalist logic without questioning the bases and the tradition of the inherent values. However, the effort of Coop57 is to implement these values as a political way, more than in a philanthropic way, with the aim of denouncing the capitalist logic based on speculation and individuation; this example showing an alternative way to structure the praxis of productive relationships that implies redistribution of wealth as against capital accumulation. Its ideological project includes the creation of a network with other experiences in the area of consumption, production and distribution of products and services. This network of entities that work inside, or in the interstices of, the market has as its objective to limit the power of the conventional market in accordance with the traditional principles of social transformation and social justice considered in the history of Social Economy.

Both of the ethnographic examples undermine the neoclassical axiom that the logics of competence and maximization are the universal foundations of human economic action.

Nevertheless, this challenge to the capitalist moral economy (Thompson 1971, 1973; Booth 1994) does not mean that these cooperative practices are autonomous from the capitalist structuring forces which dominate the global economic scenario. We are in fact faced with a relation of opposition, resistance and articulation. Capital is always a menace to any opposition due to its tendency to subjugate every domain of human life through destruction or integration.[6]

The dialectics between destruction and integration leads us to conceptualize these cooperative experiences as an ambiguous and bi-dimensional phenomenon. At first, they appear as an enclave for the *struggle for life* flourishing in the interstices of capitalist hegemony. Second, they are the object of capitalist policies of integration of labour's counter-hegemonies in its expanded accumulation project. We will examine both dimensions in the following lines.

Alongside the provision of credit or food, these cooperative experiences reshape the contours of the economic practices from a political-moral framework the aim of which is not the *simple* reproduction, but the improvement of the conditions of life and work. In the case of Coop57, the specific forms of work (self-managed, non-speculative) and the horizontality, determine the access to credit. While the search for an improvement of food provisioning (in terms of health, work relations and environment) is the aim of the consumption's and agro-ecological production cooperatives. In both examples, subaltern classes[7] express and perform their political project of expanded reproduction of life. In contrast to the logics of expanded *reproduction of capital,* we use the notion of *expanded reproduction of life* (Coraggio 2004)

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6 "In a compromise, integration allows the counter-hegemonic group to retain certain non-threatening signs but only if it is completely subject to hegemonic basic requirements" (Narotzky 2004: 249).

7 Our definition of the subaltern class is based on the reconceptualization that Gramsci did of the Marxist concept of the proletariat (see Gramsci 2010; Marx 1999 [1867], particularly Chap.IV). The Gramscian use of the concept of subaltern class underlines the continuum existing between peasants, petty producers, and industrial workers (and even sometimes petty bourgeoisie) in the capitalist structure of class. In this sense, the author undermines certain reductionism which reduces proletariat to the industrial worker and the capital accumulation processes to the phenomenon of real subsumption (Federici 2013). In our ethnographic cases, we are dealing with people from middle-class strata who, in the last decades, have been suffering processes of growing precarity and dispossession.

in order to highlight that in their economic practices, subaltern classes are not in pursuit of simple reproduction, but improvement of their lives.

Furthermore, these projects perform economic relations consciously in opposition to the capitalist ones: as the assemblies for deciding food prices against the agro-industrial speculation, or the limitation of the liquidity fund's growth that prioritizes the provision of credit to social projects over the *maxima* of expanded reproduction. In our opinion, this *continuum* between everyday practices of better reproduction, the development of a critical conscience and an alternative project (under construction) of a common world, invalidates a lecture of these experiences in terms of *pure* survival strategies.

However, sometimes public or private capital institutions gobble up the language of these experiences of resistance, hollow out their concrete meaning, and use it in order to mediate their antithetical project of society. When it happens, they destroy the unity between theory and praxis, and between immediate goals and common aim. See for instance the *ethical banks,* or how conventional banks include key words such as 'cooperation', 'social value' or 'solidarity', in their slogans. On the other hand, we observe the deployment of a new and lucrative market of so-called 'ecological and fair' food in which these two concepts are reduced to forms of added monetary value. This kind of re-appropriations diversifies the language of capitalism and pluralizes its moral economy, while unifying the concrete world under the capital domination of wealth and labour force.

We defend that the concepts of conflict, articulation, integration and hegemony crystallize, better than those of diversity or pluralism (Gibson-Graham 2008), the nuances of this double movement of re-appropriation and resistance.

On the one hand, because the history of capitalist hegemony disputes the idea, implicit in the concept of diversity, of the world as an open space for the emergence and coexistence of different economic practices. In this sense, we could mention the violence used by the agro-food industry or financial capital to dispossess people from some of their fundamental means of livelihood, such as food or housing. On the other hand, the notions of conflict, integration and articulation connect these *other economic experiences* with the ideas of social struggle and resistance to dispossession and exploitation. Even more, insofar as an important part of the subjects involved do not tend to conceptualize the practices in terms of incompatibility or contradiction with a systemic or structural critique.

Thereby we put economy back into the field of politics, that is, a domain of struggle between opposing (and not simply *different*) projects with regards to the social organization of the relations between people,

and between people and the socio-natural environment. Projects that are not only opposed in their purposes, but which oppose the interests of different classes of people unequally situated and structurally confronted.

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New Transition: Community Gardens and Civic Engagement in the City of Zagreb

Valentina Gulin Zrnić, Tihana Rubić

INTRODUCTION

Community garden literature is a growing field, especially since the 2000s. It marks new grassroots sensibilities regarding the city and the environment, as well as awareness of and engagement in alternatives to the dominant (neoliberal) capitalist world framework. The studies address the contribution of community gardens and gardening to food security and environmental justice; greening the city; enhancing health and recreation; raising neighbourhood safety; promotion and building of social networks, inclusion, solidarity, and cohesion (Armstrong 2000; Glover 2004; Gottlieb and Joshi 2010; Kingsley and Townsend 2006; Firth et al. 2011). The community building process – which in many urban initiatives goes hand in hand with gardening – has further empowered urbanites to negotiate other

contested urban issues (such as the shrinking of public spaces or neoliberal urban governance), fostering, in this way, gardens as sites of collective social action and political activism (Krasny 2012; Nettle 2014).

In Zagreb, community gardens became an issue in 2012. A series of public debates and lectures have occurred in the last several years, and a number of civic associations and initiatives have been created, all focused on promoting and organizing urban gardening and shared ecological topics. City-run community garden projects were established in Zagreb in 2013, as well as in some other Croatian cities, together with various community and guerrilla gardens, art gardens, therapeutic gardens, and school and university gardens in subsequent years. Scientists, gardeners, activists and artists have produced papers analysing, interpreting, or commenting on the recent social, ecological and political phenomenon of "the gardens of our city".[1] We, the authors, have participated in various ways over the years, in public discussions, research and civic activism.[2] In this paper we are focused on three examples of urban gardening initiatives: their actors, their structures and the aims of the established gardens. The article begins by introducing the practice and perception of the illegal gardens that have existed on vacant plots for decades. The changing contexts of urban gardening within the last few years are discussed next. Three ethnographic examples indicate the variety of organizing and actors involved, the types of communality and solidarity, as well as the negotiation and debate about discursive, structural and governance issues. The analysis aims to examine the heterogeneity of gardening communities and to illuminate the dynamics (changes and modifications) of various relationships that are constituent of the phenomenon. The article concludes by considering the politics of space, particularly the transformation of urban public spaces, and the potential of gardening initiatives in the sphere of contemporary politics and strategies of urban governance.[3]

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1 The majority of these texts was collected in the volume "The Gardens of Our City: studies and notes on the practices of urban gardening" which may be accessed electronically (in Croatian) (Rubić and Gulin Zrnić 2015).

2 Tihana Rubić was motivated by civil engagement in establishing community gardens and participated in the initiative *Parkticipacija* from its beginnings in 2012 in various ways, from preparing the community garden project and organizing and participating in public discussions, to civil actions. Valentina Gulin Zrnić previously carried out research on transformations of public urban spaces, which from 2012 onward particularly focused on urban gardening. In 2014 and 2015 our interests combined within the politics of space framework as part of the ethnological and cultural-anthropological research project on "citymaking" (www.citymaking.eu).

3 The paper is based on research undertaken as part of the scientific project "City-making: space, culture, and identity" (2014-2018). which was funded by the Croatian Science Foundation (project No. 2350).

ILLEGAL (WILD) GARDENS IN SOCIALIST AND POST-SOCIALIST ZAGREB

Gardens - called "wild" by the locals - have been spreading for decades on urban derelict and vacant plots. These gardens were not legal, but the municipal authorities tolerated them. Wild gardens were fenced by decorative bushes or waste materials (such as bed slats, clothes dryer stands, metal frames or plastic blinds). Improvised doors secured the entrances to these garden plots, and some of them were locked by similarly improvised (wooden or metal) contraptions or even padlocks. The fencing clearly indicated the feeling of "private property", regardless of their illegal status. Moreover, it signalled the intent to remain isolated, rather than to be incorporated into the gardening community – the aim of the new and recent garden initiatives. However, some gardeners jointly invested money into water pumps (for several gardens on the location), indicating that specific issues were recognised as collective. However, they did not develop any type of formal organization or cooperative.

Wild gardens exist even today although they are fading due to the new financial powers investing in the city. They are generally cultivated by the older generation of local residents who had been growing food there for decades. All of them explain the motivation for gardening in contrasting arguments, such as of being in nature vs. flats, socialising vs. alienation, beautification of the space vs. dereliction. Many gardeners talked about economic reasons for growing food in the city, while others mentioned recreation and fun (Gulin Zrnić 2009: 129-132; Biti and Blagaić Bergman 2014). Gardeners were mostly seen as "people with rural origins" or "peasants in the city". However, long-term research sheds light on a significant discursive shift towards viewing gardening in ecological and sustainable communitarian terms.

Since the turn of the millennium, much of the neglected land was turned into construction sites, and wild gardens abruptly dwindled. The loss of wild gardens was not questioned in public since it was not regarded an issue in the new post-socialist city, which was guided by deregulation in planning, private investment and a consumerist lifestyle. However, one architect and sociologist voiced a rare opinion on urban gardening, stating in 2002 that, "urbanistic, communal and ecological interest for Zagreb gardens is not evident". The author proposed that some current (wild) garden lots might be maintained in the urban landscape and "could be combined or incorporated congruently into the newly planned Zagreb parks" (Kritovac 2002). To our knowledge, this is the first public comment showing a different discourse on

urban gardening, contextualizing it as a European gardening practice and considering gardens as parts of urban fabric. The comment anticipated issues that have become current ten years later, and referred to in ethnographic studies.

GARDENS IN THE NEW CONTEXT: RE-SEMANTIZATION OF TRANSITION

The last decade has brought to the fore "small" civic initiatives, direct action and self-organizing as means to social and political changes. It has been a reaction to the hierarchical manner of state and local governance as well as to global crisis. Gradually, critical and semantically different relationships towards consumerist lifestyles and neoliberal markets have emerged in Croatia. The discourse of sustainable development has become more prominent. Some concepts and terms like "shared", "public" or "communal", which were previously burdened with socialist ideological inputs and neglected in the 1990s, have become reaffirmed. A reassembling of meanings has been under way.

In such a context urban gardening popped up as an issue in 2012 when wild gardens in the housing estate Travno were destroyed following the decision of the municipal authorities. A newly formed civic initiative, together with existing branches of green activist groups, started advocating urban gardening as a necessary strategy for sustainable urban development. The initiative was a reaction to the current local situation but also correlated with various practical European urban initiatives that were aimed at changing established consumerist consciousness and life habits. Such initiatives are, for instance, organizing skill-sharing, groups of community-supported agriculture, permaculture courses, seed distribution, local currency, time banks, and "do-it-yourself" (DIY) workshops. Such approaches are at the core of the global *Transition Movement*, a reaction to the global ecological crisis, a reaction of particularly local communities to climate change and shrinking supplies of cheap energy.[4] In Croatia, "transition network" is focused on "advocating of social change in accordance with resilient and strong local communities with minimal ecological footprint" (Dragičević and Maljković 2013).

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4 *Transition Network,* http://www.transitionnettwork.org (accessed in August 2014)

The notion of "transition" requires thus a radical re-semantization, especially in the context of Croatia and other post-socialist states. Previously, it referred to a fundamental change of the political, economic and social system, while now it refers to the fundamental change of *consciousness* and *practices;* previously, the transition was run from *"above"* (the government) and now it connotes engagement from *"below"* (active citizens). Moreover, the previous notion of transition implied that changes are inevitable and citizens were only transition-bearers. The new notion of transition is proactive, requires initiative, is constructive and citizens are *transition-builders.*[5] The next part of the article describes the actors, structures and dynamics of relationships in three urban gardens in Zagreb.

ETHNOGRAPHY OF ZAGREB URBAN GARDENS

Travno

In April 2012, in only a few days, the wild gardens of the housing estate Travno were "cleared" with dredging machines. This was the decision of city authorities who explained that the lot was planned for a designed public park. This situation provoked the start of the civic initiative *Parkticipacija* (park + (par)ticipation), pressing for formal community gardens in Zagreb. The nucleus of the initiative consisted of 15 people in their thirties, from all over the city, highly educated and already engaged in various alternative initiatives (Right to the City, Green Action, and Urban Guerrilla). They criticized the municipal government for destruction of gardens and stressed the importance of growing food in the city. They also criticized city authorities for governing public spaces exclusively from "above". During the spring of 2012 *Parkticipacija* started a public campaign for establishing community gardens as newly organized public spaces, and for the new active role of citizens. It organized the signing of a petition for the first community garden in Zagreb and developed the idea of community gardens into a constructive and applicable project with recommended locations (vacant lots owned by municipality).

After ignoring the requests, actions and proposals for the community gardens for a year, the city authorities finally responded. In the

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5 Here we refer to and paraphrase the idea of "culture-builders" developed by Frykman and Löfgren (1987).

spring of 2013, just as the election campaign for mayor had begun, the mayor of that time presented the project on "City gardens" and criteria for gaining garden plots. From 6 locations in 2013, "City gardens" grew to 10 locations with 2000 garden plots on over 20 hectares at present (mid-2016).

The implementation of the city-run garden project grew out of a civic initiative on gardening, although it followed a different conceptual framework than that which was proposed in the original initiative. Many ecological, social and sustainable elements of the civic initiative idea were annulled and ignored and the city-run garden was a hierarchical top-down project strictly administered by the municipal government (Municipal Office for Agriculture and Forestry).

However, the interest for city gardens was huge and many citizens became gardeners. In talking with gardeners, the difference between *old gardeners* and *new gardeners* became evident.[6] In contrast to wild gardens which were fenced by recycled materials, the new gardeners built with bought and ready-made materials. The interviews also reveal the generational differences: "wild" gardeners are people of an older age whereas new gardeners are generationally a mixed group; even children are present while accompanying their parent-gardeners. Old gardeners grew food in various ways but the new gardeners are contractually obliged to grow organic food. Furthermore, old gardeners did not develop their gardening practice in conjunction with the ideas of sustainability and community. These concepts are discursively prominent today, particularly within the framework of community gardens, and modestly within city-run gardens. The new gardeners create some forms of networking and community, particularly among younger people, although we have also heard comments about gardeners who do not communicate even at the level of greeting.[7]

Urban gardening is a *process* on every level from the ground to the administration. It has its dynamics, its formalizing phase, contested issues; it has its advocates as well as strong critics. Gardeners sometimes react to problems of infrastructure and inadequate design. According to the municipal officials who were interviewed, they work on solving problems and discuss proposals which come from the gardeners themselves. They occasionally go on field trips and try to adapt the "City gardens"

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6 *Old* and *new* gardeners are categories used by gardeners themselves. The third category that we introduce in the next chapter is *guerilla gardeners*. We use the terms *old* and *new* gardens/gardeners (as well as *guerilla* gardens further in the paper) as heuristic vessels throughout the text.

7 Compare with the research of Slavuj Borčić, Cvitanović and Lukić 2015.

model (in governing and equipping) to particular circumstances in each garden. The garden thus becomes "an experiment" (Dobrić 2015), not only for gardeners but also for municipal employees.[8]

Prečko

In the spring of 2013 a group of citizens in the neighbourhood Prečko sent several requests for establishing gardens to the municipality. Having no reply, they cleaned an unauthorized dumping ground on municipal land and started growing food there. Citizens have thus unintentionally become *guerrilla gardeners*. By the end of the year the civil initiative *EkoEkipa Prečko* had 70 gardeners. The group was generationally mixed and connected by personal relations and social networks within the neighbourhood. Some of the activities they organized included skill-share and knowledge-share, cooperation with the local school and composting. They also installed a small street library in a recycled bookcase.[9] In several TV and radio broadcasts all these activities were presented as positive examples of strengthening the community and fostering the intergenerational interaction.

The case study of Prečko points at the comparison of various types of gardeners' engagements within the city, namely the new, old and guerrilla gardeners. Although the old gardeners (in wild gardens) also applied the squatting strategy on vacant and derelict lots, using the land without the owner's permission – a characteristic of guerrilla gardening – the significant difference rests in the political potential which characterizes guerrilla gardeners: i.e., the straightforward initiative for self-organizing and social and civil engagement that goes beyond the gardening itself. With new gardeners (those in the city-run garden project), guerrilla gardeners share the orientation to ecological and social sustainability, however, there is a huge difference in the type of approach. New gardeners are a group of people who are selected for gardening by municipal authorities through an application process and they need to develop basic networking and social capital. Guerrilla gardeners conversely found their activities in existing social capital (personal relations, local and international social networks). New gardeners are given ready-made gardens and

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8 Ethnographic examples are also presented in the interactive map of the "Citymaking" project showing various contemporary experiences of gardening in the city of Zagreb, http://www.citymaking.eu/mapa/.

9 This garden community and its dynamics over more than two years were also described by an insider – Radovanović 2015.

many of the organizational problems (preparation of land, division of plots etc.) were already solved, and therefore, the self-organization is something that could potentially be developed in the future. The guerrilla gardeners start with self-organization at the outset. Furthermore, in contrast to old gardeners who did not have a strong position in the fight against the destruction of their gardens, guerrilla gardeners hold strong ecological, political and economic arguments when confronting the municipality. New gardeners are of various standpoints and some of them share the idea of radical change, but this heterogeneous group (which is also under a certain "control" of the municipality, the formal owner) is not genuinely characterized by activist engagement, as are guerrilla gardeners. In comparison to old and new gardeners, guerrilla gardeners incorporate the idea of community building through which they implicitly react to ecological crisis, inadequate municipal governmental strategies and crisis of consciousness in order to create some new models of activity (at personal and group levels), constructing thus a new *transitional* reality.

Savica

The third example of urban gardening is a reaction to the concept of the city-run gardens, but it also shows how the local (neighbourhood) community can be empowered by the active engagement of its citizens who are guided by their various goals that address the municipal government and its projects. In the summer of 2013, the self-organised residents in the neighbourhood Savica – the initiative *Čuvajmo naš park!* ("Save our Park!") - started to protest against the plan for a church building within a neighbourhood park. They signed a petition against the location of the church in the park and gathered in various leisure and recreation activities on the park meadow. The protest was supported by a number of NGOs and it was covered by the media, which interpreted their movement as a protest for green public spaces in the city.

A month later the municipality started to clean a terrain which was partially derelict (green, bushy and with a significant number of birds), but also, for decades, the site of wild gardens. The Savica gardeners sounded the alarm to gardeners in other neighbourhoods, local residents, civil organizations and media about the unexpected construction work and destruction of wild gardens. They thought that the lot was allocated for the church, instead of the one in the park. The gardeners became very active in demanding answers from the municipality, researching planning documentation and the legal status of the land. The local initiative "Save our Park!" in Savica cooperated with

local gardeners and a number of garden workshops and gatherings were organised jointly to address the threat to their wild gardens. They also demanded that the gardens should be saved on the existing location, not according to the city-run garden model, but arguing for the legitimacy of gardens on the basis of several decades of gardening practice on the same location. They also stressed that existing gardeners wanted to build the gardens themselves, take care of infrastructure and organization, make decisions, and introduce programs for education.

In the end, the gardeners stayed there and the church building was not built in the park. The wild garden location with its old gardeners was incorporated into the "City garden" project with new gardeners on the encompassing ground. Self-organization of some 15 old gardeners, aided by civil organizations and media pressure, presented themselves as active participants in disputes with the municipal government over the gardens and green areas. They strive now to build a strong local community out of a generationally and socially mixed group of people, connected mostly by their interest in gardening.

The comparison of old, new and guerrilla gardens illuminates that Savica gardeners are a kind of *melange* and incorporate and modify various practices and discourses. New gardeners are organized by the municipality, guerrilla gardeners act outside of the municipal model, while Savica gardeners resisted the municipal gardening model. Savica gardeners are old gardeners who adopted new discourses and benefited from the already existing gardening social network, other existing local self-organized initiatives and the established position of the civil green associations and initiatives, which have all grown stronger in recent years.

Maintenance of wild gardens and, consequently, their "defence" against the advances of the municipality, present the success of old gardeners and even represent a benchmark of how to oppose the still traditional hierarchical (top-down) manner of governing the city. However, this could also be seen as a kind of deconstruction of such a hierarchical relationship and an opening up of some new possibilities for negotiations and decision making, which could be based in a more participative approach.

THREE FACETS OF GARDENS: COMMUNITY, GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

In the 1980s, the ethnologist Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin characterised wild gardens in the newly built Zagreb housing estates as an example

of "alternative urbanization". The use of space in estates was totally planned, and Rihtman-Auguštin (1988: 96-101) valued new practices like gardening as a deviation from abstract and normative urbanization, as a spontaneous, undisciplined and creative intervention in urban space. Furthermore, she understood such interventions as having the potential for creating an estate's community and a sense of belonging. However, the general vision of the modern city in the second half of the 20th century did not include agriculture – and wild gardens were perceived as anomalous in the urban fabric. Recent reviews and re-evaluations of gardening practices in the world throughout the 19th and 20th centuries reaffirm them as "informal urbanization", and "an important dimension in development of the city from the bottom up", thus valuing gardening as "the *radical strategy* of hands-on urbanism" (Krasny 2012: 11).

The analysis of Zagreb gardens illuminates three concomitant dimensions – *community, governance* and *sustainability* – and how they work together in a local context. We argue that the three dimensions are actually processes of building (community), shaping (governance) and living (sustainability) with various intensities and interactions. In the rest of the discussion, we suggest a few more topics for further research.

In these particular ethnographic cases, community building illustrates different dynamics of social networking and social capital. In other words, gardens might be "a consequence or a source of social capital" (Firth et al. 2011: 564), which might lead to two different categories of communities – "place-based" and "interest-based" (Firth et al. 2011). Prečko and Savica gardens are "place-based" communities; they are internally driven, initiated and guided by local residents whose social networking is not only focused on gardens but also on other local developmental affairs. Travno garden is "interest-based" – it is initiated by municipality and gardeners gathered there through the application process. Gardeners come from various neighbourhoods and some even from quite remote, other city districts. Travno garden is an opportunity to develop and/or enhance social capital, which could further be of benefit for local communities in the area. Furthermore, communities reveal themselves as contested spaces internally (such as disputes over organic food) and externally (management and relationships with the municipality over governing urban spaces). This particular research shows how gardens are heterogeneous communities and spaces; they should be understood as "plural, complex, and tension-filled cultural spaces", specifically when some new perspectives are opened, for example by feminist or political

ecology frameworks (L'Annunziata 2010). One of the problems that gardeners face is the transient character of gardens – wild gardeners, new gardeners with two-year contracts or guerrilla gardeners – their lots are all under the threat of being destroyed and jeopardized by new urban investors. In other words, "urban land values being comparatively high, agriculture will always compete with other uses" (Katkin 2012).

The issue of governance includes two basic types of top-down and bottom-up initiatives, establishing and managing the garden. These three ethnographic examples show various and even hybrid approaches in Zagreb. There are authors who argue that community garden projects could be an important way "for a municipal government to engage citizens in addressing the social problems in their neighbourhood" (Henderson and Hartsfield 2009: 13) and that, through garden activities, people "produced themselves as aware, involved and undismissible urbanites" (Eizenberg 2012). However, although Western municipalities open up spaces for increased participation of their citizens in urban affairs – which is interpreted as "the democratization of urban governmentability" – the same steps might work "as a mechanism for further neoliberalization of cities and as a means to suppress possible resistance from below" (Eizenberg 2012: 106). This calls for nuanced research on the dynamics of urban governance and policy-making processes, and the interaction of various actors (political parties, local politicians and administration, groups of citizens and civil initiatives, NGOs), to find out whether the shift from traditional forms of urban governance to alternative governance really occurred, and particularly, how much and in which ways do current urban gardening initiatives challenge and reconstruct existing power relations while addressing public spaces (cf. Häikiö 2007).

Finally, a note on the issue of sustainability. Many European cities view urban gardening as an indispensable part of their long-term urban developmental strategies, particularly those that are instructive examples of urban sustainability (for example Helsinki).[10] In Croatia, the concept of sustainable development has been primarily affirmed in the public by civil initiatives and associations (Green Action), and it is discursively included at present in various national and local programs and strategies. Although some changes can be seen in Zagreb, it seems that stronger shifts towards sustainability practices should be made, for example in implementing modes of

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10 Compare *Helsinki City Plan. Vision 2050,* http://www.hel.fi/hel2/ksv/julkaisut/yos_2013-23_en.pdf (accessed in August 2015).

sustainable transportation or changing urban consumerist infrastructure.[11] It is on the State and municipal governments to provide the most effective ways for developing various sustainable living practices which would be the basis for new forms of "environmental or ecological citizenship" (Turner 2011). Urban gardening has "the potential to promote physical, ecological, socio-cultural, and economic sustainability" (Stocker and Barnett 1998 according to Turner 2011: 511). Liisa Häikiö (2007) argues that prominent actors of urban sustainable development[12] from above (municipality) and from below (groups of citizens), as well as intermediary NGOs, all use the same discursive grounds (themes of expertise, representation and the common good) in their struggle for gaining legitimacy in urban policy-making. Consequently, this provokes some contested questions on how much the discourses from above and below are actually opposed, and how much are certain arguments adopted and adapted by the various actors.

The ethnographic examples from Zagreb, as well as relevant literature, call for further detailed research of entangled community building and the shaping of governance and urban sustainability in local contexts of urban gardening. This would provide us with deeper insights into the structural and discursive background of the (re) making of political and cultural identities, practices and values.

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11 An instructive example of decisive shift towards urban sustainability is Ljubljana in recent years (Poljak Istenič 2016).

12 Häikiö's research relates to Tampere, Finland.

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Reciprocity and Solidarity in the Face of the Spanish Home Repossessions Crisis

Irene Sabaté

INDEBTEDNESS AND HOME REPOSSESSIONS

During the recent housing bubble in Spain, there was considerable social consensus on the advantages of home ownership compared to other forms of tenancy. Hegemonic discourses as well as most of the involved social actors assumed that purchasing a property was the strategy that best fit the needs and aspirations of households, regarding the attainment of adequate housing conditions and the obtention of a heritage that could then be transmitted to future generations. Besides, the accessibility of mortgage loans and fiscal incentives reinforced the tendency towards over-indebtedness (Defensor del Pueblo 2012), representing it as an acceptable and necessary sacrifice, especially when households are created. During the current economic crisis all these circumstances have brought about a major

social, economic and political problem: an unprecedented spate of home repossessions.[1]

Drawing on the classical concern for the relationship between givers and receivers, and for the cultural meanings and moral values attributed to their respective social positions (Mauss 1979), a renewed interest for debt and credit relations in contemporary economies has emerged in the last years (Peebles 2010), in line with discussions around the financial crisis and with the conflicts experienced by households, enterprises and States who are incapable of repaying their debts. Indebtedness, it is stated, has become the primordial condition of economic actors -citizens, companies, States- under contemporary capitalism (Lazzarato 2011). Graeber's volume on the anthropology of debt (2011) has contributed to illuminate the moral foundations of the obligations to repay money debts; it has unveiled as well the naturalisation of debtors' responsibilities in capitalist contexts. As the author shows in his historical examination of credit relations the risk for certain debts not to be repaid has traditionally been assumed by social systems. In contrast to this, in the capitalist framework, the pace and conditions of repayment are strictly quantified (Guyer 2012), and the possibility of default seems to be absent from social representations, or, whenever it is represented, it is intimately linked to stigma and social exclusion. As a result of this situation, violence on debtors is legitimised (Graeber 2011), and the State's withdrawal from welfare provision is justified (Lazzarato 2011).

In this article, of mortgage default is analysed as a transgression – a massive and forced one – of the obligation to repay that is implicit in debt and credit relations, and that constitutes a key factor for the disciplination and hierarchisation of society. Indeed, mortgage debtors are transgressing the legal and moral obligation to repay their loans after the end of the housing bubble in 2007 (Naredo y Montiel 2011). Up to that moment, many loans had been granted despite the applicant's high risk of insolvency. Gregory's observation (2012) on subprime mortgages applies here: as those mortgages were granted, the usual course of action was subverted: it was not borrowers, but creditors, who initiated the process by aggressively offering credit. The complex workings of financial derivatives, through which debts are turned into objects of investment (Moulier-Boutang 2012) in the framework of a particularly invasive process of financiarization (Marazzi 2009),

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1 According to the Spanish General Judiciary (*Consejo General del Poder Judicial*), between 2007 and the second trimester of 2015, 642.104 repossessions were initiated in Spain.

fostered in turn by the deregulation of mortgage markets (Nasarre 2011) and for certain pro-cycle policies such as the provision of subsidies to developers and building companies (López and Rodríguez 2010), explains to a great extent the eagerness on the part of credit institutions and mortgage brokers to sell financial products irrespective of the chances of them being repaid.

What are, then, the strategies available for defaulting mortgagors, or those at risk of going into arrears, in order to cope with their situation? To what extent does the practice of reciprocity and solidarity by debtors entail a questioning of the obligation to repay debts? Answers to these questions will be sought on the basis of ethnographic data collected among debtors vulnerable to repossessions in the Barcelona area.

IN THE FACE OF INDEBTEDNESS

Mortgage indebtedness puts considerable pressures on domestic economies; in addition it threats or strongly constrains the life projects of those involved. The impact of this phenomenon includes the material aspects directly related to livelihoods, as well as other social and political processes related to the generation of inequalities, exclusion or subordination. The indebted people, as a result, are forced to adopt various strategies in order to secure survival and domestic reproduction. Sometimes also their behaviour is oriented towards the achievement of broader improvements for their situation.

In this section, the domestic strategies and forms of collective action put in place in the face of indebtedness are considered.

DOMESTIC STRATEGIES

On the domestic scale, the strategies adopted by debtors include, on the one hand, practices based on reciprocity and mutual aid among people tied by moral obligations. Through these links, monetary and non-monetary resources circulate, for example the provision of temporary or permanent accommodation. That happened, for example, as C. and his family had to leave their home after obtaining the assignment in payment. Three members of the household (the parents and the youngest child) were accommodated for free in another defaulting debtors' home they had met during the previous months. Another

typical case is that of Y., who moved into her parents' home with her two daughters as she lost her own flat.

The stress on reciprocity, however, should not lead us to ignore the weight of the market circulation of resources, be it formal or informal. Thus, for example, R. and A., a couple composed of a white-collar and a blue-collar worker who had simultaneously obtained two mortgage loans for their first and second residences, managed to overcome their difficult situation after both became unemployed as they found a buyer for their holiday home. In turn, since his firm went bankrupt, F., a small entrepreneur, found some relief by selling his car and other valuable objects. In a similar sense, V., a female security ward, decided to rent out her home[2] and to move to her parents' with her two children. Of course, resourcing to informal work, for example as domestic workers or by trying to obtain some income from former hobbies is another possibility for unemployed debtors. That was R.'s case, who, after losing her job in the realm of companies' public relations, tried with little success to employ herself as an artisan, while she kept looking for a formal job in her profession.

Through these market strategies, mortgagors under financial distress obtain supplementary incomes in order to cope at least with their immediate mortgage repayments, while they expect to get employment as a more stable solution.

Besides the seek for resources through different means, mortgage debtors, from the moment they start to have difficulties in meeting repayments, adopt austerity in their domestic economies, for example by renouncing certain forms of consumption or by replacing some products and services for less expensive ones. R. and A., for example, considered the possibility of de-registering their youngest son from the nursery school he was attending, as they found they were both unemployed and therefore could do without that service. They decided to take care of him for the whole day until, in some months, he reached the age when he could attend public pre-school for free.

However, it is worth keeping in mind that domestic strategies aiming to access material resources are important not only during economic hardship. Far from that, with some adaptations, they are also practiced in times of prosperity. For example, many mortgagors report that already when they contracted their loans, they counted on renting out some rooms in order to lighten the burden of monthly repayments, a strategy that, in some cases, allowed them to purchase bigger

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2 In fact, renting the mortgaged property can serve as a source of income or even, under certain circumstances, as a legal tactic to delay eviction.

and more expensive housing units. Thus, already from the beginning, they sought to increase the household's income by taking part in the subletting market.

We also find some telling examples in the sphere of reciprocity. As a relative or a friend accepted to act as a guarantor in a mortgage contract, or even as a co-owner in order to enhance the actual purchaser's solvency, this process entailed the formalisation or reciprocal bonds of obligation that pre-existed the contractual relationship.[3] The result, as it would later become clear, was the conversion of social relations themselves into assets for financial depredation by the creditor, as happens when mortgage default occurs and the bank demands the debt to both owners and guarantors. Mortgage loan contracts can be interpreted, therefore, as the crystallization of otherwise more informal social relations that have the potential to channel resources from debtors and their social networks toward the credit institution. In case of conflict among the involved actors, the effectiveness of social relations as a vehicle for economic circulation can be undermined. That is what happened, for example, when M.'s partner left home and travelled back to Ecuador, thus avoiding his financial commitments as a co-owner of their flat. For as long as she could and with great effort, M. kept on repaying the loan, until the situation became unsustainable and she got into arrears. At least for now, the bank cannot claim the debt to the mortgagor who is abroad, in the same way that M. had not been able to force him to contribute to repayments or to look for an alternative solution.

THE EMERGENCE OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

Parallel to the deployment of these practices by households and their social networks, the social unrest provoked by the spate of home repossessions has given way to the emergence of a social movement that has turned mortgagors into a new political subject. We are referring to the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH),[4] that, since its foundation in Barcelona in 2009, has spread all over the country with more than 160 local assemblies.

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3 With an exception: sometimes, strangers or almost strangers introduced by mortgage brokers themselves acted as guarantors. Sometimes, two strangers acted as guarantees in each other's mortgage contract, as so-called "crossed guarantees" (*avales cruzados*).

4 It could be translated as the 'Coalition of People Affected by Mortgages'.

Perhaps the most famous face of the PAH is its 'stop evictions' civil disobedience campaign, that consists on preventing court officers and police from physically accessing homes under an eviction notice. However, the PAH's activities are far more diversified (Mir et al 2013, Colau and Alemany 2012). First, regular meetings of local assemblies provide an arena for mutual support, where debtors can express their concerns and overcome their previous isolation, while they become conscious of the collective dimension of their problem and, in many cases, self-blaming processes are subverted and replaced by the responsibilisation of other, more powerful actors, such as banks or public authorities. Thus, by attending assemblies, members feel empowered and de-stigmatised, and their material and psychological needs are made public.

Second, the PAH channels a flow of collective counselling, as a rule provided by the most experienced members and, in some cases, by lawyers working on a volunteer basis. In this way, members are given access to pertinent expert knowledge in order to face each particular situation, depending on whether debtors are already in arrears, have received the eviction order, or, after the eviction has been carried out, they are enduring the burden of the debt while looking for alternative accommodation. The goal of collective counselling is, in all, to promote the agency of debtors and to provide them with crucial tools to overcome their powerlessness in front of other actors – such as bank clerks or civil servants – who monopolise expert knowledge on law, finance and the bureaucratic mechanisms of social assistance. In addition, experienced members within each assembly stand by other debtors during their negotiations with banks and other involved institutions.

Third, the PAH promotes political engagement by organising collective struggles on different scales. Fostering political and legislative changes by influencing public opinion and claiming for the intervention of legislators, judges and other public authorities stands among their goals. Thus, for example, in 2013, the Spanish Parliament processed a Popular Legislative Initiative (*Iniciativa Legislativa Popular,* ILP) that intended to regulate assignment in payment, debt cancellation for already evicted families, and the provision of social rents (Colau and Alemany 2012). Meanwhile, during the parliamentary process, a controversial campaign tried to persuade particular members of Parliament to vote for the proposal. In so-called *escraches,* politicians were intercepted in public spaces where they carried out their everyday, private activities. Finally, the ILP, which had gathered the support of over 500,000 citizens, was not passed, but it succeeded in making

visible the huge social support for the measures it contained.[5] Also in the legislative arena, the PAH is promoting municipal initiatives to penalise credit institutions for accumulating vacant housing. Besides, mobilisations are being called for against banks with the higher rates of repossessions. This pressure has had some effects: a few credit institutions have agreed to negotiate with the PAH collective solutions for all their customers, although such negotiations have rarely been fruitful. Additionally, a less visible outcome of the PAH's pressure has been the establishment by banks of specific protocols to react in front of customers who state their PAH membership. Some concessions have been made to them, such as offering a so-called 'partial' assignment in payment, consisting in an almost full cancellation of the debt in exchange for the property, with a much smaller amount of outstanding debt in the form of a conventional loan with no collateral. These kinds of concessions, as some bank manager conceded, have been made due to the banks' concerns for their bad public image that the PAH is succeeding in attaching to them.

Beyond the repayment of mortgages, the PAH also claims for solutions regarding other difficulties met by debtors, such as their inability to pay energy bills or taxes on properties, as well as to afford other basic necessities, such as food or school supplies for their children. Even if this is not their main role, such demands often emerge and are sometimes addressed in local assemblies, either by means of the circulation of resources among members, by asking local communities for support, or by contacting social services and charities.

Finally, the PAH has also devised a mechanism allowing the direct provision of housing for already evicted households with no alternative accommodation. In this aim, they are squatting vacant buildings that belong to banks. Similar strategies are also being used individually by evicted households, who often re-enter their former homes after verifying that they will remain vacant long after eviction. However, in the case of collective squatting actions promoted by the PAH,[6] the practice acquires a protest character, seeking to claim for policies that reinforce and prioritise the social function of ownership and the effective recognition of the constitutional right to decent housing. The most famous of these squatting actions, for example the one that took

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5 Such a victory was attained in Catalunya, where, in July 2015, a law proposed by the PAH among other organisations was passed.

6 This campaign is labeled *Obra Social de la PAH,* a name that ironically alludes to the social programs (*obra social*) that banks, and especially savings banks, have held as a token of their charitable activities.

place in 2013 in Salt (Girona), have been successful in the latter sense: in making visible the problem and claiming for a political response. They even obtained support from the Court at Strasbourg. However, most families accommodated in this way, far from having achieved a permanent remedy for their homelessness, are still at risk of eviction.

TOWARDS A TRANSFORMATION OF FINANCE CAPITALISM?

We have just classified in two categories the strategies and reactions of mortgage debtors in the face of the risks and consequences of home repossessions.

The anthropological literature (Lomnitz 1974, Stack 1975) has already shown that what we have been calling 'domestic strategies' based either on reciprocity or on formal or informal market circulation, are not specific to times of hardship. Rather, they constitute everyday economic practices in any phase of macroeconomic cycles, although they need to be adapted to each particular moment: while sometimes resources need to be mobilised, there are other circumstances under which what is needed is just the preservation of potential channels for material circulation. Providing accommodation for a relative who has suffered an eviction would be an example for the former, while agreeing to act as a guarantor in a mortgage contract would fit the latter situation. Anyway, the transformative potential of such practices is very limited, as the resources mobilised are used to keep up with repayments or, when debtors are already in arrears, to mitigate the negative impacts of default on domestic survival and reproduction. The obligation to repay debts (Graeber 2011) is not challenged either way, and neither the role of credit institutions nor the negative moral judgment on defaulting debtors (Gregory 2012) is questioned. As a result, domestic strategies in the face of (over)indebtedness constitute and adapt to the changing conditions of market economy, and by no means aspire to structural transformations.

But in this article we have also described collective action promoted by a social movement like the PAH. Such action entails a refusal of market logic, or a claim for its regulation by the State, as well as a stress on solidarity among mortgage debtors. In this case, an explicit aspiration to transform the political, economic and juridical system can be identified. Since its foundation, the PAH has alternated several failures and achievements that account for the potentialities and limitations of collective action in the face of very strong and asymmetric

power relations. Mid-term, mid-scale strategies have revealed themselves as effective weapons, as the very actors targeted by these actions – bank managers, judges, civil servants at town halls – concede. Such strategies have managed, for example, to damage the public image of specific banks, to disseminate judges' sentences that may set court precedent benefiting debtors, or to implement specific policies on a municipal scale. However, broader and deeper transformations, such as legislative changes on a national scale, are still to be attained. Up to now, legal regulations introduced by the Spanish government, allegedly in order to address the spate of repossessions, have been very timid,[7] evincing little disposition of the authorities to effectively regulate the impact of macroeconomic cycles on citizens' livelihoods.

But still, to a great extent as a result of the PAH's actions, those 'affected by mortgages' have become a social and political actor that has overcome their previous invisibility and stigma. Their distinct public presence, both on the streets and in the media, has empowered them in negotiations. And this can be explained because they do not limit themselves to mitigate the consequences of over-indebtedness and evictions for specific households. Reciprocity and solidarity relations that emerge in their assemblies spread to the collective field of political struggle, as they envision a structural transformation regarding both the legal framework and the social meanings and values attached to indebtedness. Thus, through the denunciation of the structural and symbolic violence exerted on mortgage defaulters, the obligation to repay debts when these are socially considered as illegitimate is challenged (Graeber 2011). In this way, the positive valuation of credit and creditors, as well as the negative connotations of debt and debtors (Gregory 2012) are counteracted on the basis of justice and legitimacy notions, and through the denunciation of abuse, lack of information and transparency, as well as of the shortcomings of the regulation of financial and mortgage markets. Even within a capitalist context, where the possibility of default has been systematically invisibilized (Graeber 2011), and where the pace and quantification of repayment are strictly established and sanctioned according to contract clauses and interest rates (Guyer 2012), the possibility of default and even of the cancellation of debts become socially thinkable.

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7 Perhaps the most notorious case is so-called De Guindos Decree (after the minister of economy), that was presented as a regulation of assignment in payment, but that merely entailed a non-binding recommendation, a "good practice" code for banking institutions. It has been criticised for contributing to legitimise the denial of assignment of payment to a majority of debtors who do not meet its narrow requirements.

Nevertheless, beyond these achievements in the arena of discourses and social representations, an effective transformation of finance capitalism that guarantees livelihoods and social reproduction in decent conditions, and that does so even in times of economic crisis, is still to be conquered.

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"For A New Social Order": A Genealogy of Self-Management in SFRY

Cirila Toplak

ETYMOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

Twenty-five years ago the self-management system (slo. samoupravljanje) was abolished in Slovenia. Yet Slovenians have not forgotten the term. On the contrary, the economic and financial crisis has revived its memory via certain alternative political and for now extra-parliamentary movements and initiatives (Rižnar 2013). For established political parties the term self-management has turned into a taboo (Dragoš 2013) or almost a curse. To conservatives it represents one of the symbols of the Socialist regime that they brought down in order to take the part in transition; to the established "Left" self-management is an unwelcome historical-political memory it has tried to suppress in order to lose the label "continuity" with the Socialist regime. The current public debate on self-management has revolved around the non-essential issue of who had

been the original author of the concept (Švajncer 2013; Dragoš 2013) rather than focusing on an objective assessment and the potential of re-actualization of self-management. This may be typical of Slovenian political culture, yet it is also regrettable considering the efforts in other (academic) communities to rethink progressive political concepts in order to find solutions for the current politico-economic crisis of the West.[1]

The Dictionary of Slovenian Language defines self-management as "independent, direct or indirect decision-making by members of a workers' or other community to manage communal matters". This definition is also valid for democracy in the broadest sense of its meaning. The definition of democracy by the same source is interestingly consistent with the definition of self-management: "1. Political system of rule of majority that protects individual and political rights of all citizens; 2. The principle of equality in decision-making in the life of a collective". The Dictionary defines Socialist democracy in particular as a system "based on public ownership of production means and self-management of citizens" (DSL 2008).

Self-management and democracy are therefore tightly knit, yet they are often identified as antipodes in Slovenian political discourse. This is quite telling of the neo-conservative dimension of such discourse and the mentality of its mediators in a yet unconsolidated democracy. It echoes the early interpretation of the representative democracy as an opposition to direct democracy that was typical of political elites of the first bourgeois revolutions (Toplak 2012: 734-735). On the other hand, this conceptual "misunderstanding" contributes to the contours of a Pearsonian (2000: 251-253) path dependence of the Slovenian political community the discursive anomalies of which were identified as a form of exclusivisms and anachronisms by Rotar (2007: 246). It also contributes to the understanding of the corporate and illiberal fundaments of the Slovenian political culture (Lukšič 2006: 57).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS OF THE GENEALOGY OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

Self-management as "a project of organization of production and society" had first been invented by utopian Socialists. However, in the

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1 In 2014 Council of European Studies at the Columbia University organized the annual congress of Europeanists entitled The Resurrections and included a panel on Yugoslav self-management into the official program.

political and academic discourse the concept soon became inseparable from the evolution of the workers' movement, which conceived of self-management as "an expression of the efforts of the proletariat to free itself of the wage condition and take over power over production and social relations" (Nikolić, 1989, 5). According to Miloš Nikolić, the leading Yugoslav Marxist theoretician in the 1970s, the evolution of the concept and the implementation of self-management as a catalyst pointed at a gradual evolution of the workers' movement and therefore, the research on self-management should necessarily be part of interpretations of the development of the workers' movement (Nikolić 1989: 5).

At present such a framework for interpretation of self-management has become too narrow. In the contemporary post-industrial society the workers' movement has found itself in serious trouble: the traditional blue-collar working class has significantly diminished in recent decades, while the workers' representatives such as trade unions and "labor parties" have lost credibility in processes of adaptation to and collaboration with the employers and the governments – in particular in a peripheral European state such as Slovenia – which at present represent the interests of capital rather than public interests. Although collaboration between state unions and governments has become less intensive since the collapse of the European Socialist regimes and some forms of direct conflict between the proletariat and capital have been revived, in particular since the start of the current economic crisis, the workers' representatives are a much less important interlocutor for the opposite side and not just for the smaller numbers of the proletariat they represent. The post-War Socialist regimes in Europe functioned as a permanent pressure on the capitalists so that they were forced to give ground in negotiations on workers' rights in exchange for guarantees that trade unions would not promote the ascent to power of radical leftist or Communist parties in Western Europe that could seriously threaten the private ownership of production means. This is how the post-war welfare state was possible (Wahl 2011: 31-33), while the one-party regimes behind the Iron Curtain ensured their political legitimacy by even greater social concessions and state services. When the collapse of the Socialist regimes annihilated this threat to liberal capitalism, the capitalists were no longer interested in negotiations. On the contrary, with Thatcherism, Reaganomics and globalization an immediate and intensive deconstruction of the welfare state has begun; on the ruins of which at present live or vegetate the majority of Europeans. Such destructive processes could neither be avoided by the post-Socialist state despite initially high standards

of social protection; moreover, the welfare state has been subjected to additional criticisms here as a relic of the former regime. It should also be taken into consideration that the post-Communist states have uncritically adopted parliamentary democracy and market economy at the precise moment of the victorious ascent of neoliberalism and the subsequent pressure for a "lean" state that was to become the descendant of or, more precisely, the sorry remains of the welfare state (Toplak 2009: 609). An additional argument for the obsoleteness of Nikolić's thesis on inseparability of self-management from the workers' movement has to do with current attempts at reviving self-management that no longer take place in the context of the workers' movement and which will be discussed later on.

More convincing and ideologically open is the connection between conceptual evolution and practice of self-management and the evolution of political systems in the industrializing modern Europe as detected by Karl Korsch, beside György Lukács the most prominent theoretician of Western Marxism. Korsch divided the "organization of labor", as the fundamental historical issue of the proletariat, into three historical stages: in the first stage the organization of labor was feudal-patriarchal and workers were neither owners of the labor force nor had they personal freedom; in the second stage the workers became owners of the workforce yet only under absolute despotism of the company/factory that employed them; and in the third stage the "right of the participation of citizens workers in the community of work" started to emerge with the political emancipation of the proletariat (Korsch 1978: 50). With the dissolution of the post-war welfare state we therefore regressed to an earlier stage in history since the third stage of participation of workers in the community of work had already been reached. At present, we are back again to the second stage that Korsch also identifies as "the industrial constitutionalism", by analogy with political constitutionalism identified as a transitory stage between absolute monarchy and participatory democracy. According to Korsch, the final "industrial revolution" would only be developed under the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, the developments in the 20th century, and in particular the scope of the proletariat and the discreditation of the idea of its dictatorship in Communist Europe, have made the latter a highly improbable vision for the 21st century, unless neoliberal policies would cause such a "proletarization" or even disappearance of the conservative middle class that circumstances would become ripe for the "dictatorship of the precariat". For these reasons in the history of self-management to follow, I focused on the pre-workers' movement era and the Yugoslav period. I left out the

evolution of Soviets and later on, the national liberation committees during the Second World War in Yugoslavia as well as the post-war rehabilitation of self-management in the Western European workers' movement. In short, I discuss the history of self-management here independently from the history of the workers' movement.

Beside Miloš Nikolić, historicization and analysis of self-management in the context of the workers' movement was of scientific interest to many Yugoslav analysts, such as Branko Pribičević (1979) and Rudi Supek (1974), and most recently in Slovenia to the economists Aleš Vahčič and Tea Petrin (1986) and Janez Prašnikar (1989) as well as to sociologists such as Veljko Rus and Frane Adam (1986). Towards the end of the Yugoslav self-management era, Yugoslav theoreticians were mainly occupied with the transfer of democracy as a form of the participation and decision-making process from the political to the economic sphere and by the "export" of the concept and practice of self-management to the developing countries. With the dissolution of Yugoslavia and abolition of self-management these reflections were interrupted, just when they tackled the essence of the problem of implementation of self-management and pointed at key reasons for failure of this project in the SFRY. At present, the topic of self-management is making a comeback with the youngest generation of Slovenian leftist theoreticians and politicians.[2]

HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

The concept of self-management first appeared in the early 19th century in works of utopian Socialists such as Henri de Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier, and Robert Owen, and later on in texts produced by early workers' rights activists such as Louis Blanc and Louis-Auguste Blanqui as well as several other French authors, which was unsurprising considering the French political progressivism at the time. Utopian Socialists conceived of self-management in a period when the working class had not yet been a consolidated political force and at present, with the working class no longer being a considerable political force, their reflections remain quite relevant. The utopian concept of self-management was not "contaminated" by the obligatory connection

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2 See Kirn (2014) or texts accessible on the website of the Institute for Workers Studies at www.delavske-studije.si (in Slovenian) or the program of the Slovenian parliamentary party United Left.

with the workers' movement and the proletarian revolution. Such connections have later been again rendered rather obsolete by the position of the working class in the post-industrial society.

Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825) based the relations between the state and the economy on the preposition that the only sensible aim of the industry was production of things useful to man; that the government needed to intervene, when the industry crossed certain lines; that only producers who were taxpayers could also be voters; and that human society was in fact a workers' society defined more broadly than the proletariat as the whole of the active population. Since he was the first to argue abolition of private property as well as planned economic policy, Friedrich Engels proclaimed Saint-Simon the first anarchist (Nikolić 1989: 12).

Charles Fourier (1772-1837) imagined extensive self-managed cooperatives or phalansteries where up to 1620 people would cohabit – the number calculated by Fourrier included all combinations i.e. types of personality. As political subjects, phalansteries were to unite into a global federal government. Work, adapted to individual's capabilities and interests, should have become pleasure and unpleasant works would therefore be better paid. Fourrier's concept of self-management deviated from the revolutionary principle of equality and focused instead on a harmonious symbiosis of differences (including gender; Fourrier invented the word feminism). Phalanstery was also far from proletarization of society since its welfare and social contacts (basic human needs according to Fourrier) were enjoyed by producers as well as consumers (Dilas-Rocherieux 2004: 114-123).

In the US state of Ohio alone, Fourrier inspired the foundation of four phalansteries in the districts of Ohio, Trumbull, Columbian and Clermont, including the most famous Communist settlement Utopia. In 1844 Utopia was settled by Fourrier's followers who in exchange for $25 acquired a wooden cabin with some land. Yet the commune subsisted under Fourrier's rules for just three years - in 1847 Utopia was taken over by spiritualists who reoriented local economy to the market and private property. They moved their townhouse to the Ohio riverbank only days prior to catastrophic floods in which most of the settlers who found shelter there died (Bailie 2014).

Robert Owen (1771-1858) turned Fourrier's experimental logic upside down and first went through the empirical stage of a concrete social experiment before identifying theoretical prepositions of his communitarian utopia. He reorganized, optimized and humanized his father-in-law's company in the Scottish village of Lanarck and soon managed the village as a commune in which the wellbeing

of the worker was of direct benefit to the company, which spent the profit to further enhance the wellbeing of the community. Yet when Owen attempted to repeat the experiment on a larger scale, despite public recognition and popularity he failed to win the 1819 parliamentary elections. Owen's attempt to create a thus designed commune from scratch in the United States – the New Harmony colony in Indiana between 1824 and 1828 – also failed economically since the community could not survive amidst the market-oriented American environment because of insufficient self-subsistence. Due to the constant inflow of new inhabitants, the colony also lacked cohesion; newcomers had a negative impact on infrastructure and subsequently on communal relations. When Owen tried to improve the situation by personal intervention, it was already too late: the community went bankrupt for absence of competent craftsmen and poor management (Dilas-Rocherieux 2004: 100-102).

Whereas there was no room for the state in Owen's visions of future society, his French contemporary Louis Blanc still allowed it; his concept of self-management was mainly focused on companies, which thus organized would compete and in time replace conventional capitalist ventures. Blanc's society was also to be distinctly meritocratic. Blanc did not linger in fantasies, but implementations of his ideas were all very short-lived. In March 1848 he designed the first workers' factories (*ateliers nationaux*) in France in which 100.000 workers were employed but they were closed down by July 1848 (Nikolić 1989: 15).

Louis-Auguste Blanqui also favoured collective property. He was the most proto-Marxian of all utopians in that he called for a vanguard group of revolutionaries to first take over power and then introduce self-management. At the final stage of societal transformation self-management was to enter all power spheres (Nikolić 1989: 13).

The most famous self-management thinker in France in the 19th century was Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), the author of the groundbreaking anarchist study What Is Property (1840) and a political radical who first argued for total abolition of the state and political system. From the present perspective, Proudhon's arguments unfortunately sound even less realistic than they must have appeared in his own time. In particular he was unconvincing in how to overcome obstacles to achieve an ideal society according to his prescriptions, since he emphasized solidarity, mutuality and ethics as solutions to all problems. In Proudhon's demands that all economic activities needed to be surrendered to the free effect of economic laws on the one hand and on the other hand that all economic decisions needed be left to workers' unions/economic subjects that were to function ac-

cording to the principle of mutual fair exchange of goods, there was a considerable contradiction, especially since he also supposed a total sovereignty of the individual and he imagined society as a harmony of individualities. Later on Proudhon realized he was mistaken and agreed to further existence of the state in which he hoped to balance the authority by federalism. He transferred self-management to the level of a workers' company whose collective owners were workers who worked in a publicly transparent way yet within the framework of the market economy. In the second half of the 19th century, such companies were actually founded in France. However, Proudhon criticized them for their isolation and the gentrification of worker owners. Based on this experience, Proudhon concluded that two preconditions were necessary for the successful implementation of self-management: a certain level of education of the stakeholders needed to be ensured and the property needed to be collective and only used by particular collectives without being owned by any of them (Proudhon 1967: 129-131).

Karl Marx considered workers' cooperative "the first important victory of political economy of labor over political economy of capital" (Marx et al, 1974, 387), the "workers association [being] their own capitalists" (Marx et al. 1974: 373), while in order for the "social production to transform into a unified, extensive, harmonious system of free and cooperative labor, general social changes are needed, such changes in fundamental social conditions that may be achieved only by a transition of the organized social forces i.e. state power from the hands of capitalists and land owners to the hands of producers themselves" (Marx et al. 1974: 158). Marx found the thesis that in order to introduce self-management the working class had to first take over political power and transform political structures, confirmed by the 1871 Paris Commune. (Marx et al.1974: 301).

In the Slovenian speaking part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1945) we find the earliest references to self-management in the texts by the Christian Socialist Andrej Gosar (1887-1970), more precisely in his book entitled For A New Social Order, published in 1933. Gosar based his societal vision on a common sense that "a universally valid ideal of self-management system cannot exist and each state therefore must be organized according to its specific conditions for the best state system is the one enabling for as much of individual and public prosperity as possible" (Gosar 1994: 220). Gosar also considered democracy and self-management as antipodes and argued for self-management since "local authority is original as the state authority is original" (Gosar 1994: 213) and the supremacy of the state authority over other levels of power and administration was therefore

not legitimate. He nailed one of the key elements of the Slovenian politico-historical path dependence by the conclusion that "the state administration [...] is something alien to the people, hostile even, while self-management is humane and familiar" (Gosar 1994: 214).[3] In accordance with Christian Socialist convictions Gosar would introduce self-management in all key areas of human activity – in economy, politics, culture and in the social strata – yet self-management in these spheres would only be efficient, if they were self-managed into a coordinated system. Gosar still opted for hierarchy at this point i.e. the supreme authority of political power arguing that it would be more difficult to delineate the right power relations between particular self-managed domains in a totally egalitarian system than to assign supremacy of political self-management to economic, cultural and class self-management (Gosar 1994: 216). Considering self-management in economy Gosar's concept was much more conservative than the later Yugoslav self-management. According to Gosar, self-management in companies meant merely organizing planned production by economic areas via representation of companies managed by self-managed committees in a dialogue with the capital owners, labor leaders, trade unions and professional chambers.

Despite some still unfulfilled and progressive ideas that would at present contribute to a greater quality of democracy such as consistent consideration of the administrative principle of subsidiarity, safety valves for the tyranny of the majority and interesting initiatives for active citizenship (Gosar 1994: 215-6 and 219), Gosar insisted not only on the authority of state power, but also on private property (except for compensation for the owners of certain key resources), and in order to assess Gosar's concept of self-management historical contextualization is therefore crucial. In other words, comparing Gosar's and the later Yugoslav concepts of self-management it becomes obvious that self-management is a word of multiple complex meanings that cannot be synonymized at will. Ironically, we may agree with the conservative analysts of the Slovenian political reality: Slovenia indeed is at present founded on self-management principles in many respects yet not still but rather again as these are more conform to the adoption of Gosar's conservative idea of self-management rather than the sediments of the much more radical Yugoslav self-management system.

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3 Alienated state is a phenomenon clearly detected in Slovenian democratic transition by political scientists (Toplak et al, 2012) as well as political anthropologists (Vuk Godina, 2011).

SELF-MANAGEMENT IN SFRY – THE BEGINNING AND THE END

Reflections on Yugoslav self-management also need to be consistently contextualized since the political and academic discourse in Slovenia and abroad includes the entire spectre – from odes to harsh judgments. The Yugoslav concept of self-management was supposed to solve one of the key issues of the Marxist proletarian revolution – how to pass from the Communist vanguard ruling in the name of the proletariat to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat. In this respect the self-management period was intended to be a transition. Albeit achieved by very different means than the current transition, the declarative aims were the same – freedom, prosperity, security. Foundation of the Yugoslav self-management was the complete (and not Gosar's merely partial and strategic) socialization of private property, while the workers would dispose of the means of production and incomes in the individual as well public interest (Šetinc 1979: 146). From 1950 on self-management spread to "all areas of work and life in [Yugoslav] society and became an increasingly integral system enabling workers to manage the newly created value in the TOZD (Slovenian abbreviation for Basic Organization of United Labor) as in the socio-political self-managed interest community and all other forms of pooling of labor and production means". Beside workers thus becoming shareholders, Edvard Kardelj, the most eminent theorist of Yugoslav self-management radicalized self-managed political pluralism into "a system where each citizen is a party." (Sruk 1994: 290).

Reasons for the introduction of self-management in Yugoslavia are numerous, depending on the source and the time distance. According to Nikolić, the Yugoslav self-management marked the beginning of the destalinization process and represented the most concrete, continuous and radical criticism of Stalinism (Nikolić 1989: 45). Dragoš (2013) is at present much more critical of self-management: the latter was the result of the decline of Yugoslav Stalinism and an attempt to reinforce the power of the Communist elite, which contradicts President Josip Broz Tito's announcement at the introduction of self-management that self-management would eventually result in the disappearance of the state which was to be the final aim of this social experiment (Nikolić 1989: 45). Šetinc adds to these reasons that "self-management was a necessity in Yugoslav circumstances as Yugoslavia was a multi-national community of diverse and traumatic histories. Respect for national idiosyncrasies and struggle for a true, also economic equality of nations could only be brought about fully in the

self-management system" (Šetinc 1979: 145-146). The Yugoslav self-management system was therefore founded on complex arguments, reaching from the Cold War foreign policy to at least declarative anarchist imperatives and from a cohesion agenda to the balance between nationalist tendencies of the federal republics and the federal authority that was crucial to the survival of the SFRY. The reasons for the "export" of the self-management system to the developing countries that we find in later self-management theories indirectly serve to interpret the experience of self-management in SFRY: in the late 1980s self-management was still identified as the path to the individual's political and economic freedom, while workers' participation was "the reflection of contemporary production mode and reflection of converging socio-economic systems in a contemporary world" (Prašnikar 1989: 156). Introduction of self-management in the post-colonialist Third World made sense since Yugoslav self-management was introduced very early following the Second World War into which the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was pushed as a distinctly traditional, non-cohesive society with great economic imbalances. Moreover, the federalized parts of Yugoslavia had endured centuries of colonial rule.

We may apologetically agree with Rižnar (2013) that "self-management historically failed or did not achieve its aim" or go along with critical Sruk (1994: 290) that self-management was a farce in which the "party structures", the "new class"[4] affirmed itself as the new owner of means of production while the masses in the stagnating system "actually decided on nothing" – in the late 1980s it became clear that self-management contributed to a fatal weakening of the Communist party while it did not come close to the abolition of the state. On the contrary, weakening of the federal authorities by consecutive constitutional amendments and the cohesion agenda failure led to increasing idiosyncrasies of the republics and finally, in the early 1990s, the emergence of anachronistic nation-state projects based on separatist nationalisms. By its very failure, self-management increased hopes of individual's political and economic freedom in a radically different, democratic-market paradigm in these new state entities. Stalinism and the Cold War meanwhile became historically irrelevant. Nikolić on the other hand, emphasizes the transitional nature of self-management which in its integrity is almost impossible to implement and represents therefore a very remote objective. It may be reachable in its first phase only and that is

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4 New Class was the book title of the famous criticism of Yugoslav Socialism by Montenegrin dissident writer Milovan Đilas (1911-1995).

> ... the duality of self-management and the state [in which the latter] manages foreign policy, economic development and general reproduction, while self-management is closed behind the walls of companies and other institutions. Self-management developing in the social base remains embedded in the state organization of a Socialist society (Nikolić 1989: 118).

This first phase (until 1974) alone fulfilled in SFRY the expectations related to political and economic liberalization. In the first decade of the self-management era, albeit uneven, the SFRY's growth was one of the highest in the world and SFRY became an example of one of the fastest transformations from an agrarian to a modern industrial society in history (Toplak et al. 2012: 57).

However, economically and politically this was not yet self-management in the full sense of the word as the political regime which would implement self-management from above was supposed to "renounce the power to the direct representation of workers" (Gurwitch 1973, 35). Despite public promises, this never came true. From the remaining possibilities of implementation of self-management according to Gurwitch the spontaneous self-organization of workers during a social revolution also failed (in the Soviet Union), while the third possibility – a gradual and slow transformation of autocratic and bureaucratic economic structures in a conflict with the political regime (Gurwitch 1973: 35) remains untested and may be a future aspiration.

The second important factor of failure of self-management implementation that is detectable in theory from utopian Socialists on is the insufficient education and awareness of stakeholders in the process. As mentioned earlier, Proudhon was the first to acknowledge this obstacle. In the second half of the 20th century numerous authors addressed this issue. According to Lucien Goldmann and Serge Mallet self-management was attractive only to "a segment of the working class ... related to most advanced technological development" (Goldmann et al. 1968: 67). John Galbright presents a similar argument in his book The New Industrial State (Galbright 1970: 69-80). These assessments coming from abroad were confirmed by Ljubo Sirc after the abolition of self-management: "Workers are for the most unable to take decisions requiring knowledge, experience and updated information. In the best of cases they can elect managers and insist that these consider their partial interests i.e. pay them more than the minimum wage and keep jobs at any price" (Sirc 1994: 62). Among disadvantages of the structure of the self-management system Sirc also mentioned the absence of economic initiative and sense of responsibility as

well as creation of companies based on political decisions rather than economic necessities (Sirc 1994: 117-118). I would argue that these reasons for the failure of self-management may only partially be attributed to the concept itself, while path dependence and political culture based on traditional egalitarianism, class determinism, centuries of collective subordination to the Others, nepotistic tendencies of closed communities and a specific collective development horizon, mostly limited to survival, were also at work here. This conclusion is based on observations that these factors also hindered transition processes in the post-Yugoslav time and space (Toplak et al. 2012: 183-213). Historian Janko Prunk (2002) attributed failure of the Yugoslav self-management to the "human factor" as well, i.e. to the disappearance of the key designers of the concept, Edvard Kardelj in 1979, Josip Broz Tito in 1980 and Vladimir Bakarić in 1983 (Prunk 2002: 178). According to Phillips and Ferfila Yugoslav self-management may also have been a collateral damage of the general collapse of the Socialist regimes and the debt crisis caused by policies of international monetary institutions. At the same time, there were internal systemic contradictions, dysfunctional institutions and ideological rigidity and utopianism of the whole experiment that brought it to a halt (Phillips et al. 1992: 111). Sirc partially opposed this argument when he pointed out that Kardelj brought down to earth many initial utopian elements of the self-management project and limited at first total socialization of work and income by later introduced economic planning. At last Kardelj was willing to admit that there was no system in which inequalities could be totally abolished (Sirc 1994: 26). The circle of theory and practice of self-management was thereby somewhat closed as this was the very starting point of utopian Socialists.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this paper was to find answers to the questions as follows: Why workers' self-management in Socialist Slovenia and Yugoslavia did not work? How can the concept of self-management be conceived and made relevant in the present Slovenian political and economic context? Can autonomism, which is one of the theoretical foundations of self-management, constitute an efficient alternative or threat to the neoliberal capitalism? One may answer the first question with many more or less convincing explanations on reasons for the historical failure of self-management in the Yugoslav case. Some rea-

sons have meanwhile become irrelevant to the reflection on potential revival of the system. As Sirc warned, it is hardly motivating for such reflections that one of the reasons for failure of the Yugoslav self-management was the incapacity of the political elites to learn from past mistakes or consider analytical insights (Sirc, 1994, 125). However, if I bring this intellectual challenge to the end, I argue that at present two of these reasons may contain a lesson for the future. The first considers the implementation of self-management that ran in two wrong directions and should not have been imposed either from above or from politics to economy. What remains to be tested then is the introduction of self-management from the bottom up and in the economy first. The second lesson concerns the importance of education of stakeholders in self-management processes. The results of the Bologna study reform in Europe may be closer to the idea of a technocratic anthill than the desired knowledge society, yet without a doubt the average citizen is more educated than s/he has ever been and most have at their disposal sophisticated technologies for efficient mass communication. A new factor to the benefit of some form of re-implementation of self-management is the realization that a combination of representative democracy and market economy in the imported form is an unsuitable development paradigm for Slovenia. Following Gosar's vision, we should include the specifics of Slovenian political culture and past experience in the creation of an undoubtedly needed vision of the political and economic future, which, again according to Gosar, should aim at individual's and public prosperity. In a contemporary world such a vision cannot be entirely autarkic. Such a vision should be as autonomous as possible yet connected into a collation of similarly autonomous entities, such as utopian Socialist communes.

Independence of an individual entity from the psychopathology of the "markets" would thus be achieved simultaneously to the creation of a unified front in the struggle against the global rule of the capital. Autonomism is by no means an obstacle to a federation, on the contrary. The small size of a community can be an advantage or a disadvantage and it depends entirely on itself as to whether it will show some initiative in the flexible introduction of novelties or it will merely suffocate in the tight net of inbred status quo.

Slovenia needs not to become a utopian experiment (again). There is reason for optimism when one considers that self-management as a political and economic phenomenon is coming back at the infrapolitical and microeconomic level simply because other forms of production and action have proven less efficient. Worldwide and in Slovenia, top IT companies have realized that the sooner the participa-

tion of the employees in the decision-making process the more successful the implementation of the decisions taken as the stakeholders in the implementation process have come to own these decisions, and the higher subsequently the profit (Toplak et al, 2002, 11-12). The neoliberal dogma of savings in labor costs and subsequent increase of precariat has also come to be doubted as on the one side, the differences in competitiveness of the labor force diminish and on the other side, the employers have realized that delocalization and use of the contractual precarious labor force results in lesser loyalty to the company, lesser motivation for work, lesser quality of work and inevitably, lesser profit.

When the economic system eventually ends up reorganized according to the principles of self-management as dreamed of by the utopian Socialists and the 20th century Communists, regardless of the ethics of its motives, the political sphere will also need to be reorganized since the political representation in the form of partitocracy has proven harmful and dangerous not only to prosperity, but to peace as well. The debate on the relevance of the representative democratic political system with regard to the size of the society remains relevant, while at the infrapolitical level in Slovenia, too, we have detected the interesting phenomena of spontaneous public organization of citizens according to the principles of self-management, co-management, and cooperatives. In certain cases these forms of self-organization have emerged from the "revolutionary" energy of the recent anti-government protests but have to face hard work in order to reach long-term affirmation and implementation of changes from bottom up - not a "long march through the institutions", but a long march through public opinion.

As such it will be of primary importance to consider that political language creates political reality. In this text alone it has become evident that self-management has more than one meaning and that it is necessary to contextualize it in order to avoid it becoming the victim of daily ideological disputes. Some eminent social theorists have lately attempted the rehabilitation of historically compromised and hollowed concepts such as Communism (Žižek 2012: 473-475; Badiou 2013). Such concepts are also being refreshed and revived as green capitalism, post democracy, and social economy. Yet in order to convince public opinion, so tired of everything and so eager for anything new, that is not enough. It would be better to refresh the theoretically undying, yet practically unviable concepts with really new, unburdened terms that will renew some faith in the future. Even prior to that, we should come up with convincing explanations for past mistakes and realistic plans for future prospects.

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Solidarity and the Feelings of Belonging: Textile Industrial Workers in the Socialist and Post Socialist Slovenia

Nina Vodopivec

"At the meetings and the workers' assemblies I often told everyone that we should watch over this chimney of ours and care for it; for it gives us daily bread. If we do our best, we'll succeed, and we'll all be satisfied and happy." This is how the former director of the Litija Spinning factory[1] started our conversation in May 2005. The pensioner who had managed the Litija factory for nearly thirty years tried, at the beginning of his mandate, to *"instil the feelings of belonging to the factory in the workers"* by referring to the factory's chimney. The chimney embodied the production power in the sense of classic industrialization, socialist ideology, and modernization. The former director noted that the feelings of belonging had yet to be established in the 1950s.

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1 The Litija spinning factory (established in 1889) is one of a few textile factories in Slovenia still in operation.

Building on my study of the textile industrial workers' lives in socialism (Vodopivec 2007), I argue that socialist factories (and directors) would systematically establish factory communities and a sense of belonging. Such practice was not merely a part of the socialist ideology or the Yugoslav self-management system, but an everyday reality. In the present article I address the policies and practices that have constituted different forms of belonging and which I associate with the concept of solidarity. Besides the normative solidarity, the basis of the socialist ideology and of the Yugoslav self-management system in particular[2] , I call for a more complex understanding of solidarity. I explore the concept of solidarity by addressing the meaning of a socialist textile factory, an organization of labour and workers' experiences in the socialist period and during the postsocialist transformation in Slovenia.

Textile industry played an important role in the history of industrialization in Slovenia in the 19th century, even though historians place its major development breakthrough in the 1920s and 1930s (Kresal 1976, Lazarević 2014), regarding the capital invested and people employed. At that time, 37 % of all industrial workers in Slovenia were employed in the textile sector (Kresal 1976). In socialist Slovenia (1945-1991), the number of textile workers as well as the importance of the textile industry increased and reached its peak in the 1970s. The socialist textile industrial development changed its orientation. Besides the large textile industrial centres, smaller textile factory branches opened in the rural areas. Textile industrial workers gained a new status in the socialist society. They were included in the core of the socialist modernization plan. In the last 26 years, after the collapse of the socialist system and the Yugoslav state, many textile factories went bankrupt, textile industrial workers lost their jobs, and the number of employees decreased to less than one tenth.

When we discuss solidarity in relation to textile industrial workers, we should also address their political organization, industrial class-consciousness, and increasing political power. The textile industry was important for the history of the Slovenian economy and the history of industrial workers, but it was significant for the history of women as well. From its beginning in the 19th century, employees (production workers) in the textile sector were predominantly wom-

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2 Even though the Yugoslav political system and its socioeconomic practice cannot be equated with other former socialist countries in Central and East Europe, comparisons are nevertheless possible. See Vodopivec 2007.

en. Female textile industrial workers contributed actively to the fight for the collective industrial workers' rights (particularly during the collective textile strike in 1936). The female labour force characterized the textile industry in a particular way: the society saw it as a light industry, suitable for female workers. Such representations marked its development and co-shaped the perception of textile workers in the broader society (Vodopivec 2010).

In the article, I refer to the material I gathered between 2000 and 2012; interviews with textile industrial workers (retired, employed and unemployed), managers, directors, trade unionists and office workers across Slovenia;[3] field work in the Litija spinning factory (where I worked for a couple of months in 2005); and the historical literature on industrial workers and industrial work in Slovenia. Even though some of the historical literature addresses the situation in Yugoslavia, the article remains limited to the Slovenian socialist and post-socialist situation.

FACTORY COMMUNITIES AND SOLIDARITY IN SOCIALISM

Textile factories in socialist Slovenia (1945-1991) were considered an important centre of social and cultural modernization, a driving force that raised the awareness of a predominantly rural population.[4] In spite of this political agenda, they were not merely a subject of political propaganda, nor were these processes perceived as such by the local population (Vodopivec 2012a).

Textile factories influenced the lives of various generations as well as the broader local community. Several generations of the same families were often employed at the same factory. Workers knew the factory, materials, machinery, production relations, and factory hierarchy long before they actually got employed there. The histories and memories of families were intertwined with those of the factory. This contributed to the sense of belonging to the factory and to the work experience even more profoundly.

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3 For the list of factories and a more detailed description of the fieldwork see Vodopivec 2007.

4 Such did not relate merely to the textiles but to all of the industry, yet, in relation to other industrial branches, the textile industry had a particular educative role to play (Vodopivec 2012a). My fieldwork was done among textile industrial workers but I talked to other industrial workers as well, usually textile workers' spouses or other family members, even neighbours who joined us in our conversation.

Textile factories (as well as other socialist factories) would build districts and blocks of flats, organize trips and social events, and arrange for the leisure time of their employees and their families by means of holiday homes at the seaside or in the mountains. Many retired textile workers told me that finding a job in a factory was tempting because it provided a solution to their housing problems. Such practices played a significant role, as housing problems were a pressing issue for textile workers, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s. Besides providing workplaces, factories allowed their employees to get acquainted with different lifestyles. Journeys and excursions organized by trade unions were particularly impressive, as for some employees they represented an opportunity to travel to the seaside or abroad for the first time. Factories would issue internal bulletins and report on technological improvements and employee trips, as well as publish the stories of retired workers or employees and simultaneously inform the workers of the factory operation and performance (a survey of bulletins reveals that the workers were always given a great deal of attention). The Litija spinning factory, for example, published three monographs on the factory, and every worker had at least one of these publications at home. When I visited them, they would leaf through them, proudly showing me photographs of themselves, their family and friends. The historian France Kresal, who wrote all three books, recalled the former director's aspirations to include all the workers in the book, so that they could recognize themselves in the photographs. I argue that with such practices during socialism, factory management systematically created a factory community and a sense of belonging.

By constructing the local infrastructure and structuring the leisure time activities, the factories did not only organize the lives of their employees and their families, but a considerably larger number of people. Factory communities structured and routinized everyday life, production, consumption, reproduction, as well as formal and informal social networks. Employment in the factory played a significant role in the formation of social networks, contributing to family life and integration into the local community. Factories would also build union halls that served as venues for central local ceremonies, and they had their own brass bands and choirs.

Different generations of the same family would gather in the factory for major celebrations: retired workers would be invited to sit together with their still employed children in the production halls in order to listen to the culture program and the performance of their grandchildren. The practices establishing factory communities did not only reinforce the sense of belonging in the employees, but also in the

local population; intergenerational connections were forged between the factory and local community. This is how places where solidarity could be enacted/practiced were formed.

Solidarity was a basic concept of the socialist Yugoslav ideology and its social-self management system, perpetuated by the ideology of labour and communal practices. As labour and communal solidarity practices often overlapped, I will briefly mention some of them. Normative solidarity practices included intergenerational solidarity, "voluntary" contributions in cases of accidents, for example earthquakes, fires, etc., or contributions given to the "underdeveloped regions", work actions, and brigades that built the basic infrastructure across Yugoslavia. One of the propagandized forms was voluntary work. Although it was not actually voluntary, many people have often perceived it as such or remember it this way today. Voluntary workers helped build stadiums, playgrounds, schools, restaurants, open-air cinemas, and holiday houses. Even today, in many cities across Slovenia, younger generations remember which part of the city their grandparents built. According to a historical account on voluntary work in Velenje, a Slovenian mining town, the director of the mine, who himself took part in the work, argued that such activities "united workers unobtrusively." (Kladnik 2013: 257)

Not many historical accounts exist on how socialist solidarity practices were experienced in everyday life.[5] Many foreign experts at the time found the Yugoslav participatory practices of the socialist society, social self-management, social property, and market socialism interesting. The international study by Howard Wachtel (1973) was one of the few critical works on self-management in Yugoslav factories, based on empirical data. The factories selected for the study remained anonymous and might not explicitly include any of the textile factories I have researched. I refer to this work, however, because it gives a general perception of the self-management system by the industrial workers at the time. The study focused on the decision-making power of self-management bodies – workers' councils. The results showed that the majority of industrial workers did not feel that the workers' council – and thereby the workers – had a strong influence in the decision-making process. According to 42% of workers from fifteen companies in Ljubljana, the self-management bodies actually failed in the process

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5 A more detailed historical empirical study of self-management practices and their perceptions as well as ethnographies of self-management would be needed to better understand historical realities, which I have not carried out.

of consulting the workers. The study of four Slovenian companies[6] illustrated that the companies were mainly controlled by the managers, management boards, and directors. The workers in all four companies believed that the workers' councils should have exerted the most influence. The discrepancy between the perceived and actual influence was especially felt by unskilled workers, not by the managers. Judging from the surveys, the workers wanted to have more influence, mainly with regard to the working conditions, labour relations and wages, while they were less interested in the factory's business operations.

Historian Jože Prinčič – who analyzed party policy dynamics, entrepreneurship, and the role of directors in socialism (2008) – further pointed out these discrepancies by claiming that the directors overpowered the role of the self-management bodies. As of the 1960s, the companies gained more autonomy (in relation to the Communist Party). Consequently the director's team played the central role in running the business, even though its decisions had to be formally endorsed by the workers' councils.

This point was also raised by a former director of one of the textile companies, whom I interviewed in 2001: he described the workers' councils as bodies which he had to consult in order to "justify his decisions". His statement indicates that the director would make decisions, but that he had to substantiate them.

The retired elderly female workers whom I have interviewed would rarely make any particular references to self-management themselves. Whenever the workers' councils were mentioned, younger women (born after World War II) would often ignore them or comment that they only involved more meetings, conflicts, and negotiations on irrelevant things. Nevertheless, this does mean that workers have never addressed the ideas of self-management. But their concerns did not involve the decision-making power in the workers' councils, but rather the transparency of the factory's operation and the protection of collective rights.

Although the interviewees referred to socialism as a system of greater equality between people, they did not exclude hierarchies or relationships of authority in their recollections of the past. They took the labour organization that established the hierarchy for granted, and internalized the inequalities between the hierarchies of positions (despite also being critical). However, they did not take the wage

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6 Wachtel cited the unpublished material prepared by Bogdan Kavčić, Veljko Rus and Arnold S. Tannenbaum (Control Participation and Effectiveness in Four Yugoslav Industrial Organizations. Mimeographed, 1969).

differences for granted. The director-to-worker pay ratio was one to four, pointed out the female interviewees, and *"the pay scale was disclosed on the notice board."*

A retired older employee of the Litija spinning factory told me that the director helped *"the children earn their bread."* Such portrayals were common among many retired workers; the directors were seen as fathers, providing welfare for the employees' children (Vodopivec 2012a). The expectations that the directors should help workers with their children were also noted during my fieldwork in 2005.

The older retired generations would often refer to their lives and relationships in the factory as family life.[7] *"We were truly a family in the factory,"* commented an older retired woman in Litija (2003). As he described his attitude to the employees, the former director used similar family-life metaphors: *"The factory was my first home, and my wife and children came second."* The former directors of other textile companies pointed out their responsibility and concern for the employees, particularly women. This relation between directors, female workers and factories can be interpreted in the context of socialist paternalism. Socialist paternalism, however, was not considered repressive; people perceived it as the factories' concern for the employees.

The archive of the workers' council meetings of the Ljubljana-based Pletenina Textile Company provided me with an insight into the vivid and dynamic debates during council meetings in the 1960s. The workers' representatives in various commissions actively participated whenever the management would present business plans. They made suggestions with regard to labour organization, reported on day-to-day work-related problems, in particular regarding the relationships on the shop floor, in production, and circumstances external to the factory environment.[8]

When reading the meeting reports, I was surprised by the attention given to social policies and the harmonization of the employees' family and work environment: this is something that demonstrates a complex understanding of their interaction. I am mentioning this because of the different understanding of the basic concepts, social expectations, conceptual schemes, and social structures related to both

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7 The older generations of retired workers, born before the World War II, experienced both systems –capitalism before the war and socialism after it. For them the change was profound. In addition, such metaphors can be interpreted in the context of memory construction processes or life histories narrated in old age. For additional information see Vodopivec 2007.

8 The structure of meetings, together with the employees' participation, started to change in the process of economic restructuring in the 1970s.

the understanding of solidarity and the formation of the conditions or opportunities for its development in the socialist past and during postsocialist transformation.

Development, according to the socialist scenario, was not limited merely to numbers, capital and production growth, but rather anticipated the modernization of the society, construction of the basic infrastructure (roads, electrification, communal facilities, etc.), as well as the improvement of the personal and social standard of people.[9] At the time, living standard assumed the collective fulfilment of needs, health, social security, and adequate working and living conditions of employees. The analysis shows that the most attention was given to housing (the issue was critical), establishment of food canteens within factories, childcare facilities, assignments to other suitable workplaces within the company, identification of occupational diseases, etc. All these fields of social care were very important for textile workers. Due to the unsuitable working conditions, textile workers most often suffered from rheumatic (spine) and chronic respiratory diseases, directly related to their living conditions and working conditions in particular.

SOLIDARITY AND LABOUR ORGANIZATION ON THE SHOP FLOOR IN SOCIALIST TEXTILE FACTORIES

The socialist ideology encouraged competition among the various textile factories and among the shifts within a single factory. It was very important that the shifts met their production norms. The production norm occupied a crucial role in the workers' memories. Besides the shifts, individuals had to meet these quotas as well, which resulted in conflicts, tension, and competition. The production norm system would often provoke nervousness and fear.

Many workers claimed that they had been upset because of the high production norms. Yet they qualified women who failed to achieve them as incompetent or not sufficiently hardworking. The production norms discriminated people, in particular separating blue-collar workers from their supervisors and white collars. It prevented the workers from vacating their workplaces and inhibited mobility.

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9 The developmental economic and social tasks were not perceived equally by all companies. There were socialist factories that even opposed a more active social policy. However, in the context of socialist modernization, social concern for the employees was institutionalized.

The apparent autonomy of norms played an important role in the wage payment system; the workers would blame themselves for failure (Burawoy 1985: 171). On the other hand, due to this apparent autonomy the workers felt that they could organize and control their work. Some interviewees argued that norms were fairer, as one was paid in accordance with one's actual performance. However, the opinions of the production norms in the past remained contradictory.

Retired female workers told me that sometimes they did not want to leave their workplace, not even for a lunch break, in order to perform better. Such dedication was not popular among the workers. On the other hand, retired employees would also mention women who "did not try hard enough" and "paid for it" in their old age due to lower pensions.

However, the younger workers argued that due to the socialist practice of equalizing wages, it did not matter how hard one worked. They claimed that elderly women in particular could not keep up with the speed. The younger generations had to produce more to fulfil the shift norm.

Elderly women, on the other hand, knew the machines better and they had more work experience. They were usually highly respected among the other workers (technicians and supervisors), and they were also the ones who would teach the younger generations and newly-employed workers. The newcomers depended on their older colleagues, and if they did not mentor them, the newcomers could learn the process incorrectly. Thus they worked more slowly, and consequently did not meet the norm or they executed the task incorrectly. In this way, the older and more experienced workers would retain authority and influence.

The plurality of different disciplining mechanisms marked the production workers' experiences – besides the labour organization also gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, family histories, etc. – and constrained or enabled solidarity. The organization of labour in the factories established a system of production and formed the workers' subjectivities, relations between people, and different forms of belonging. In production, the employees were divided into technicians, supervisors, and machine operators; and jobs were divided between men and women. However, the division that influenced the employees most profoundly was between production and offices.

Although the organization of labour in the socialist factories in Slovenia was similar to the Fordist division into small units on the production line, these units were not equal – similarly as the Yugoslav self-management model cannot be equated with other socialist

countries. Nevertheless, even in socialist Slovenia the factory regimes were determined by political decisions, quota systems, lack of machinery and resources, and in particular by the system of soft budget constraints[10]. Consequently, directors were forced to accumulate stock and to think and act in such a way as to gain control over resources. The negotiations between the factory directors and the state (political officials), as well as between the workers and their superiors, affected the centralization of power in the factories, while simultaneously establishing the factory communities, the sense of solidarity within the factories and among their employees in particular. Factory managers had to deal with outdated technology, lack of resources, and complicated administration due to the large number of production workers. The relationship that formed between the management and production workers enabled the latter to obtain – in exchange for extra hours and hard work – guaranteed posts, social security, various bonuses, shares of the profit, and other benefits, such as access to education, housing, and family and child assistance (i.e. scholarships, summer jobs, etc.). Being somewhat dependent on the production workers, the management would grant the workers more autonomy and flexibility in their work organization. Many textile industrial workers were semi-proletariat: they retained access to land by themselves or through their extended family. Land cultivation contributed to a better living standard of many industrial workers. During major seasonal works on their land, the workers would be absent from their respective factories. Such practice, often tolerated by factory managers, could be interpreted in the context of the same silent pact between production workers and factory managers. In socialism, formal and informal economy interlinked in a particular way; the latter served as an important security tool and was based on reciprocity and trust, social networks of factory communities (which also often overlapped with kin), neighbourhood relationships, rural communities, and personal/family friendships. The specific relationship of trust between the factory and its employees enacted solidarity.

The value attributed to industrial labour was formed through the relations between people, objects, and tools, on the shop floor,

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10 By using the economy of shortage concept (coined by János Kornai in 1980), socialism was presented as a system of various modes of negotiations between administrative politics and factories. By addressing the shortages within planned economies and processes of negotiations, anthropologists in particular put the focus on studying the practices at the everyday level (considering individual choices, decisions and strategies), thus treating individuals under socialism as agents as well (Vodopivec 2007).

within a particular local community, and in the broader society.[11] Yet, labour was more than just a technological process, a rational or competitive activity subject to capital or political ideology. It was an embodied experience. In production, the embodied dimension of labour was direct and evident. The work was characterized by a number of non-verbal aspects that united production workers and simultaneously created specific body memories. These aspects could include many occupational diseases suffered by workers that operated similar machines or were employed in the same branch of textile industry. Recognizing common feelings, sharing experiences, and embodying skills also united the workers and initiated solidarity. I experienced that myself: after working in production for a while, I suffered from neck pain, burning feet, dry eyes; and thus I was able to relate to many life stories of the women I interviewed and feel connected to them.

THE POSTSOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION

The policies and practices of the factory community formation changed during the period of postsocialist restructuring, enhanced by the admission of Slovenia into the EU and the intensification and flexibilisation of labour. *"We are a joint-stock company, however the workers and pensioners are still major shareholders,"* stated a supervisor in 2004.[12] *"What I'm saying is that we're still somewhat old-school."* When asked what that meant, he said: *"Back then* (under socialism) *everybody owned everything and yet nothing. Now with private property, if twenty people invest money in the factory, it becomes theirs. No social property anymore. As I say to our workers at the meetings, now the factory might belong to us more than it did before. Earlier it wasn't ours."*

However, the interpretation of what is "ours" changed. The concept of joint-stock companies is closely related to the notion of ownership. This is a perception that was not shared by people in the socialist past. In the interpretations of the socialist past, "our factory"

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11 In Slovenia, the value of machine-operating physical labour started to change, in terms of its social value, already in the 1970s. Today, machine-operating physical labour is not an asset in the labour market. However, as I argue in my fieldwork, "knowing" a machine – i.e. operating it in the true sense of the word – still matters in the production of the Litija spinning factory. In fact, it calls for specific knowledge and skills, where experience is considered more important than school education.

12 Similar to many other companies in Slovenia, the Litija spinning factory was privatized through an internal buy-out. It became a joint-stock company in 1995 and a limited liability company in 2005.

refers to the concept of belonging. Socialist factories systematically promoted the sense of belonging and constructed the workers' identities. Workers were perceived as social beings that satisfy their social needs for social security. Unlike today, social security was considered a nucleus serving the development of the workers' belonging and identity. Belonging was a network of entitlements, social relations, rights, obligations, duties and reciprocities.

In postsocialism, the workers' altered position in everyday life is characterized by inequality and power relations. In such a context, the difference between us and them is marked by the division between workers and factories. The factory that the workers used to refer to as *"*our factory*"* is now perceived as their opponent. They reproach *"*corrupted young managers*"* and the state that enables and tolerates their actions.

This is related to the restructuring of the labour market that redefined the workers' subjectivity, transformation of management regimes (within human resource management), and discipline techniques. The focus of human resource management[13] shifted from group relations to the individual: to their autonomy and creativity. Workers were no longer considered social beings that satisfied their need for solidarity and security through group relations. They were treated as individuals who construct their identities through work.

Loyalty and belonging remain important qualities of an individual, the so-called soft skills that an individual needs to acquire and market (Vodopivec 2012b), but they are no longer a part of the factory community policies, as was the case in the times of socialist factories. In terms of the redefined social and employment policies in the postsocialist market economy (in particular after the accession to the EU), today's society does not pay the same kind of attention to the harmonization of family and work environment.

Contemporary active employment policy in Slovenia actually promotes individualization, the policy of the individual's activation; workers themselves should ensure their employability, and the state is not obliged to provide it anymore – it is merely supposed to assist them. It is no longer about employment, but employability – i.e., the ability to transform professional profiles. The flexibilisation of the labour market was introduced as rationalization of social security costs within the EU. The modernization of social security systems was based on shifting (more) responsibility to the individual. The state was sup-

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13 This is related to the general transformation of the workers' subjectivities rather than merely to industrial workers.

posed to become more efficient on the account of responsible and informed citizens and the outsourcing of social services.

Social transformations resulted in the invention of new vocabularies and expectations – social rights, for example, were renamed as social transfers. These reforms changed the way they tackle or explain social problems, exclusions, and structural conditionality. Structural reforms were accompanied by the stigmatization that served as a form of control, a way of disciplining the society. Unemployment and poverty were not considered structural problems, but rather the results of people's personal decisions and their lack of motivation (Leskošek 2014).

Drawing on works by the sociologist Nikolas Rose (1998), I see that the self-responsibilisation – stemming from the withdrawal of the state from social provision, marketization of labour and health, and from the transformation of workers' and citizens' "subjectivities" – has changed the way we understand and treat social conditionality and class relations. The self-responsibility paradigm is the matrix that emphasizes self-dependency and self-reliance with idea that "we cannot count on anyone but ourselves". Nikolas Rose draws attention to self-regulatory mechanisms, the contemporary role of economics, management, and entrepreneurship in order to create an entrepreneurial self that urges us to steer our lives and ourselves as a business. In this context, entrepreneurship is not merely an organizational or a business model, but it establishes the ideal of the individual's activity in different spheres of life; we should all think, behave and act as entrepreneurs. Business methodologies establish new ways of thinking in order to maximize productivity, competency, and efficiency with the aim of ensuring economic and personal growth.

I do not claim that these processes are totalizing. However, I want to point out the social effects that result from these processes: firstly, risk and responsibility are shifted from the institutions onto the individuals' shoulders; secondly, those who cannot adapt and "be flexible" become socially excluded; and thirdly, such expectations are internalised, and failure to fulfil them results in feelings of guilt.

In the first period of socio-economic restructuring after the attainment of Slovenian independence in the 1990s, all key players were included in the redistribution of the former social property: state (administrative policy), employers (managers), and workers (unions). The social pact terminated after EU accession (2004). In the second period, which radicalized the relationships, workloads increased and wage growth was systematically restrained (Stanojević 2010). The third period of changes coincided with the third wave of privatization; the radicalization of relations among workers, employers, and state; and Slovenia's

entry into the Eurozone. The third wave (managerial buy-outs) had material and strong psychological effects, as privatizations dramatically deepened mistrust in the society (Stanojević 2010, Lorenčič 2012).

Labour market flexibilisation is related to the redefinition of labour. The imperative of the contemporary organization of labour is competitiveness – in the labour market as well as in production. Such production reorganization pits workers against each other, as they become each other's competition. Based on interviews with redundant workers from the Mura Textile Company,[14] tension and mistrust among the blue-collar workers has increased over recent years. The loss of trust among workers has resulted in the decrease of social capital in industrial collectives and consequently in the broader social environment. In a town where people know each other, tension and mistrust not only pose a problem at the workplace, but also in the local community.

In the new competitive context, many textile factories (those that have not closed) have transformed into organizations with flexible production. The first managerial "move" in labour-intensive export-oriented companies was to exacerbate the internal regulation mechanisms. The intensification (during the integration process and after EU admission) escalated the system of rigid internal authoritative regulations (Stanojević 2010). As explained by Silva, a former Mura worker, the working conditions changed; the procedures in production were only set up in theory, and it was never *physically tested whether such work could be executed in practice.* The working time did not include the time-consuming preparation (different materials require different machines), the time spent waiting for the materials, or the fact that machines might require repairs in the event of failure. The shortage of consumables (scissors, thread, spools, and shuttles) prevented the workers from performing their tasks on time, while the production norm was simultaneously increased. The working procedures were additionally aggravated by other conditions: *"We couldn't make the air conditioning work. It was hot, 42 degrees. And you could only meet the production norm by working between eight and ten hours. Now we are all allergic to bad air and heat. It doesn't surprise me that some die of stroke now. The pressure and impossible conditions have left a mark on us. We were like baby chicks under light bulbs."*[15]

Additionally, the textile industry (as well as many other industrial branches) in Slovenia has suffered from management buyouts

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14 In the socialist Slovenia, Mura became one of the largest ready-to-wear textile companies. The Mura Textile Company went bankrupt in 2009.

15 Interview, Murska Sobota, June 2011.

and the depletion of company assets. The number of employees in the textile industry dropped to less than one tenth over the last twenty years.[16] Factories have closed, and the unemployed textile workers have often had to fight in court for overdue wages, severance pays, and other social contributions. Social contributions have been deducted from their salaries, but not paid to the state for health, social insurance, or pension scheme.

Industrial workers, the central protagonist in the socialist modernization plan, have lost their previous institutionalized position. The reformed labour market policies have redefined the workers' subjectivities, production relations, and conditionality. The transformation has affected the way they understand and practice solidarity.

CONCLUSION

The narratives about solidarity in the socialist past are contradictory. During interviews, people may often claim that solidarity used to be more pronounced in socialism than today. Nevertheless, no fixed places of everyday solidarity can be identified in the sense that people perceived them as such directly.

Daniel Barbu argues that there was no solidarity in communist Romania, despite the political propaganda implying that there was. However, he points out that the short-term; nomadic forms of solidarity should also be considered, such as queuing (Barbu 1998, cited after Bădică 2012). Despite being despised, subject to criticism, and a laughing stock, queues established a form of sociality (people sharing information on products or standing in a queue for somebody else) that reinforced the solidarity of those who waited in queues against the system. Although Slovenia with its self-management system cannot be compared to Romania, I agree with Barbu's idea of nomadic solidarity during socialism, which was, in Slovenia, demonstrated by opposition to the system as well. To "trick the system" or "be resourceful" is the most common reference in many memories. I am referring to the example because it addresses other forms of solidarity besides the normative or institutionalized ones. This is what I have strived for in this article.

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16 The term textile industry, used in the article, refers to the production of textiles, clothing, footwear, and leather (according to the categorization of the Textiles, Clothing and Leather Processing Association at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia).

In the paper, I draw attention to the places where short-term solidarity was demonstrated in everyday life. In addition to normative solidarity and different political institutions, ideologies and day-to-day life, socialist textile factories constituted particular places where solidarity could be practiced, as they established factory communities and implemented a specific labour organization. However, I argue that a more detailed study of the historical materials would be required in order to better understand how solidarity was experienced and understood during socialism.

In their narratives of the socialist past, the workers would refer to "our factory", believed in it, and spoke of it favourably. This did not mean that they have never been upset with it, never taken any stock from the factory and used it for their personal needs, mocked the ideas of community actions, or complained about them. Yet they were proud to show the extent of their investments. People had taken many collective rights for granted and started to refer to them once they were gone. Within the collective, industrial workers would identify themselves as the promoters of social development and the central political subject of socialist modernization, whereas today they are confronted with material and symbolic impoverishment. This is especially true of industrial workers, although the self-responsibility paradigm and structural adjustments have affected the workers' and citizens' subjectivities in general, as well as everybody's working and living conditions. The self-responsibility paradigm has not only shifted risk from society to the individual, but has also redefined its role: the individualized social conditions and circumstances are presented as the result of an individual's wills, their choices and abilities. Institutionalized solidarity has shrunk, and the conditions for solidarity that may be practiced on an everyday level have changed. However, we should not claim that solidarity has shifted completely to the private and intimate area of family life or to the occasional humanitarian contributions.

Many researchers and trade union movements point to the decline of the traditional workers' solidarity based on citizenship, social rights, and intergenerational solidarity. With flexibilisation and precarity, individualization has resulted in the de-collectivization of spaces where solidarity could be constituted. The reorganization of labour, precarity and the importance of competiveness make any sort of unification difficult, though not impossible. A more detailed study would be needed in order to identify and explore the contemporary places of solidarity in relation to working communities and working experiences, also with the aim of identifying its political potentials.

The article aimed to provide an overview of the different forms of solidarity in socialist Slovenia and within the changed structural conditions in postsocialism, in relation to work experiences and sentiments of belonging. At the same time the paper strived to broaden the discussion on solidarity by calling for a more complex understanding.

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Trade Unions' Fragmentation in Slovenia: The Causes and Practical Lessons

Gorazd Kovačič

NEO-CORPORATIST TRADE UNIONS AND THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF SOLIDARITY

Trade unions emerged in their early period in the 19th century as small groups for horizontal solidarity within plants, providing assistance in cases of illness and loss of job in the context of a complete absence of government's social functions. In the next step, they adapted their strategies of acting and the organisation structure to the concentration of industrial production within large factories with mass labourers, so they transformed into big institutions. Their actions, including solidarity, became institutionalised and they tended to generalise them to the burden of governmental bodies and policies. The peak of this policy of the workers' movement was achieved within the neo-corporatist regime of industrial relations regulation after the Second World War,

when trade unions became a social partner, which successfully negotiated wages, the legal security of workers, their working conditions, and welfare policies with the Chamber of Commerce and the government in the context of a great economic growth and full employment. They achieved a legislative role through co-signing collective agreements. Since the development of this institutional framework, the mode how the unions exercise solidarity can no longer be comprehended as direct assistance only, but also as being integrated into wider institutional arrangements. The rationale for this way of acting is to pursue the members' interests.

The engagement of the unions in social partnership and in the never-ending collective negotiations generated internal bureaucratisation and a split between the union's leadership and the members. The decision-making was centralised and the members comprehended their relation to the union as an instrumental one: they expected the leadership to realise workers' economic interests, while the members could mostly remain passive. In the long period of economic conjuncture up to the 70s, this division of work was not dysfunctional; but since then trade unions have been forced to play a defensive role, the regulation of industrial relations has tended to be decentralised which has increased the power of management within companies, and union members have been disappointed. Furthermore, the unions, which have thus so far mostly associated qualified industrial blue collars, have had serious problems trying to integrate an increasing population of much more various white collars and a critically rising segment of precarious workers, in whose favour the unions' legal assistance services cannot do much using the employment legislation. Consequently, trade union density has been decreasing everywhere across Europe since the 1980s.

TRADE UNIONS IN POST-SOCIALIST SLOVENIA

This development, characteristic of European trade unions, has been repeated in Slovenia, too, in a shorter period since 1990. The neocorporatist framework developed in the mid-90s, after the unions had organised a one day-long general strike as a response to the difficult social situation following the collapse of Yugoslavia and its market, and to the government's plan to restrain the high inflation rate by freezing salaries. After that the right-wing government soon lost elections, and the following left-centre governments realised that the inflation rate

should be dealt with through a social dialogue on salaries. They established a neo-corporatist system, and joined the trend of its renewal in Western Europe in the 1990s, where consensual cutting of the inflation rate facilitated the convergence into the common European currency. Within social partnership, Slovenian unions achieved the preservation of a relatively high standard of open-ended employments' legal security, an inter-generational solidarity public pension system, and a relatively wide-ranging welfare state (Stanojević 2010: 123).

But within only one decade, negative lateral effects of this historical deal started to emerge. Lower-productivity companies competed with the strained international competition by intensifying work and by spreading precarious segments of employments. These increased up to 40% of the labour-active population before the financial crisis of 2008, and until now they have already exceeded a half of it (Kramberger 2007: 76; Kovačič 2016). In companies, temporary "survival coalitions" have emerged (Stanojević 2004: 127), based on an exchange of an increasing quantity of work and a more and more flexible working time for safe jobs with very low salaries, making possible only survival or a life with a low material standard. An informal economy has been their external condition, but this welfare model has had two limits. The first is a longer-term one: the health exhaustion of such double-workers will eventually become a social cost, and an increasing one. The second limit is a mid-term one: in the years before the crisis, the prolonged work-days started to critically reduce the spare-time available for additional incomes from the informal economy (Stanojević 2010: 128). Younger generations have paid a huge price for these temporary strategies of keeping price competitiveness despite technological underdevelopment of an important part of the Slovenian economy. They have been hit extraordinarily by the segmentation of the labour force market, and their welfare perspective in the elderly age has not been optimistic due to the low social security payments and demographic decline. Inter-generational interest splits have had political consequences, too: a high rate of distrust of the system and the elites, the volatility of the electorate body, a quick de-unionisation after joining the EU in 2004 (Broder 2016: 41), and after 2011 also net emigration of young and highly educated people. Slovenian trade unions have not yet found efficient answers to these structural trends and challenges.

The unions in Slovenia started to lose their members after accession to the EU and the ERM in 2004. The working and social conditions in the Slovenian industry worsened after the abandonment of the floating exchange rate policy that had supported exporting com-

panies. Moreover, financialization (Blyth 2013; Pettis 2013; Krugman 2012; Koo 2015; Becker 2013) and an inflow of cheap foreign credits (Drenovec 2015: 149–167) stimulated a series of management takeovers that added to the financial burdens of companies. A higher inflation rate caused by the inflow of foreign loan money affected the purchasing power. Despite a nominal economic growth, the situation of Slovenian workers worsened in their working places as well as in consumption, since the conjuncture was not based on increasing productivity, but on taking debts. Great public expectation about "European salaries and material standard" after EU accession, which was the main slogan with which the political elite promoted its central political goal, turned into great disappointment. The combination of all the listed breaks caused the workers' realisation that the neo-corporatist political exchange serving the EU accession gradually caused an unbearable situation. The neo-corporatist regime "changed into a mechanism of strong internal self-exploitation" (Stanojević 2010: 137); thus, Slovenian unions "became victims of the neo-corporatist system they had co-created" (Stanojević 2010: 132).

Stanojević deems that the unions had an opportunity to change their strategy of action to a more determined class mobilisation after the massive protest in November 2005 against the government's plan to introduce a flat tax rate. But instead, they decided to renew neo-corporatist negotiations and "became part of an unequal political exchange of the government abandonment of the flat-tax idea for a revival of Economic-Social Council and the inflation restraint. The question of privatisation was excluded from this exchange". Within this constellation, trade unions agreed to the role of a legitimiser of processes worsening the workers' situation and, consequently, "the previously indicated opportunity for class integration started to go to ruin" (Stanojević 2015: 413).

At the beginning of the 1990s, the union density in Slovenia was around 2/3 of the working population; later it decreased due to the downfall of many large companies, and eventually it stabilised at 40–44%. In the few years following EU accession, this share was reduced by one third, as a consequence of the widespread disappointment about the results of the unions' neo-corporatist strategy at the micro level. This trend continued and intensified during the economic crisis, which started in late 2008. Labour intensity, low salaries, numerous bankruptcies of big companies, threatening unemployment, the struggle of companies and households for bare survival, cuts in public spending and, consequently, the defensive attitude of trade unions caused a further decrease in the number of members. In 2015 the

union density fell to 20% of the work force (Broder 2016: 41). This number should be interpreted in the light of the restructuring of the economy and the segmentation of employees. The collapse of many large companies in the 90s and during the last crisis, and the move of workers into small businesses and self-employment, has changed their structural conditions, so that it is hard to expect them to stay in the unions. The power over the employees in small companies is much more severe and direct, and the chances for company unions acting there are much smaller. Also, the unions hardly give legal assistance to precarised workers, due to the lack of efficient legal means within the employment legislature. In the meantime, the union density within many larger employing organisations is still 40–50%.

In addition to the quantitative reduction of union members, their demographic and professional structure has changed significantly, too, and this impacts on relations and dynamics between the unions. The members have been ageing quickly which, together with the decreasing union density, means that the existing members have got older, while there are not enough new, younger ones coming in (Broder 2016: 16–17). The share of union members with secondary and tertiary levels of education has been increasing (Broder 2016: 19–21), which can be explained not only by a general rise in the level of education, but also by a transformation of the members' structure from formerly outstandingly prevailing blue collars to white collars. According to the pool data, from the beginning of the 90s to the outburst of the economic crisis of 2008, 64–74% of all union members were employed in the business sector and the core of the members were classic industrial workers. This share has dropped rapidly since then, and in 2015 no more than 37% of the members came from the business sector, all the others were from the public one (Broder 2016: 31).[1] Another important indication has been a deep change in the union density among the employees in the business and in the public sector. According to the pool data, the density in the public sector was around 70% from 1990 to 2003; after EU accession and during the

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1 These data are probably not fully correct. The longitudinal pool *Slovenian Public Opinion,* which is their source and is the only publically available source of information about the union density, in 2015 surveyed the proportions between employees in the business and in the public sectors at 65 : 35, while the official statistical data said it was 72 : 28. This difference indicates that the pool was not fully successful in covering a certain segment of the employees in the private sector. Nevertheless, the data point out an enormous change in the sector structure within union members, as the share of the private sector workers within the total work force has decreased by only a couple of percentage points during the crisis (Broder 2016: 29-31).

first years of the crisis, it fell to 57%, and after 2013 it stabilised at 42%. The density in the business sector was 45–50% before 2003, and since then it has been rapidly falling so that in 2015 it reached no more than 13% of the work force (Broder 2016: 32). We should note, however, that in certain branches, such as metal and electro, paper, and chemical industries, as well as partly in the trade branch, the union density has remained relatively high, even up to 40%, according to the insider information I received. But this means that the above-listed structural difficulties of private-sector workers have decimated the number of the members and the power of other business-sector unions in comparison with the situation in the 1990s.

The breakdown of trade unions in important parts of industries and business services has increased the relative power of public-sector unions. These cover very different white-collar professions with various problems and interests. This situation – together with a generally defensive role of the unions and with the existential troubles of union professionals due to the decrease in the number of members – has produced strong interest fragmentation among public-sector unions. Some of them have radicalised, as the leaders have been addressing their bases more aggressively. The consent and cooperation among them in common actions has become more difficult to achieve. They have tended to play one against another in their separate and partial struggles, especially because the restrictive public spending (austerity measures) has pushed them into a zero-sum game in terms of gains from the government's budget.

THE RISE OF INTEREST FRAGMENTATION

Miroslav Stanojević, the most prominent expert on industrial relations in Slovenia, has briefly mentioned the interest fragmentation of Slovenian trade unions in several places in his texts,[2] but he has not put forward a satisfactory analysis and explanation of the phenomenon. At the level of the notion, he has pointed to different levels of union organisations and acting: to the plurality of union confederations, to the extent of their organisational (de)centralisation, to parallel activities of several branch or branch and profession unions, especially

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2 In 2010, he gave an estimation, derived from pool data, that it "has potentially grasped at a half of the unionised population" (Stanojević 2010: 132), while my observations from practice show that this tendency is very strong all over the unions' scene.

within the public sector, and to their conflicting goals. Stanojević has offered several sporadic explanations of this phenomenon, but they are epistemologically heterogeneous. Some of them are structural, such as the thesis on the influence of the rising share of public servants within the unions' movement, and of their professional diversity (Stanojević, 1996: 14, 82); another one concerns the split of branch unions between the top, communicating mostly with its political environment and getting involved in macro political exchanges, and the unionists in companies, cooperating with management in order to save enterprises and jobs (Stanojević 2010: 133). Another type of interpretation is based on comprehending unions as actors, and it explains fragmentation as a result of their strategic mistakes. Such is the thesis that, after a huge protest in November 2005, Slovenian unions missed the opportunity for the formation of a class movement, and returned to social partnership under the conditions of concession bargaining; therefore, they have regressed into economism, which produces strong interest fragmentation. But the author continues this argumentation by claiming that room for historical opportunity appeared rarely, and that in general the present structural constellation leads spontaneously into economism (Stanojević 2015: 413–414).[3]

A historical ascertainment that in worsened economic circumstances, those national unions that have included class mobilisation in their strategies are in the least bad position (Stanojević 2015: 414), or the author's political statement that interest fragmentation is counterproductive in the neo-corporatist model as well as in its alternative of class mobilisation, cannot be analytically stronger than the fact that fragmentation is very strong, especially in the public sector. The negative assessment of interest fragmentation comes out of a political wish for unity among the unions that could be useful for union activities, but this should not prevent someone from analysing the internal dynamics of the unions' scene. Such an analysis can disclose which mechanisms and strategies at the micro level strengthen or restrain the generation of interest fragmentation. By taking this step[4] we shall develop an alternative mode of thinking about how to reorganise unions and their

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3 Another case of a tactical type of explanation is Stanojević's statement that fragmentation is a consequence of the strategically missed Representativeness of Trade Unions Act, 1993, which defined low threshold conditions for gaining representativeness for unions and confederations, and it did not prescribe periodical checks and procedures for the dispossession of this status if the number of members decreases; such a mechanism should stimulate unifications (Stanojević and Broder 2013: 304).

4 This analytical step has not been made by Stanojević, as he has been interested only in the general dynamics on the unions' scene, but not also in its internal diversity.

strategies in a productive way, so that they will adopt and integrate the fact of interest fragmentation and will thus limit their further collapse.

At the structural level, firstly, we state that interest fragmentation of the trade unions is a consequence of the multiple interest fragmentation of workers, in terms of their working situations as well as their segmented legal positions. The main mechanisms generating fragmentation are the spreading of small enterprises in the business sector, the diversity of professions in the public sector, and also the segmentation of the labour power market in both. Secondly, in addition to the structural changes in the labour market, the particular interest policies of some of the public sector unions aiming at the common public budget stimulate offences and jealousy of the other unions, and also within them.

The concrete aspects of the fragmentation of Slovenian trade unions will be presented here following their organisational stratification into three levels: confederations, core unions, and unions within every single working organisation or even within its units. The lower level unions are collective members of those at higher levels. The sum number of all formally registered unions is several thousand. Hardly anybody – apart from the insiders (union functionaries and officials) – knows the whole three-level construction and complicated relations within it.

Confederations (at the moment, there are nine of them, and the establishment of the tenth is being prepared, even if only three are functional and capable of leading national policies) are structured by several different logics. Some of them are composed of several trade unions of wider branches. In some cases, there are also unions of narrower branches, professions and specific legal statuses of workers. One of the confederations has a regional identity. Some of them were established for ideological reasons, as right-wing parapolitical party organisations. The very differences between the basic principles of structure have brought about the possibilities for the overlapping of competences and rivalry between the unions operating in certain branches or employing organisations. Besides the high number of confederations, fragmentation also consists of the fact that some of them are internally very lax formations and they do not articulate their policies centrally, but through the hegemony of the partial agendas of their stronger core member unions. Within an asymmetric confederation, the partial interests of the strongest member union can be enforced as the confederation's official policy, even if its effects for others are a zero-sum game. Consequently, such paternalism triggers tensions between different branch unions, and leads to the establishment of alternative

unions in other confederations. One of the main generators of such dynamics is the Education, Science and Culture Trade Union of Slovenia, which is by far the largest union in the public sector, and which leads one of the confederations in the way of favouring its own partial agenda. Although its declared statement is in favour of centralising the unions' scene, its policy has caused just the opposite, i.e. self-defensive fragmentation and the establishment of new unions in the disregarded branches.

The mutual acceleration of the stronger groups' interest partialism and the separatism of the weaker ones have appeared inside branch unions, too. The reasons for that are as follows. A frequent phenomenon is an enforcement of the interest hegemony of a basic profession within a branch to the detriment of assistant professions. The hierarchy of the vocations has been transmitted from working relations to the union's agenda, so that a nominally branch union has in fact acted as the union of the core profession. The reactions of members from other vocations have been the establishment of unions of professions or alternative branch unions in which professionally specific members have prevailed. A similar phenomenon has been the interest hegemony of a more massive narrow branch over those which are few in number, and the last have formed their own unions. In some of the cases, a new union has been established because of the passivisation of the previous one, when it was usurped by a leadership clinging to its positions because of their personal interests. Some of the industry unions have become completely inactive and have thus lost numbers of its members, but the existing leaders block any renewal and are nevertheless able to survive financially, because the union accumulated certain means in the past. Even if the organisation is nominally still a trade union, it has in fact transformed into a little financial or real-estate holding, while its unsatisfied members have been escaping to its competitors.

In Slovenia, the most difficult fragmentation in forms of parallel unions as well as unions of narrower branches, and of professions, is in the field of the health system. A very strong hierarchy among professions, the non-transparent mingling of public and private health services, the decay of the public health system, and private by-passes of public system doctors are the structural circumstances that have an impact on the trade unions in the health field. Consequently, there is no real whole-branch union with a balanced covering of interests of all of its professions that would enable it to seek allies among users. Instead, there are several vocational unions (even if some of them are nominally declared as being branch unions) and a sharp interest rivalry between them dominates the scene.

Before 2008, single strong public sector unions periodically organised strikes and other forms of pressure, in order to gain and improve privileged material positions of their core professions. The result was the accumulation of salary imbalances and a lack of transparency over all salary supplements. The government then adopted the law on the uniform salary system in the public sector in 2002, and implemented it after six years of negotiations on placements of all the job positions into the new system. Because of the union partialism in the period of the negotiations, the new salary system fixed the imbalances, reflecting the inequalities of power between the unions. The existence of anomalies was generally acknowledged, but their elimination was frozen by the emergence of the financial crisis and the following austerity policies. The frozen imbalances have become a source of new tensions between the public sector unions and of deepening their fragmenting. After an improvement of the economic situation and the government's fiscal condition in 2015, the expectations of underpaid groups of civil servants have grown, and partial achievements of some unions using strikes and protest meetings have become targets of jealous outrage by the others. This complicated coordination between the unions, competing against one another for the same sack of public money, has become more difficult. It seems that the deepening interest fragmentation has become irreversible and that there is no neutral authority able to turn this process.

Besides this general constellation, what needs to be considered are those trade unions in the public sector with a relatively big ability to mobilise their members. Such cases are the unions of doctors, of single uniformed occupations (policemen, soldiers, fire-fighters), and of school and nursery teachers. In all the cases, these are the core occupations of the branch. Constrictions of their unions' agendas to one profession's focus have produced an identification pivot, attractive enough for more individualistically oriented white collars. The strongest public sector unions act as unionist versions of professional associations. Their answer to the challenge of the diversity of working conditions, which in the past was the reason for a lower union density in comparison to the qualified blue collars, was getting smaller. Their size reflects the fragmentation of the field of work in public services. What members expect from such focused unions is covering their specific interests and problems of their specific working conditions, and not a kind of general class interest. They are ready for involvement in a union if it is sensitive to their specific needs. Mobilisation for wider goals and principles is much more difficult to expect. This existing perspective of the white collars should be the key for a proper organising of the trade unions at all the three levels.

A PRODUCTIVE ADAPTATION OF UNION'S INTERNAL STRUCTURE TO INTEREST FRAGMENTATION

The key point that needs to be taken from the currently most successful model of the organising of individual unions, i.e. identity and programme compact profession unions in the public sector, is the fact that the field of working practices has diversified into numerous niches. Therefore, the internal organising of every union should reflect this external condition, in order to be able to cover as many niches as possible, and to prevent parts of its members from taking distance from the union and its actions. This very base – and not the opposite statement that unions should maximise their unification,[5] which, under the condition of developed interest fragmentation, would mean to submit to the hegemony of the largest groups or core occupations – should be a fruitful starting point for integrating fragmented decision-making structures, so that every partial interest should keep access to communication channels for delegating their specific agendas to the higher strata of union hierarchy. We can draw the following analytical as well as practical conclusions from the presented argumentation.

1. Interest fragmentation in the public sector is a fact that should be taken into consideration through an analysis as well as by seeking tactical solutions as regards organising structure and agenda-setting within unions. It has originated from different, even competitive partial interests of various sorts of public services and their occupations.

2. The negotiating potential of trade unions depends on their capacity to mobilise their bases, which is strongly differentiated among white collars, and this shrinks the field of possible identification with certain unions into narrower professions. The mass class base of the Fordist blue collars, which were the running force of the unionist movement in the mid-20th century, cannot be reckoned within a shorter term, at least, as their production conditions have changed and most of them have left the unions. The (no more existing) blue-collar

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5 One of Stanojević's statements says that the unions' fragmentation was stimulated by a strategically false Representativeness of Trade Unions Act (Stanojević and Broder 2013: 304). We estimate that the Act only enabled a formal realisation of tendencies, caused by wrong, hegemonistic policies, performed by the largest union organisations. If the disregarded groups had not been given the option of a way out into their own, narrower unions, they would have exited the unions completely, and the gross union density would be dropping even quicker, similar to the business sector. Its branch structure would become even more asymmetric, consisting only of several large, identity compact occupational unions, and the interest fragmentation would be no smaller, while a large part of work force would have remained uncovered by union policy.

class unity will not be able to take dominance over rivalries among the white-collar unions. The possibility of a wide class mobilisation is not available, except in specific political situations, e.g. when the government insults the citizens. The real condition that the unions should adapt to is the condition of interest fragmentation.

3. An integration of the fragmented unions' scene in the public sector is possible only if the decision-making structures in every union and confederation are organised in a way enabling the articulation and transmission of specific interests bottom-up, and considering them by seeking synergies and balanced relations, together with limiting the cannibal prevailing of stronger partial interests. It means that organisations that are higher in a hierarchy act in a centralistic neutral as well as in a democratic way. Branch unions should exercise differentiated policies, servicing the needs of all their occupations. The only real alternative to this attitude is the endless division.

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'Repaying the Suffering' in Transnational Families from Kerala, South India

Tanja Ahlin

INTRODUCTION: MIGRATION AND TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY CARE[1]

In middle-class Indian families, it has become quite common to have some family members living abroad. Indians have been migrating to countries which have historical links to their motherland, such as the United Kingdom (Rutten & Patel, 2003) and the countries of the Middle East (Vora, 2013), as well as more recent destinations such as the United States of America (George, 2005) and Australia (Voigt-Graf, 2005). Migration, however, rarely splits these families between 'home

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country' and 'migrating country' in any sharp manner. In the past, migration might have been experienced as a kind of "social death" (Baldassar & Merla, 2014, p. 54), but today information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the possibility of frequent travel enable migrants to keep a constant connection with their family members and thereby remain involved in everyday family life, creating the so-called "transnational social spaces" (see also Basch, Schiller & Blanc, 2005; Herrera Lima, 2001). In contrast to some other communities studied under the paradigm of transnationalism, for example Latin American and Caribbean migrants in USA, Indian transnational social spaces have been described as particularly dependent on small-scale kinship networks rather than state-based political and economic ties (Voigt-Graf, 2005).

In anthropology of migration, Laura Merla and Loretta Baldassar (2014) have introduced the notion of "care circulation" to explain care in terms of various kinds of support that fluctuates over the life course of family members and across countries and continents through which they are dispersed. According to this conceptualization, the circulation of care is (1) reciprocal, as it flows, for example, not only from adult children to their parents but also the other way around; (2) multidirectional, as it is exchanged also with other relatives and non-relatives outside of this dyad; and (3) asymmetrical, as it tends to be exchanged in uneven ways on different occasions (Baldassar & Merla, 2014). Family, household and home are not seen as static social structures, but as ideational and structural processes built around everyday practices of caregiving, emotion work and intimacy. What counts as good family relations and care in "global households" (Kofman, 2012) does not depend strictly on physical proximity between family members. In care circulation, the emphasis is not on how migration disturbs family relations, but on how family members, despite large geographical distances, manage to effectively "do family" from afar (Zentgraf & Chinchilla Stoltz, 2012).

In this contribution, I explore how family and intergenerational reciprocity are practiced in transnational families originating from the South Indian state of Kerala. I explore this topic on the basis of long-term fieldwork which I conducted in 2014-15 in Kerala as well as in Oman, a Middle Eastern country which has historically been one of the major destinations for Keralite migrants (Irudaya Rajan & Percot, 2011). My fieldwork also included some Keralites who migrated to other countries around the world and whom I interviewed by phone or via internet-based webcam communication platforms. I focused particularly on those who migrated as nurses, a profession often taken

up in Kerala as a migration strategy *par excellence*. As such, the phenomenon of migrating nurses from Kerala can be described in terms of "global care chains", a notion referring to "a series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring" (Hochschild, 2000, p. 131). Care is here conceptualized as moving in a unilinear way as women from the global South and East migrate to care for children of fully-employed women in the global North and West, and at the same time leave their own children behind and provide for them through remittances. This theory highlights globally structured inequalities of class, race, ethnicity and gender, as well as illuminates commodification as the central norm of care, which in the context of labour market exchange and the wider frame of political economy becomes embodied in the migrant domestic worker (Lutz, 2002; Parreñas, 2008; see also Van der Geest, Mul and Vermeulen 2004). Additionally, Nicola Yeates (2009b) emphasizes that the carers involved in care work are not only unskilled domestic workers, such as nannies and maids, in household settings, but also professional carers such as nurses.

In continuation, I first describe the colonial history of the nursing profession in Kerala and how its practice changed under the influence of worldwide socioeconomic changes as described in the framework of global care chains. I then explore how for Keralite families of nurses, migration in itself became a form of reciprocating care. Finally, I look at some examples of how the migrating adult children continue taking care of their parents at a distance by using ICTs, and I show how also the parents who remain in India actively participate in the caring process by means of ICTs.

NURSING IN KERALA, NURSES FROM KERALA

In India, Kerala is known for its nurses and, conversely, the nurses from Kerala are known to be especially good nurses (Nair, 2012). The reasons why most nurses originate from this particular state are related to the Indian colonial history as well as to the strong presence of Christianity in comparison to other states. Indian women were first educated as nurses under the guidance of Florence Nightingale in 1914 when the British settlers needed nurses to attend to their military forces (George, 2005). At the time, women who would become nurses were recruited mostly from Kerala, where about 20% of the population is Christian (Philips, 2003). Compared to Hindus, who see any work re-

lated to bodies as polluted, the Keralite Christians perceive nursing in a different light, as a service to God. As George (2005: 41) writes, the "relative openness of the Christian communities to nursing had much to do with the active role that English missionaries and mission hospitals took in representing nursing as a noble Christian service." But nursing has also been related with lower economic classes: one woman I talked to remembered she wanted to become a nurse in order to "serve God," but her father refused because this profession was below the status of their family (see also Nair 2012).

After the Second World War, and after the Indian independence of 1947, the dynamic of need for Indian nurses changed, as Keralite nurses started entering the global labour market in significant numbers. This was triggered by the political and economic conditions that had created severe shortages of nurses in USA (George 2005: 50). Coupled with the liberalization of immigration, this induced immigration of Indian nurses to the USA, and nurse migration also increased to the United Kingdom and the Persian Gulf countries (Nair 2012: 13). Their relocation was facilitated by the Syrian Christian Church, which provided a social network abroad, and by embassies of the destination countries and employment agencies which provided sponsorship and guidance in practical and official aspects of the migration process. In line with the theory of global care chains, the international migration of Keralite nurses has thus been fuelled by the global socioeconomic inequalities that pushed nurses into searching employment abroad while leaving their non-migrating family members behind (Walton-Roberts, 2012).

In Kerala, poor working conditions have continued to serve to this day as a strong incentive for nurses to look for employment abroad (see also Chua, 2014). As my informants told me, nurses' salaries remain among the lowest in the country, with the monthly payment up to 12,000 Indian rupees (Rs, roughly 160 EUR), thus well below the average monthly expenses of about 16,000 Rs (220 EUR). It is therefore of little surprise that Keralite nurses strive to work and live around the globe. This is illustrated by the diversity of destination countries for the nurses in my study, which included USA, UK, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, the Maldives and Guyana. The choice of country mainly depended on its current migration policy, labour market and the nurses' knowledge of English; if they were able to pass the required English language test, they would migrate to an English-speaking country, while those with a poorer knowledge of English generally moved to the Middle East or other non-English speaking

countries. Additionally, nurses often migrated to countries in which members of their extended families and friends from nursing schools had already moved; these personal and professional networks were indeed crucial for prospective migrants in planning their journey (see also George 2005: 54-57). Once abroad, the nurses thus remained well connected to their Keralite roots, and the Christian Church, strongly present in many of the destination countries (USA and Oman included), helped significantly in sustaining the networks of the Keralite diaspora of nurses.

Besides global economic inequalities, the theory of global care chains emphasizes gender inequalities integrated in care work, as most of those who migrate to provide care labour are women. According to global care chains scholars, this phenomenon is built on the long-lasting local patriarchal social and welfare structures and even supports them (Yeates, 2009a). While Keralite nurses are still predominantly female, the benefits of this profession in terms of migration prospects have become so alluring that even men have started entering into it. In my study, seven out of twenty-nine families had sons rather than daughters working abroad as nurses. One male nurse even told me he was "forced" into nursing by his cousins so that he could move abroad and earn well. He continued to complain, however, that he regretted his decision to become a nurse after having difficulties in passing the English exam and seeing the demand for nurses plummet in some countries, like USA, in the recent years. While the impact of female nurses as the main breadwinners on the family dynamics has been explored (Gallo, 2005; George, 2005; Percot, 2012), how family power relations are subject to transformations as men enter into nursing, a highly feminized field, still calls for further exploration.

MIGRATION AS AN ACT OF INTERGENERATIONAL RECIPROCITY

In Kerala, the increasing entering of women as professional carers into the local and then global economic market has had a significant impact on family dynamics, including intergenerational reciprocity. The expectations the parents have towards their daughters have altered, as the daughters' status shifted "from burdens to assets" (George 2005: 42). Before women started taking up the nursing profession, they represented a burden for their parents who had to assemble the dowry for their wedding. Especially in large families

with many daughters this could be a painstaking process, pushing some families into further poverty. The parents were also reluctant to invest in the education of their daughters who would marry soon after finishing their studies, and so whatever income they earned would land in the hands of daughters-in-law. But with nursing, this changed. Excellent prospects for migrating, earning significantly better salaries abroad than in India and sending remittances home have made nursing a desirable profession not only among youngsters but also among their parents.

As Sheba Miriam George (2005: 43) writes, migration in Kerala became "a family project" rather than a decision of an individual nurse. Among the families I encountered during my fieldwork, migration was planned for years, and some parents, especially mothers, started pondering about educating their daughters as nurses when the latter were still little girls. While the nursing education was relatively inexpensive in the past (Nair 2012), it later became a significant investment in time and resources, leading some families in acquiring loans to pay for enrolment fees, dormitories and food for their studying daughters. Furthermore, money was needed to pay for the English language classes and exams required by the migration and labour laws of English-speaking countries recruiting Indian nurses. However, families considered these investments worthwhile, if the daughter(s) eventually succeeded in passing all the tests and obtaining a visa and employment abroad.

Migration of children also entailed emotional and other costs, as the children would move far away from their parents; this is significant in a country where co-residence of elderly parents with one of their married children is considered key to good elder care (Lamb, 2000). However, one mother explained her feelings about her three daughters becoming nurses and migrating to three different countries (UK, South Africa, and United Arab Emirates) in this way:

> Interviewer: Since you are away from your children, do you feel sad?
>
> J.: Don't we all have to live? Things wouldn't work (they wouldn't get a job) here … I can't ask them to be here with me. How can it be possible? Don't they have to lead their life ahead? Then, when we are sick, if they want to take care, then it's ok (to accept their support).

This mother saw it would be selfish of her to demand that her daughters remain in Kerala, as she was well aware they had better employment prospects abroad. Additionally, she recognized that having lucrative employment abroad enabled her children to also help her in times of need. As my informants told me, the parents in Kerala could

not demand support from their children, especially from married daughters whose income would belong to her family-in-law. But if the daughters offered their help, either financial or any other, the parents could accept it. The nurses I talked to, however, never saw any dilemma in this: while they knew their parents would never require help explicitly, these nurses took it as their duty to help their own parents to reciprocate the parents' efforts in educating them and thereby opening important life opportunities for them.

The remittances provided by the nurses were generally spent on repaying loans, renovating the family house in Kerala, paying for younger sibling's education, saving for a dowry, and buying a car. Additionally, the aging parents could count on having financial resources in times of health crisis. This is particularly important in India, where despite some recent efforts to introduce various health insurance schemes, there is no universal system to provide for health care related costs and also no pension for a large majority of the elderly (Ahlin, Nichter, & Pillai, 2016; see also Rutten & Patel, 2003; Mazzucato 2008).

For the nurses I interviewed, migration was a way of 'repaying the suffering' to their parents who "suffered a lot," as they said, in order to bring them up and especially to educate them in the nursing profession. For example, during my visits to a private school, run by one of the Christian factions in a town in central Kerala, I learnt about the difficulties and challenges of the nurses studying to pass the English language exam, IELTS (International English Language Testing System). The young nurses attending the classes saw it as their duty to succeed in these tests and to migrate, as only then they would be able to reciprocate their parents for all their "suffering."

Successful migration thus represented a form of intergenerational reciprocity, particular to Keralite families of nurses. Such understanding of migration was related to religion and class. However, some of my Hindu informants in Kerala disproved of nurse migration, saying that it was "not good" to leave one's parents behind to age on their own. In the Hindu context, elder parents should live with one of their children, usually the eldest son and his family, in the same home, since this was the best way for the children to also provide seva, or service, to them (Cohen, 1998; Lamb, 2000, 2013). Furthermore, both Hindu and Christian informants of higher classes noted that many of these nurses were "nothing but milking cows" for their families, suggesting that family exploitation was the main force behind their migration efforts. Christian nurses and their families, however, saw their own endeavours very differently. As one of the mothers, whose daughter was

a nurse in Australia, said, "If (my children) lived here and had no jobs or earned a very poor salary, would we all be happy? No!" The nurses I interviewed agreed with this observation, and recognized in migration an improvement of the quality of life for both themselves and their aging parents, despite the fact that it introduced distance between them. From my field notes:

> B., a nurse working in the UK, has two younger sisters who can take care of her parents if needed, as they still live at home, while she can give financial support, and "that's the basic thing everybody wants." Nobody has to look after the parents because they are in good health; she could stay here (in Kerala) and support them physically in case of illness, but "for that also money is needed". ... Even if you are "sitting nearby" but don't feel for your parents that doesn't help – care depends on your personal engagement. She says, "(It's about) having a feeling for your parents from the heart ... a genuine feeling ... Basically, we should be near, I know the importance of that, but they should feel that I care for them, there's a mutual understanding, that's a good relationship, it won't go away even in many years."

Thus, in Keralite families of nurses, solidarity and reciprocity was practiced differently from Hindu families in which co-location were of prime importance (Lamb 2000). For Keralite nurses, intergenerational reciprocity was not linked as much to physical proximity, which is not possible in the case of international migration. Rather, coresidence became gradually replaced, at least to a certain degree, with practical and emotional engagement at a distance. In practice, besides remittances and regular yearly visits home, this increasingly included keeping in touch via information and communication technologies (ICTs).

PRACTICING INTERGENERATIONAL RECIPROCITY AT A DISTANCE

For Keralite transnational families, living together in the same house or at least in proximity became impossible due to international migration. However, everyday ICTs, such as landline and mobile phones as well as the Internet, have become crucial in maintaining relationships between family members at a distance. For the nurses abroad, calling their parents frequently and regularly became a norm, the next best way of reciprocating care to doing so in person. Keeping in touch over ICTs often included working out a schedule around the nurses' work obligations as

well as around the parent's activities, such as attending social events and prayer. If the nurses failed to contact their parents for a longer time, or did not follow the implicit schedule of calling regularly, this was a sign for concern. As one mother with three daughters abroad explained:

> Interviewer: When you talk on the phone, what feelings do you have?
>
> J.: I'm very delighted. If they don't call for a day, I won't be able to sleep even that day. If everyone calls, I sleep peacefully.
>
> Interviewer: How many minutes do you talk to them?
>
> J.: At times we talk for one hour, if it is from the UK, though computer (internet-based calling). With the daughter in Dubai, we talk for about half hour, if it is through the net, if it is through mobile about 10 minutes.

Calling home regularly and frequently thus became a way of providing care at a distance (Ahlin, 2018). The goal of this ICT-enabled interaction was often to exchange small, mundane details of everyday life, and this kind of paying attention was perceived as an expression of continuous care across distance. The children provided care by ICTs also in more explicit ways, for example, by giving advice on treatment when the parents in India fell ill or had a sudden health emergency. For example, they monitored carefully the treatment that was given to their parents in hospitals, such as by asking for pictures of healing wounds after surgeries.

The parents, however, were not only passive recipients of care in these relationships. They, too, used ICTs to continue taking care of their adult children abroad. For example, a young nurse working in Saudi Arabia, told me that she was in touch with her mother daily, using the landline phone, mobile phone and Skype. As she explained, talking on Skype, and especially seeing scenes from daily life in her family, such as the food prepared by her mother, had a good impact on her wellbeing when she was missing her home and was having a hard time being so far away. Thus, a webcam can be helpful for parents to support their children abroad emotionally and morally in times of homesickness. Additionally, P.'s mother told me she used the webcam to check on P.'s health by closely inspecting her physical appearance: "Does she look thin? Does she look pale? Is she eating enough? Is she smiling enough? Or is her face sad and worried?" In P.'s case, such parental concern was also related to the challenging living conditions that unmarried Christian women experience in a largely Muslim Middle Eastern countries (Percot, 2006).

For Keralite parents, the care they provided for their children through upbringing and education was reciprocated in several ways. To 'repay the suffering' of their parents, the children strove to complete their nursing studies and successfully migrate abroad. Later on, they provided for their parents financially through remittances, paid regular yearly visits to them and gave attention throughout the rest of the year by calling home frequently. The parents, too, used ICTs to continue caring for their children, for example by offering emotional support in moments of homesickness. The level of support between the parents and their children varied between families as well as between siblings within the same family. Generally, however, the family relations after migration mirrored the quality of relations that existed before it. The case of transnational families of Kerala nurses thus illustrates how migration can re-shape the notions and practice of intergenerational reciprocity of care.

According to the theory of care circulation, the main underlying principle of intergenerational care is moral (rather than just monetary) economy. Thus, the generalized reciprocal exchange is based on the expectation that the giving of care of various kinds (financial, practical, emotional and so on) will eventually be reciprocated. One of the key characteristics of such care is that it is asymmetrical, meaning that "the quality, quantity, direction and presence or absence of the circulation of care is highly variable, constantly negotiated and deeply influenced by factors both within and outside the family" (Baldassar and Merla 2014: 31). But how could the quality and quantity of care ever be measured? When Keralites talked about parents' "suffering a lot" to educate their children as nurses and help them in the migration process, this was meant as an expression of the significance of the invested care rather than a quantitative evaluation of care to be eventually reciprocated in equal quantity and quality. Suffering, like caring, is much too complex to allow for any sort of measurement. The question of how much care, exactly, would suffice to reciprocate the parents' suffering is therefore impossible to answer.

Still, as a sort of practice of family power relations, emphasizing the 'great amount' of care that the children received from parents can be a powerful way to remind them of their (more or less near) future obligations towards their parents. Indeed, in Kerala there was little subtlety about this, as the parents constantly recounted to their children of their own efforts and involvements in helping them succeed professionally. At the same time, the act of

migrating and leaving their family in India incurred suffering for the children, too, and this was generally noticeable from their feelings of homesickness. Moreover, the migrants made sure to convey the importance of parental suffering to their own children, and this became a way of securing reciprocal care in their own old age. As one middle-aged nurse Anna, working in Oman by herself for almost two decades while her husband and two daughters lived in Kerala, put it: "If my parents didn't educate me, I would be nothing, I would not earn any money ... Now I am in Oman, I am struggling for them (my whole family, including own parents). (My daughters) too, have to remember, 'See, my parents struggled for me, so I cannot forget them.'" Anna recognized the suffering of her parents, but also pointed out the suffering she had to endure by living in a small desert town without her family, only to work, and she made sure her own daughters would understand the meaning of her actions: an illustrative tale of how in Keralite transnational families care, and the feeling of obligation to reciprocate it, moves from one generation to another through the invocation of suffering.

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Looking for a City with Foundations: Intentional Urban Communities as a Christian Response to Justice and Power

Eugene Richard Sensenig

> *For he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.* (Hebrews 11:10).

In 1943, during the darkest days of World War Two, Northwestern University – located in the Chicago suburb of Evanston – published an obscure Hutterite document laying out the ground rules for life in a Christian intentional community (Schiemer 1943). Originally written in 1527, this 'Discipline of the Believers: How a Christian is to Live' (Schiemer) was one of the impulses leading to the founding of a small communal fellowship 490 years later in a conflict ridden, inner city neighborhood on Reba Place in Evanston, Illinois. The pioneer families, who set up this early Mennonite experiment in urban communal solidarity, raised their children, redistributed their incomes, advocated for humane housing conditions, and opposed US military

involvement in East Asia in a collective manner. Children growing up during the founding years of Reba Place Fellowship (RPF) enjoyed only limited personal privacy and even less in the way of family property. They did experience at a young age what it means to help refurbish dilapidated slum dwellings, live in close quarters with dozens of 'brothers and sisters', and demonstrate against the war in Vietnam, racial segregation, and property speculation. RPF's founders were reform-minded graduates of Mennonite colleges in Virginia and Indiana. Instead of putting their dreams of a Christian community into practice in a rural setting, as had their forefathers for half a millennium, they opted to raise their families in an urban environment in an attempt to make the 'Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision' (Hershberger 1957) relevant to modern day society.

This author is one of those Reba Place children who grew up in the Fellowship during the 1950s and 1960s, experiencing a combination of communal living, social activism, and an egalitarian approach to collective governance based on the teachings of the historical Jesus and the life of the original Christian church. The following pages are as much the result of a thorough literature review on the topic as they are a personal rediscovery of the path taken by RPF during the last 60 years. One of my strongest memories of communal life as a child in Evanston was sharing a renovated Victorian mansion on Reba Place with several other Fellowship families; waking up for breakfast in a combination kitchen-living room, which served simultaneously as a children's bedroom for four. Research for this chapter helped flesh out another childhood recollection, namely that extreme poverty not only has sights and sounds but also a uniquely unpleasant smell. Members of the Fellowship took their children along to RPF's sister "Church of Hope" in the Peoria Street slums on Chicago's South Side to help rebuild impoverished homes and empower the local minority community there. In the following, the reader will be introduced to the historical roots of RPF, the impact it had on its surrounding community, and the impressive successes and unique failures it faced in putting its faith-based approach to internal governance into practice. Since its founding in 1957, RPF largely succeeded in this dual approach to external servanthood and radical internal governance. The reasons it failed to live up to its own high standards during the second decade of its existence will be one of the main foci of this study. According to Harris (1973), the Reba Place model of "The Way of Love" (Miller 1960; Miller 2013) has survived and prospered where others have failed because of its emphasis on the sanctity of the individual within the collective as an expression of God's will.

This author's personal experience growing up in Reba Place, along with extended email correspondence with past and present members of the Fellowship, have provided insights into the role that spiritual guidance and "a radical commitment to God's will" (Harris 1973: 178-180) can play in both encouraging and undermining individual freedom within the collective whole.

According to Jackson, a key component of the Reba Place approach to changing "the world by being an alternative community in which the kingdom of God is being manifested" (Miller 2013: 57) was the assumption that by continuously calling on "the Holy Spirit's help the congregation can deduce from the New Testament a set of instructions, commands, and prohibitions" (Jackson and Jackson 1987: 51), as a foundation for its social justice agenda. According to Harris (1973) and Miller (2013), it was the Holy Spirit which enabled RPF's egalitarian experiment in communal self-administration to succeed during the formative phase, starting with a student group led by the then theology professor John Miller[1] at Goshen College Indiana in 1956, and lasting until he was called as a professor and left Evanston for Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario in 1969. Inversely, Jackson and Jackson maintain that it was this very same radical dedication to the Holy Spirit which led to a stark undermining of personal freedom in the Fellowship during the 1970s. As described in "The Spirit, the Power, and the Excess (1972-1978)" (Jackson and Jackson 1987: 161-250), the Fellowship took a hard authoritarian turn after Miller's departure, only to recover and regroup in the 1980s. The Fellowship has largely been able to return to its original approach to internal governance, while expanding on its mission of radical servanthood during the last 40 years of its existence.

HISTORICAL AND SOCIETAL ROOTS

Many strands of the communitarian tradition served the founding families at RPF as sources of inspiration. Along with various biblical references to living in community (e.g. Act 2:42-47) and collective governance and power sharing (e.g. Matthew 18), the historical German ('Taufgesinnte') and Dutch ('Doopsgezinde') Taufer movement

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1 This author had the honor to discuss an earlier version of this article with John Miller before his death in late 2017.

of the 16th century Radical Reformation played an important role in guiding the young Mennonite students and scholars who initially founded the Fellowship (Jackson and Jackson 1987: 27-36). Please note here that this author prefers the historically precise term 'Taufer' (Kauffman 2009, 175), as opposed to the more commonplace descriptive 'Anabaptist', because the former more appropriately signifies the nature of the Radical Reformation, which dates its inception back to the reintroduction of adult baptism (or Taufe) in the Switzerland of 1525[2] .

The actual founding of RPF can be followed back to the "Concern Movement", which was the direct result of reflections of a group of young Mennonite intellectuals meeting in April 1952 in Amsterdam (Toews 1990) in order to process their disappointment with their own historical peace church tradition. In the Netherlands during World War II, Mennonites and Quakers participated in the overall church resistance movement against Nazi occupation. Their contribution, however, did not go significantly beyond that of the Dutch Reform and Catholic churches[3]. The situation in Germany and Eastern Europe was much more troubling. At best, the Mennonites put up little resistance to the gradual introduction of totalitarianism throughout the 1930s. By the late 1940s it had become increasingly evident that in the eastern part of Germany and in the regions occupied by the Nazis as of 1939 many Mennonites had openly sympathized with the German authorities (Regier 2004, Schroeder 2003). The Concern Movement saw this pervasive inability or unwillingness to resist fascism as indicative of the larger crisis within the church in general, and the Taufer tradition in particular. According to Paul Toews' definitive study, 'The Concern Movement: Its Origins and Early History' (1990) and Hershberger's analysis of the impact of 'Concern' on the Mennonite church today (2013), RPF should be understood as the tangible realization of the hopes

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2 According to adherents of the Radical Reformation, pedobaptism, or the baptism of infants as practiced by Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Magisterial Protestant denominations, was not in conformity with the traditions of the original, first century Church. By practicing 'believers baptism', thus allowing any devout Christian to baptize new adult members into the faith, the Taufer movement also undermined the authority of the priest as dominant leader of the congregation (Bender, Friedmann and Klaassen 1990).

3 The anti-fascist resistance of the overall Church in the Netherlands was as much national as it was based in the Christian faith. Despite their longstanding tradition of radical pacifism, the historical peace churches did not develop a unique form of opposition to the Nazis along the lines of the anti-war position taken by the Taufers during the Ottoman occupation of Central Europe in the 16th century (Zijpp and Brüsewitz 2011; Sensenig 2016).

and dreams of those young critics of the Taufer tradition who had been forced to consider a radical transformation of their approach to community and service to society. One of the up-and-coming Mennonite intellectuals of his day, the young Paul Peachey, "wrote his colleagues that 'from all appearances Amsterdam succeeded in jolting us out of some of our complacency' (Toews 1990: 12)." Upon returning to the United States, the Concern group would discover that – at least initially – few within the leadership of the Mennonite church shared their exuberance for a radical renewal of the faith.

Several members of the Amsterdam group played a direct role in applying their newly won convictions to both their scholarly work and practical life experience. With the support of his fellow theologian, John Howard Yoder, RPF founder John Miller attempted to implement the thinking of Concern in both instruction and communal living at Goshen College Biblical Seminary in Indiana. Returning from Europe in 1954, Miller brought the enthusiasm to change "the world-wide church" to the satiated Mennonite church of the post-war era in America (Jackson and Jackson 1987: 16). His message was not well received by those in power. This ultimately led to Miller being pressured by his employers, in early 1957, to take an extended leave of absence in order to reconsider his radical intentions. Rather than discouraging the adherents of Concern (i.e. Miller, Peachey, and Yoder) in their attempt to revolutionize the church, this disciplinary measure was actually the spark leading to the founding of the first urban community within the, until then primarily agrarian, Taufer tradition. Taking a group of young scholars and students with him, Miller and his wife Louise moved to Evanston in the summer of 1957, setting up a Mennonite commune in a three story Victorian mansion in a short, one-way street named Reba Place. They were followed shortly thereafter by a small group of recent graduates of Eastern Mennonite College (EMC) in Harrisonburg, Virginia, including this author's parents. As a member of the Concern team, the eminent Mennonite sociologist, Paul Peachey, played an important role in promoting the Reba Place experiment at EMC, today's EMU. John Howard Yoder, known internationally as author of the definitive pacifist study on church-state relations, "The Politics of Jesus" (1994), remained at Goshen College, supporting RPF from within the largely ambivalent to hostile Mennonite 'academic establishment' (Jackson and Jackson 1987).

According to Timothy Miller's exhaustive survey of intentional communities in North America during this period, the decision to set up a Christian intentional community (CIC) in a major city

was a break with Taufer tradition. The founders of RPF took the "unprecedented and radical step of planting a Christian community not in a rural area, as the Hutterites and Bruderhof had done before them, but in metropolitan Chicago – a place where they could use the traditional Anabaptist vision of righteousness to confront endemic social evil" (1998:182). Many rural role models existed at this time, which the founders of RPF could have emulated, including the Amish, Old Order Mennonite, and Hutterite communities of their own Taufer tradition, the afore mentioned Society of Brothers (Bruderhof) with its German-Christian Socialist roots, and most importantly, the interracial Koinonia Farm, founded in 1942 at the height of the segregationist period, in Americus Georgia[4]. As shall be illustrated below, the choice of an urban context proved to be beneficial on all fronts. It not only provided a solid financial foundation and readily available housing and infrastructure for the Fellowship, but also promoted the peace, freedom, and social justice agendas of this community by placing them in the center of various escalating conflicts during the coming decades, including the wars in South East Asia and Central America, the struggle for civil rights, and battle for affordable and dignified housing in America's big cities (Harris 1973).

A wealth of literature now exists on the history of Reba Place and the role of the Taufer tradition in its development. As described by Toews (1990) and Hershberger (2013), the founders of Concern Movement and RPF looked back into their shared history to anchor themselves in the experience of 1st and 16th century Christian communities in the Middle East and Central Europe respectively. According to a reference in Janzen's overview of CIC in North America, Dietrich Bonhoeffer has also played a role, if only indirectly, in the trajectory of RPF (1996: 133). Often cited as a major influence on 20th and 21st century New Monasticism, Bonhoeffer's principled 1938 anti-fascist volume 'Gemeinsames Leben' (Life Together) stands in stark contrast to the capitulation of German Mennonites when faced with the terror of the Nazi regime (1954:21).

During its formative years, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, RPF had close ties to numerous CICs throughout North America.

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4 Based on the ancient term for deep fellowship, Koinonia Farm directly challenged the racist practices in the 'Jim Crow' south of the 1940s and 1950s. Not unlike Reba Place Fellowship which was founded 15 years later, this inter-racial agriculture community practiced shared property and simple living, radical pacifism, and an ecological approach to land use (Lee 2011).

Koinonia Farm, the Bruderhof, and the Hutterites were the most significant and these ties are well documented in the Jackson and Jackson study (1987). Like the Amish and Mennonites, the Hutterites were part of the Taufer historical peace church tradition, dating back to the early 16th century. The Bruderhof, rooted as it was in the Protestant branch of German Christian-Socialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was outlawed after the Nazis came to power in Germany. Its North American branch, the Society of Brothers, was created through a merger with the Hutterites in 1930 and absorbed much of the potential of the movement during and immediately after the war (Pfeiffer, 1992). The founders of RPF were attracted to both traditions, but ultimately shied away from a merger with either, encouraging those members who were interested in pursuing life in these agrarian communities to join them individually (Jackson and Jackson 1987:85). Ties with Koinonia Farm were much closer. Although this agrarian project was rooted in the historic traditions of earlier centuries, it shared the peace, freedom, and social justice commitments of the RPF founders. Both communities were openly interracial and anti-racist at a time when – even in 1950s Chicago – this was by no means the norm. In times of need, Koinonia and RPF supported each other financially, sending staff and even entire families to each other's communities, and participated in joint anti-war and economic development projects. Both communities were based on what Markofski terms 'holistic communitarianism', a tradition in which Christian evangelism, spirituality, and social justice activism go hand-in-hand (Markofski 2015: 21-22).

A final strand in the development of urban Christian communitarianism, which most likely did have an albeit limited influence on RPF, can be located within the Catholic and secular labor organizations and civil rights movements in the Chicago area. Evidence of this is purely anecdotal, though the literature on new monasticism does emphasize the importance of – for example – the Catholic Worker Movement founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933 (Huyser 2008: 414) and the impact of interaction between Martin Luther King Jr and RPF (Berger 2007, Shenk 2011, Miller Shearer 2015) on the latter's development. Historically, Mennonites shared and supported many of the social justice goals of the labor movement in the United States, although they were skeptical of labor unions in particular because of their perceived militancy (Thiessen 2009, Thiessen 2016). This author was unable to find any direct ties between the Catholic Worker Movement and RPF during the formative years. However, many links can be found today (Kauffman 2009).

Two issues were at the center of the thinking which ultimately led to the establishment of the RPF as a living community bent on witnessing to their Christian faith in an urban, rather than the more traditional rural environment. The first was the perceived need to counter the assimilation of the Taufer movement into its militarist, materialist, and individualist environment – or as the founders of RPF termed it "Mars (war), Mammon (materialism), and Me (individualism) (Schreiner Youngquist and Varela 2011: 46)" – in North America and Western Europe. The second was the desire to reintroduce the concept of the 1st and 16th century believers' church – in which everyone in the group should be equally responsible for leading the community (Jackson and Jackson 1987: 113)

Over the 60 years of its existence, RPF has successfully resisted the pull of mainstream American society. Along the lines of Markofski's concept of 'holistic communitarianism', it has placed itself in opposition to American militarism at home and abroad, to corporate and individual greed, and to the prevalent culture of selfishness now common in many parts of the world. RPF has developed a variety of social enterprises and community services, ranging from education and care giving, to real estate and retail merchandising. These are described in great detail on its website (http://www.rebaplacefellowship.org/). According to its current leadership, RPF continues to experiment with its dual approach to an alternative economy, which both serves the community and develops its inner sense of Christian worship. "Our experiments to date have included property management, book-keeping services, a nursery school, a home repair business, an artists' cooperative, and an Amish furniture store" (Schreiner Youngquist 2012: 37).

This alternative economic model is seen as a form of Christian witnessing and as a tangible way of loving one's neighbor. Individually and collectively, members of RPF have actively opposed the US wars and intervention in Korea, Vietnam, Latin America, Southern Africa, and the Middle East. Two specific examples – one related to countering government refugee policy and the other to undermining speculative housing practices – will be presented here in order to illustrate the hands-on approach taken by RPF.

The 'Overground Railroad' helps Central American refugees circumvent US immigration authorities and make their way safely to Canada (Epstein 1986). It was set up in the 1980s by Koinonia and RPF. According to Betzelberger: "Because Reba Place Fellowship and Koinonia shared an emphasis on social justice, pacifism, and close-knit

common-purse communities, they formed a close bond" (2011: 24). Together they created a network of faith-based organizations throughout the US and Canada. The Fellowship also actively supported refugees from Cambodia during this period and ultimately many began attending the Reba Place worship services and some were baptized into the Christian faith.

Of equal significance on the local and personal level was the work for renters' and home owners' rights. RPF was set up intentionally in 1957 in a racially mixed area of southern Evanston, in order to promote racial and social reconciliation and to fight housing speculation head on. In this manner, members of the Fellowship were able to actually live their faith and love their neighbors, figuratively and practically. According to Harris' 1973 study, RPF not only served the lower income African-American residents in the community. They also launched a concerted campaign, including door-to-door canvassing, in order to convince their white neighbors to remain in their working class community. The comparatively large real estate holdings of the Fellowship played an important part in countering property speculation in this part of Evanston (106-107). Rooted in the 'Overground Railroad' refugee resettlement ministry, the Reba Place Development Corporation continues to play a key role in creating affordable, below market housing units for low income renters and first buyers in Evanston.

The trajectory of the social justice servanthood agenda of RPF has been continuous from 1957 until today. This was not the case for its second core agenda, the attempt to recreate the egalitarian self-governance model of the early first century Church and the Radical Reformation. According to Harris' 1973 study, the initial success of the Fellowship model of egalitarian self-rule was based on two factors, the first being the fact that formal and informal leadership positions had no impact on the living standards and external manifestations of prestige of those members entrusted with them. Because of the collective decision-making processes and the fact that all members agreed to live on a subsistence income – equal to the welfare recipients with whom they shared their neighborhood – leadership was considered a responsibility, but not a form of power or recognition. Secondly, the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding decision-making and influencing conflict situations was taken seriously. As mentioned at the outset of this study, the members of RPF saw disagreements and dissent as manifestations of divine Grace at work within the Fellowship of believers. This equilibrium would collapse after the departure of John Miller in mid-1969. According to Jackson and Jackson, the introduction of the Charismatic Renewal Movement to RPF in the early 1970s led to a concentration of power in the hands of

the middle and top level leadership. One decade later, after a severe crisis of confidence, this process was reversed. In the words of Albert Steiner, one of the original 'rebels' who accompanied Miller from Goshen to Evanston, the Fellowship abandoned its democratic principles during the Charismatic experiment between 1972 and 1979.

> "Before his departure," recalls Albert, "there was a certain, almost pride in our not having leaders—a pride led by John Miller, himself. This attitude was built on the theory that everyone in the group should be equally responsible, and it came from a strong reaction to some historical abuses by clergy." (Jackson and Jackson 1987:113-114).

After Miller's departure, power gradually became concentrated in the hands of the leadership 'Coordinating Committee', later called elders. The Fellowship began an extended, painful, but ultimately successful process of "Repentance, Regrouping, and Renewal" as of 1978 (Jackson and Jackson 1987:244-251). By 1980 the process of concentration of power in the hands of a few had been largely reversed. "The Review, a seven-month in-depth look at what had gone wrong and what needed to change" determined that the abuse of power by the elders, household leaders, and those enjoying informal power had "betrayed not only the trust of the community but also their responsibility to the Lord" (Jackson and Jackson 1987: 194, 197). According to Schreiner Youngquist and Varela (2011) this abuse of power had a particularly detrimental effect on two groups, namely women and minorities, primarily African-Americans and Latinos. Today RPF has taken great strides to rectify these problems, integrating women and minorities into its leadership and diversifying its membership structures to integrate those choosing not to live in communal households (Schreiner Youngquist 2012).

Reba Place Fellowship offers 21st century social activists and faith-based seekers alike an interesting example of applied Christian communitarianism over an extended period of time. Its modest achievements in speaking truth to power go hand-in-hand with its admittedly mixed successes in living a truly egalitarian lifestyle based on the role model of early Christianity. As a direct result of this experiment, this author traces many of his progressive instincts back to his experience of growing up in an intentional Christian community. With the 2025 quincentennial of the Radical Reformation rapidly approaching, revisiting the 60 year history of RPF provides insights into the promises and challenges of relying on the Holy Spirit to 'counter Mars, mammon, and me' within a shared communal space in a globalized urban society.

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The Spirit of Social Cohesion and Sharing in Relation to Dance Consumption Practices in Contemporary Swing Dance Communities

Boštjan Kravanja

INTRODUCTION

Swing dances evolved in America's jazz era between the 1920s and 1940s. Similar to other popular dance scenes such as salsa or tango (see Pušnik and Sicherl 2010), this partner dance vanished from subcultures for several decades from the 1960s on (Renshaw 2006: 72–3; Carroll 2008: 448) and was revived in the 1980s and 1990s all over the Western world. Substantial Swing Dance Communities (SDCs) have been established particularly in the USA, in many European countries, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, but today, they have also emerged in many cities of non-Western countries such as Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, Argentina, South Africa, Mozambique, Chile, Mexico, Brazil and more.

Swing dancers are usually members of the dominant, mainstream, relatively young and urban middle-class that possess enough income, time and resources that they can take part in SDCs' activities and communicate with the scene via information and communication technologies (ICTs). Along with the spread of Internet and ICTs, these communities are today integrated in the international swing scene with hundreds of weekend dance festivals, camps and exchanges of different sizes and formats. The biggest of them, such as the Herräng dance camp in Sweden and the Lindy Shock in Budapest, count thousands of dancers. International championships in Washington, DC and London present the scene's top layers, where competition and performance of the best world swing dancers is organized annually and disseminated to the world via YouTube, Facebook and specialized swing dance online blogs.

As the great majority of these events' audiences are dancers, none of them happen without large organized social dance floors (SDFs) with live bands and DJs playing swing jazz music of the America's 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. These gatherings may remind us of ritual congregations of Maffessoli's "modern tribes" or "emotional communities" that have retained passions and emotions akin to a Durkheimean religious moral community (cited in Gelder 2007: 135–6). Feelings of togetherness and sharing on SDFs create a sort of communitas, where participants repeatedly confirm their 'enchanting' social world. However, social swing dancing has to be seen not only from the perspective of a "doer", but also from that of a "viewer" (after Malnig 2009b: 6), for observing the dance floors and following the scene online is an equally important activity as regularly dancing and attending swing dance classes.

Moreover, beside a passion for dance, the scene's adherents are immersed in everyday life and work, which in late capitalist societies are "calling for theories of rootlessness, alienation and psychological distance between individuals and groups on the one hand, and fantasies (or nightmares) of electronic propinquity on the other" (Appadurai 1996: 29). SDCs fill the gaps of the former, as they ease many of the problems of contemporary individuals-in-society, such as emotional and identity crises, unfulfilling interpersonal relationships and so forth (cf. Gelder 2007: 138). The latter, the electronic propinquity (and proximity), has profoundly changed the swing dance culture. For it is through heavy mediation online that the global swing scene preserves its ideology and the interests of the mainstream dominant groups on the one hand and expand its diversity on the other (see Carroll 2008).

I have been more or less actively participating in the swing scene for the last decade or so and decided to write about it because of these general changes that have occurred with its development and popularization. Namely, contemporary swing dance culture is commodified and marketed by dance schools and teachers, which regularly organize SDFs as an additional opportunity for practicing dance steps. These highly organized rituals of solidarity and identity can be compared to different SF fan conventions (after Carroll 2006: 450), backpacker congregations (Kravanja 2016) or club cultures and music festival conventions (Firth 1996: 40–1). But through development of partner dancing, permanent learning to dance became a precondition for practicing it socially. Dance studios and their corresponding performance and competition discourses increasingly overwhelm and uniform the social mode of dancing, which in practice means that the SDFs are increasingly changed into, and for many dancers already 'naturally' understood, as a training facility for progressing in dance techniques.

The *fill rouge* of the present chapter is the question of how social solidarities are constructed and played out in the light of these changes. Social solidarities can be distinguished between inward, outward, backward and forward-looking (i.e. towards the self, others, the past or future). They can also be based on rational thought or on affect and emotional attachments (Crow 2002: 13). Given that all of these aspects are part of today's SDCs, I will first look at how the leisure product of swing dance has been established through mainstreaming and cultural appropriation from the disempowered African-American population in its early years. Then I will show how the process of its popularization was invested with discourses of social cohesion of its adherents and how the dominant white middle-class embraced it also in terms of creating distinctive fashion streams.

I will then touch upon SDCs inward-looking solidarities and discuss the dynamics of different status groups that inevitably emerged within the global swing scene. In these frames, the basic mutuality and sharing of partner dance is in collision with the embodied discourse of performance and competition dancing, which is pursued among the members of the scene implicitly via social networks online as well as in dance classes. As social dancing practices cannot bypass the major embodied discourses of the scene's performances, its inward-looking social solidarity, paradoxically, depends on dance progress of the dancers.

To tackle these questions, I mainly adopted the Weberian conception of social solidarities, which is "frequently constructed around the domination or exclusion of others" (Crow 2002: 24) and based on

"the closure of social and economic opportunities to *outsiders*" (Max Weber after Crow 2002: 24, emphasis in original). According to this, contemporary swing dancing is an epitome, rather than a counterculture of the late capitalist leisure consumption.

Organization of this commodified 'serious leisure' product into different SDCs calls for questions about how today's buyers and sellers strive to create something meaningful out of social dancing, rather than seeing the SDCs as self-evident *Gemeinschafts* with predisposed social cohesion of their members. The following section will first explore the making of the international swing scene as a whole and its heightened concerns about its own public image, which in recent years has emerged especially through discussions about the treatment of its legacy and corresponding issues of class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and race.

THE EARLY MAKING AND POPULARIZATION OF THE SWING DANCE AND ITS RELATION TO TODAY'S LEISURE CONSUMPTION PRACTICES

Swing dances evolved in America's jazz era in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s among the urban marginalized African-American population. According to dance historians, American vernacular dances are one of the most complex chapters of the world dance history, which in many respects reflects also in the contemporary dance scenes of the USA (see Malnig 2009a). Popular dance can be seen as synonymous with the social or vernacular dance done by a certain group, for either reinforcing or subverting dominant societal norms (Cohen-Stratyner 2001: 121). Early African-American dances such as the Cakewalk, Tap dancing, Black Bottom, Charleston and many more, were in function of the latter. Their dance steps often coexisted on numerous SDFs, and were constantly changing with transmission, mutual mixing and (re)naming, but were in general confined to the African-American part of racially segregated America. Already in the 1920s, for example, the dance form of the Charleston developed from previous African-American ragtime dances (see George-Graves 2009) and was one of the most popular dances in America, especially among the white youth. It triggered massive public concerns about the morality of the country, for it was seen as a dance that steers white teenagers to premarital sex. The Charleston, which was reproduced on so many more or less hidden SDFs, for it was also considered as too wild to get along with foxtrots and waltzes in white ball-

rooms, changed especially in Harlem,[1] where it was invested with many creative influences of its talented dancers and musicians and developed into an entirely different dance form called the Lindy Hop.

The Lindy Hop was the first African-American dance that integrated all of the previous dance forms and developed into a real performance dance. Its 'official' history is nowadays inseparably connected with the famous Savoy Ballroom, which operated in Harlem between 1926 and 1958 (Hubbard and Monaghan 2009). In the Savoy, like in other dance ballrooms of the time, the majority of the audience danced in a big circle counter-clockwise (waltzes, foxtrots, mambos, rumbas etc.). However, a group of supremely talented dancers started to gather in the Savoy's designated area right of the bandstand, which was referred to as 'Cats Corner'. They improvised their dance steps, competed one with another and gradually became also a spectacle for other visitors at the Savoy. Under their influence, the big bands gradually started to play their music differently. Especially after 'the invention' of today's perhaps most recognisable signature moves of the Lindy Hop, the aerial steps in 1935 by Frieda Washington and Frankie Manning (see Manning and Millman 2007: 93–100), the music got rougher, more syncopated, and rhythmically more exciting: the former "sweet jazz" was replaced with "hot" music, which was created along with, and for, dancing the Lindy Hop (Spring 1997: 184).[2]

These dance steps, in short, started to be known as 'Lindy Hopping',[3] and were culturally appropriated by the white middle-class already in the 1930s, when the Savoy became also a tourist spectacle destination for the white elite. Especially after the rise of the first white star of the new swing music, Benny Goodman, the 'Swing Era' obsessed American youths. Between 1935 and 1946, the Lindy Hop crossed over to America's white audience and its dance form changed

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1 Harlem was a small cultural island, a centre of African-American culture, which attracted all kinds of black artists, musicians, poets and writers from across America, especially in the 1920s and the 1930s. Given that nothing compared to its creative spirit of that time, it also should be noted that the Harlemites were a disempowered and marginalized population constantly subjected to the racist practices of New York's white surroundings.

2 In his autobiography, Frankie Manning recalls how Chick Webb, the drummer who played at the evening Frankie and Frieda publicly demonstrated their aerial step, followed them on cymbals and how in general "the band was hitting every step that we did" (Manning and Millman 2007: 99).

3 The name was publicly given by the Savoy's pioneer dancer George 'Shorty' Snowden in 1928, when Charles Lindbergh made his first solo transatlantic flight. In the press, it was often headlined that Lindbergh 'hopped' over Atlantic, and 'Shorty George' used this in an interview, when a reporter asked him about the name of his dance moves (Engelbrecht et al. 1983: 4; cf. Hubbard and Monaghan 2009: 131–3).

so much that it became something else. Some called it the Jitterbug, others 'the Dean's Lindy' (after the renowned Los Angeles performer and dance instructor Dean Collins), and still others simply the Swing. For the teenagers of that time, swing offered not only music and dance, but a way of life, a code of dress, and more, a whole culture.

What therefore made the Lindy Hop 'American' was its selling in frames of the first American entertainment industry (Usner 2001: 94). Electrical recording and national radio broadcasting networks, which started to work in the second half of the 1920s helped to develop it into a music-and-dance spectacle, worth picturing in Hollywood movies (*A Day at the Races* (1937), *Keep Punching* (1939), ***Hellsapoppin'*** (1941)) and staging in choreographed routines for different (predominantly white) audiences across America. The group of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers, which consisted of the best Savoy dancers of the second generation, was the most propulsive dance group of that time's Harlem and had brought the Lindy Hop to many stages in America and occasionally also worldwide.

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From this short historical outline of the Lindy Hop's rise and early development, we can see that the very term of popular dance is, rather than simply a synonym for a social dance, "a specific process by which local, vernacular, and social dance traditions become popularized in the public sphere" (Malnig 2009b: 5, emphasis in original). Their "recontextualization" depend on "layered purposes" (Cohen-Stratyner 2001: 121) and even if a social dance in general is a medium for the creation of a specific community, rather than *vice versa* (Malnig 2009b: 4), cultural meanings that are unpredictable and abundantly produced in such communities are inevitably intertwined with the broader social relations of their members.

As today's 'subcultural' scenes cannot avoid the powers of the late capitalism market economy (Kozorog and Stanojević 2013: 359), contemporary swing dancing still presents one of the smartest products of leisure (and pleasure) consumption. For it is not only a product for scopophilic audiences, but a reproductive good, which is inscribed in the customer's body. As such, it is one of the "body-related fashion practices" (Appadurai 1996: 84), which provides a vehicle for a 'new' identity. Like other consumption social practices (see ibid.: 82–3) it requires a lot of time, disciplined work, passion and money, and is today unmistakably supplied with "the lubricant of nostalgia" (ibid.: 78), in this case evocative of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s lifestyle and fashion.

'Vintage fashion' and pop culture's "retromania"(see Reynolds 2011) are widespread among today's youth, but the adherents of 'swing culture' adopted an 'alternative' do-it-yourself philosophy and "thrift store shopping" (Renshaw 2006), which implies "relative autonomy from mass consumption" (Doane 2006: 107). As they see themselves as exclusive connoisseurs of the 'authentic' Swing Era dress, rather than sheer consumers of the 'Great Gatsby' or 'hipster' fashion, a lot of SDCs put an effort into cultivating the dress code of their SDFs. While some dancers just do not mind about dress style and give priority to pursuing their dance techniques, at least the more advanced and long-term dancers use their dress style also as an important marker of their supposed elitist status.

ON EXCLUSIVENESS AND PUBLIC IMAGE OF THE CONTEMPORARY LINDY HOP

As we have seen in the previous section, the group of talented Harlemites created and developed numerous steps and dance routines between the 1920s and 1940s, which today present the basis of swing dance vocabulary. The Lindy Hop was reconstructed in dance studios of New York and Stockholm in the 1980s, with the help of individual 'old-timers' from the second generation of the Savoy ballroom. Most of them, due to their old age, initially hesitated to start teaching dance for the first time in their life (*sic*),[4] but when the movement started to expand, they became an indispensable part of the whole story. Especially Frankie Manning, a retired postman and perhaps the best Whitey's dancer of the time, was exposed in this process. Later on, when many started to mysticize him on this new swing scene, he was also honoured as "Ambassador of the Lindy Hop" (see Manning and Millman 2007). After he passed away in 2009, he truly became an icon of the swing dance world.

The African-American legacy of swing dances and the processes of their cultural appropriation have often been discussed, especially among American scholars (see for example George-Graves 2009; Hancock 2008; Usner 2001). 'The revival' itself and the "racial amnesia" (Hancock 2008: 787) of the dance's origins is also increasingly re-evaluated within the scene (see Heinilä 2013, 2015), especially when dif-

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4 About the problematic treatment of 'old-timers' during the revival see Heinilä (2015).

ferent symbolic slips occasionally occur in its public representations.

There are few examples of such thoughtless or perhaps even provocative slips that appeared on swing dance stages and triggered huge discussions among the dancers online. The most pressing were two performances by the renowned Russian dancer and choreographer Ksenia Parkhatskaya, namely a spoof showcase 'Pickpocket' at the Moscow Open Swing Show Tournament (MOST) 2011 and a jazz roots showcase 'Four Women' at the MOST 2013 (*hors concours*) and at the European Swing Dance Championship 2013 in London. The first one Parkhatskaya did in so-called blackface makeup and the second one, a sensual choreography for Nina Simone's song (*Four Women*), which speaks about racist stereotypes that African-American women had to endure, Parkhatskaya performed the dance with her body skin sprayed bronze (see Brian Jay Elley's Post 2013). The next such example appeared almost simultaneously in the West Coast Swing (WCS) circles,[5] when a dance couple Doug and Nicki Silton used one blackface and the other a 'Mexican' outfit for their showcase on Halloween Swingthing 2013 in Irvine, California and again triggered a huge discussion online (see Westie Discussion of the Day 2013).

These long discussions and some other careful readings on swing dance products[6] indeed contribute to general sensitivity towards the questions of racist and orientalist representations of African-Americans on swing dance stages, but of course still do not address the profound embeddedness of the making of swing in the racially segregated environment of America. The fact that African-Americans in general did not join 'the revival' and rather embraced their other social dance traditions such as Bop (Houston), Hand Dancing (Washington, D.C.) and Steppin' (Chicago) (Hancock 2008: 786) points to the exclusiveness of contemporary swing dancing.

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Another concern that addresses the public image of the swing scene refers to dancing the Lindy Hop outside its specific SDFs. As Loggins (2017) pointed out, the narrow and asocial frames of dance

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5 The WCS came out as a more stylized version of the Lindy Hop in the 1940s. Today it is danced to very diverse popular music styles such as Blues, R 'n' B, Country Music, Hip Hop, Mainstream Pop and more, and is probably for this reason even more popular than the Lindy Hop, especially in the USA.

6 See for example blogs on <http://dogpossum.org/2011/07/two-cousins> and <http://dogpossum.org/2011/11/historical-recreation-fat-suits-blackface-and-dance> (accessed 23. 1. 2017).

studios where the Lindy Hop is learned in an organized way, leads to an increase in the "sport mentality" of the dancers. He noticed that many dancers today are prone to show their "athletics" also in jazz music venues (and, I would add, rockabilly scenes), where the Lindy Hop often appears as too overpowering. As the 'proper' Lindy Hop has many space consuming elements, such as swing out, high kicks, areal steps and other flashy moves, it – purposely or not – often turns non-dancers into spectators. The 'see-me-dancing/performing' mentality is nurtured particularly in dance studios, where dance techniques are polished and flashy performative dance is encouraged, but can also be seen in occasional collective actions such as the so-called "Lindy bomb", when a bigger group of dancers bursts out in front of a jazz concert stage, take over the place and turn it into a swing SDF (Stevens and Stevens 2011: 182).

Through pursuing this approach, swing dancing, and especially the Lindy Hop is a powerful dance that can get a bad reputation in bars and other jazz venues, even if it is, conversely, usually accepted by passers-by with amusement. For this cause, the work on 'culture' and on different social institutions is constantly nurtured on the swing scene. But the problem of the public image and the exclusivity of the Lindy Hop communities is also part of the scene's inner divisions, which I am addressing in the next section.

HOMOGENIZATION AND HETEROGENIZATION OF SWING DANCE COMMUNITIES AND THEIR INNER PREDICAMENTS

Swing dance communities (SDCs) can be seen as ideologically framed social spaces of today's leisure landscapes. Their dance classes standardize the way of dancing and create a specific heteronormative embodied habitus, which was even recognized as having potential of social change towards feminist ends of gender equality. Especially in dancing the Lindy Hop, "partners happily negotiate power" (Wade 2011: 224); the 'lead/follow' hierarchy between them is gradually substituted with giving space one to another and using partner connection for cooperation through body movement, which means that dance partners ideally become 'one body' that counts only on the predictability of the music, but otherwise improvise their shared dance (ibid.: 242–3).

Being all that true for the more experienced dancers, there are many struggles among the less experienced ones. Doane (2006: 93), for example, claimed that "with a one-hour lesson, and two to three

hours of practice a week, most dancers move from the basic rock-step to variations of the swing-out within three months." Well, yes, this is how most SDCs advertise their product, but the Lindy Hop is not an easy dance, albeit it is the most desired and popular on the scene. It was created through dance contests at the Savoy and other Harlem clubs (see Manning and Millman 2007: 82–92) and the dancers rehearsed its steps also during the daytime, often in ballrooms together with rehearsals of bands (Stevens and Stevens 2011: 59). These *performance* steps were faithfully copied by the early revivalists and vernacularized for the masses.

The archival film footage of 'official' dance performances from the 1930s and 1940s and the contemporary vast circulation of different dance clips online have always played an important role in this process of "step stealing and textual poaching" (Carroll 2008). Even if the last generation of swing dancers is different from the enthusiasts of the 1980s and 1990s, especially in the fact that they put more effort in being inspired by numerous SDFs (and not from obsessive learning of 'original' steps), "the revivalist impulse persists in contemporary swing-dance culture, and is in part the dominant ideological approach to choreography and 'style' in many local communities" (Carroll 2008: 194).

The most persistent in this 'style' are performative elements, sustained in teaching materials of today's instructors, who have to promote themselves in competitions on international stages, if they want to be hired for teaching classes and get students in them. With this, the exclusivity of swing dancing is not confined only to macro-levels of race, ethnicity, social class, age and gender, but stretches also to the micro-levels of SDCs. Hence, the formal hierarchy of dance levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced) develops 'upwards' towards performance mode of dancing; exclusive institutional spaces of the so-called invitational dance classes and events are established, where the 'super advanced' dancers and instructors can (im)prove themselves under supervision of their peers and/or established 'rock stars' of the scene.

Today, the scene is already full of the unprecedented excellence of its dancers who are ready to compete, perform and teach. The question of *attribution* of talent (and not talent *per se*) is a constant subject of stress and paranoia in music schools and scenes (see Firth 1996: 36–40) and the swing dance scene is no different. Progress of the dancers is encouraged at the scene's classes with constant calls to 'more practice', but their craving for recognition of their 'talent' is also balanced by emphasizing that the final goal of all that learning and investing is

'to have fun' on the SDF. This latter sedative ideological procedure for (over)ambitious students and 'advanced wannabes' is, however, not always effective. Problems often occur at the initial ranking of dancers at festivals (short auditions are often made to 'clean' the levels, especially the advanced one), but even more so on SDFs, where dancers "rather make exhibitions of themselves than really dance with their partners" (Heinilä 2013).

There are a few more elements on the scene for balancing this unlikely situation of growing "egoistic individualism" (Durkheim after Crow 2002: 21), which works destructively on social solidarity on SDFs. First, the scene provides opportunities for showing-off separate from the SDF: ('cat') corner for 'elite dancers' usually shapes spontaneously in bigger ballrooms, occasional swing jam circles are initiated during dance evenings and open competitions of different formats are organized. Second, the scene's positive public image of neutral, harmless and noble cultural practice is additionally strengthened with established behavioural etiquette, dress codes, community rituals and passing values of decency, distinctiveness and genuine friendliness between the sexes.

The scene is already way too developed to take any steps back. As we have seen, it succeeded in making its events simultaneously filled with warm feelings of the community's togetherness and hot feelings of competition and performance. While many dancers would at this point argue that they are happy with their however fast or slow progress in dance techniques, for they anyway do it to increase the enjoyment of their social dancing, it is the profoundly organized nature of the scene, which is neither vernacular social dancing nor a proper dance school that make its social solidarities multilayered, polivalent and often confined to different dynamically emergent status groups.

Ethnographic scrutinization of different initiatives among the dancers, which sometimes succeed in creating a separate (and usually temporary), more or less autonomous 'scene' in this or that venue would show that the practices of mutuality and sharing, which are the basis of swing partner dances, are not always in complementary relation with discourses of social cohesion, which are pursued among the members of the scene. On the contrary, they often bypass the major flows of social cohesion and with that, paradoxically, create the most vital parts of the scene which in the long run most efficiently contribute to the actual social solidarity of the scene.

As exposed in the introduction, social solidarities are "open to many different expressions" (Crow 2002: 4). If I looked at it strictly on local levels of, for example, Slovenian SDCs, or even just the SDCs

that developed only in Ljubljana, all of the aspects of social solidarities would be found there, not only the dichotomy between discourses of social cohesion in the Lindy Hop's dominant streams and its performative and competitive roots, which in the extreme case pursues egoistic individualism.

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The small scale scenes and temporary repeating events that constantly emerge locally in Ljubljana, Slovenia and also around the world (see for example descriptions in Renshaw 2006; Usner 2001), would certainly open up the discussion towards diversity and power struggles on local levels. Due to the scope of this article, I cannot discuss these alternatives, which would also question the power of the SDF to create enough satisfaction for dancers, even if their dance techniques were awfully bad.

However, here I wanted to expose that the categories according to which contemporary Lindy Hop is evaluated are today internationalized and institutionalized within the global scene. In the light of this, there is little possibility for alternatives to survive longer, because they are not compatible with other scenes, and therefore have to be interesting enough for their members and different audiences to survive on their own. What usually happens with such alternative scenes within the swing dance culture is that they either develop and raise the quality of their dancers or close themselves into a private group of friends or a clique that do its own thing and organize its own events according to its narrower preferences (for example listening to a particular kind of music, dancing in a particular way, dressing in a particular style etc.).

CONCLUSION

Transplantation of the Lindy Hop as a performance dance on contemporary social dance floors (SDFs) has several consequences concerning the social cohesion of the swing scene. As we have seen in this chapter, the Lindy Hop was an integrating dance already at its beginnings in the late 1920s; its drive and progress in its formative years lies in the stealing of steps from other dancers on SDFs and in pursuing originality of the dancers at competitions. With the introduction of changes in jazz music styles in the 1930s and 1940s, it developed into a spectacular dance form of its own, which was danced to incredibly fast tempos that only those who seriously rehearsed steps could catch.

Even if today this dance form is stripped down and adjusted to the contemporary standards of an easy leisure commodity, there are of course many dancers who can copy the 'wildest' parts of its rich legacy, often not being aware that the choreographies in the 1930s' and 1940s' Hollywood movies and other clips were made for that particular historical context, when the Lindy Hop was in the midst of the process of its cultural appropriation by the mainstream cultural industry of white America (i.e., the Lindy Hop was largely presented as a mockingly wild and exaggerated 'black' dance).

Dance techniques have of course developed and are today influenced by many other dance forms, such as steps from other vernacular dances, Modern Jazz, Hip Hop, Latin dances and even Ballet, but they are still the most important thing in today's swing culture. Dress style, behaviour, haircut, lifestyle or whatever is not dancing provides proper contexts for social dancing, but does not present the core of swing dance culture. What is satisfying for both groups, instructors and performance oriented dancers on the one hand, and 'average' social dancers, buyers of the embodied products of various swing dance forms on the other, is celebrating, posing, socializing, flirting and dancing in order 'to have fun'. But the real constitutive frame of the contemporary swing scene is still based in dance studios, where progressing and struggling to master dance steps is at the forefront.

As SDCs do not explicitly promote equal economic opportunity for all, but strive and mutually compete for new members to – first of all – get them into dance classes, SDFs importantly 'correct' their image in public. They are in themselves complex social milieus, where fragile relations of different sorts of social solidarities, such as social cohesion and feelings of communitas, interdependence and mutuality between dancers, balance between different status groups, solidarity with less skilled dancers and attentiveness towards the outsiders, when a SDF is temporarily established in other music venues, are promoted and played out.

The question of how these different aspects of social solidarity relate to the diverse meanings that social dancing bear in the midst of late capitalist societies is in the scene's nourishment of its own public image. Images of happy, harmless, sexy, addictive, magical, surprising, life-changing and healthy social environment are promoted and publicly distributed in many promotion spots online. But much as swing dancing does bring a sort of solidarity model to the advanced capitalist societies and is wide and generous enough to embrace many 'lost' individuals, it does not so equally for all. It would, if structural contexts allowed it, but for that cause it should step out of the capitalist frames, which is a utopian wish given that swing dance is an American product.

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Orgunity as a New Form of Cooperation: Case Studies of Two Environmental NGOs

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INTRODUCTION

When analysing processes within an organisation – be it commercial or non-profit, private or public – we try to understand and visualise the relationships between people in a structured way. Organigraphs, i.e. graphic representations of organisational structures, which commonly look like pyramids depicting the person in charge on the top and the less responsible work fellows beneath, are of great help in portraying relationships in companies, associations, NGOs and other forms of organisation (see Mintzberg 1979; cf. Mintzberg and Van der Heyden 1999, where alternative versions of organigraphs are presented). However, relationships within organisations are, in fact, anything but clear-cut.

The multifariousness and ambiguity of organisations were suggested already in the "Hawthorne study" conducted in Chicago

between 1927 and 1933 (see Schwartzman 1993). This study included experts from different fields – sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists – coordinated by Australian-born psychologist and sociologist Elton Mayo. The researchers looked into the working processes of a branch of the Western Electrics Company. Among other things, they found that besides the formal organisation where interactions were straightforward, well defined and regulated, a more hidden and informal organisation that is established by the employees themselves and ignores the company's management exists simultaneously. What they also noticed was that the transparent and systematised organigraphs, which were supposed to represent the relations within the organisation, were ideal type images (cf. Schütz 1976) rather than accurate representations of social reality in organisational settings. The organisational reality was thus found to be complex and looked more like a fuzzy network of interwoven relationships than a sharp and clearly defined "pyramid" (cf. Molina 2006). What makes the situation even more entangled is that this informal structure is normally amoeboid, dynamic and often inseparably interlaced with the organisation's wider context.

This paper aims to connect theory with practice in presenting two complex and dynamic organisational structures. First, we present the *Bird watching and Bird Study Association of Slovenia* (DOPPS), a Slovenian nature conservation and bird watching non-governmental organisation (NGO). The ethnographic study of DOPPS, carried out in 2006 and 2007, concentrated on both formal and informal structures within the organisation and illuminated its rather unusual structure, which can hardly be depicted with a simple two-dimensional organigram. The same appears to be true in the case of another Slovenian NGO, *Ecologists Without Borders* (EWB), to which we devoted less time (October–December 2015), yet because of its size and effectiveness nonetheless considered it to be a welcome case that complemented and occasionally contrasted the birdwatchers.

Both organisations are as follows composited out of two different models. On the one hand, we noticed they are to some extent hierarchical organisations with a clearly defined pyramidal structure, but, on the other hand, they are also horizontal organisations where the relationships are fuzzier and defined constantly anew. As the paper shows, such a hybrid organisational structure can be understood and depicted as a sum of organisation and community, which Martin Parker (1998) refers to as "orgunity". The latter might represent a relevant and fresh model enabling us to understand as well as establish organisations adapted to the dynamics of the

modern world. Our contribution here is not so much theoretical, as it is an attempt to ethnographically discuss Parker's concept and its potential applicability.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this paper, we seek to firstly illuminate and afterwards intertwine three different terms proliferating in public discourse: *organisation, community* and *network.* It is through these that we attempt to explain how a hybrid organisational structure that is simultaneously fuzzy and clearly defined, flexible and dynamic appears. We draw from anthropological and sociological definitions and complement them with findings from organisational theory. The term *organisation,* the core of this paper, according to the *Cambridge Dictionaries Online,* signifies "a group of people who work together in an organised way for a shared purpose." In other words, it can mean a deliberate arrangement of components that form a system, which can be identified as a unit. Moreover, an organisation is also a sequential or a spatial entity within which knowledge, information, people or other elements are intentionally arranged, so it can be a group of people who systematically pursue the same goal. Organisation scientists similarly claim that the term organisation stands for a group of people with a common goal, mission or a programme (Ford, Armandi and Heaton 1988; Katz and Kahn 1983; Robbins 1996).

After examining our fieldwork data that shed light on the common goals and missions of the two aforementioned Slovenian NGOs, the above brought up definition of organisations turned out not to be entirely valid. We realised that "shared purpose" is more or less an ideal goal that is hardly ever achieved, so we started to lean in the direction of Barbara Czarniawska-Joerges' (1992) definition, which understands organisations as networks of collective activities that help us shape and understand the world we live in. She explains that such networks generally do not have any clear boundaries and in the case when they do, the boundaries are constantly re-established as places of conjunctions between the organisation and its surroundings, i.e. other people, institutions, the broader environment and so on. Tomoko Hamada (1994) similarly explains that the life of organisations characterises fluidity and not linearity, because people's actions and decisions are constantly hitting the walls of the ever-changing labyrinths of meanings, statuses, situations

and obstacles. According to Hamada, it is not important only what occurs within the organisations, but rather how these ongoing activities are interpreted. Due to different cognitive schemes, the happenings can be interpreted in various ways, which leads to contradictions and conflicts that are not necessarily destructive, but can help to co-create a complex organisational reality. Martin Parker (2000), an organisational anthropologist adhering to the postmodern paradigm (Podjed 2010a) distances himself from the emphasis on unity and consensus, which are supposedly typical of organisations. He suggests that an organisation and its culture represent and perform constantly contested processes that establish and confirm the differences in and among the organisation's internal groups. Although such differences may at first glance seem destructive, they are at the same time sources of creativity that permit organisational renewal and growth (Gorup and Podjed 2017). In other words, what we encounter when studying organisations is a disorder visible as clashes among the subcultures, fractions, and divisions and other.

Another relevant term we ought to refer to is *community*. Anthony P. Cohen (1985) stresses that this is one of those terms that we manipulate and comprehend on a daily basis, yet is at the same time quite troublesome, at least when it comes to academic discourse. Additional problems are caused by the definitions of community established by the sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies (1957 [1887]). He understood it as a counterpoint to "society" (*Gesellschaft*), which according to him signified a cooperating group of people focusing on common goals. On the other hand, *community* (*Gemeinschaft*) is, following Tönnies, an entity joining people who are convinced they belong together. A similar distinction has been nurtured by other crucial thinkers, among them Émile Durkheim (1997 [1893]), who distinguished between mechanical and organic solidarity, and Max Weber (1978 [1921]), who treated *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* as types of social relations. What we aim to do in the present text is to overcome and soften such dichotomies and portray the shades between the two extremes.

The third fundamental term we aim to unravel is *network*. Many sociologists and anthropologists have debated about the reasonableness of its usage when talking about social groups (see, for example, Boissevain and Mitchell 1973; Granovetter 1973; Mitchell 1969, 1974; Wolfe 1978), among them also Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown (1940), who already in the first half of the 20th century accentuated human connectedness in a complex network of social relations. For us, a network is recognised as a dynamic and open social

structure (Castells 2003: 470–471), which to an extent matches the meaning of community, mainly because both terms contrast the supposedly well-defined organisations. We instead accept that community and network are not the same, as a community is bounded – even though only in our mind's eye (cf. Anderson 1983) – and connects people with similar points of departure and curiosities, while a network is open and flexible, has unclear boundaries and does not form around common objectives (cf. Green, Harvey and Knox 2005). Nevertheless, we believe that both types of cooperations are founded on the same basic assumptions, essentially on equality and horizontal relations.

The obvious question is then what happens when these forms of cooperation intermesh. Orgunity, according to Parker (1998), is structured, organised and at the same time established on rudimentary allegiances and solidarity among its members. In orgunities, no fine line between work and leisure exists; there is similarly no spatial or temporal boundary between the private and public. The latter, hence, exists wherever and whenever the members think it does. In orgunities hierarchic relationships are reduced and members rewarded equally, in addition, they are contributing the same share in the process of collective production. It is also typical for orgunity to recruit like-minded individuals, which prevents the members from quarrelling about common interests and unclear delimitations of "Us" versus "Them".

Parker puts forth three possibilities for the realisation – or failure – of his conceptual experiment. Firstly, orgunity might only be a utopic idea lacking a rational foundation and for that reason never really present in the actual world. Secondly, it might be that these ideas are just a continuation of communism or socialism, which in practice often let people down.[1] But thirdly, orgunity may actually represent a new aspiring organisational model connecting people and structuring social relations. What the present paper argues for is the latter. In other words, we are looking to identify the characteristics of orgunities by examining the cases of DOPPS and EWB. In doing so, we attempt to critically examine advantages and disadvantages of Parker's and others' previously mentioned concepts by applying them to the two chosen empirical cases. We, therefore, start with the following question: what does our ethnographic material has to add to Parker's theoretical framework on orgunity?

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1 The organisation of work processes in the self-management socialist doctrine of the former socialist Yugoslavia might resemble the idea of orgunity even more than Communism, but was in practice also full of drawbacks (see Podjed 2006).

In December 1979, the constitutional assembly of DOPPS, attended by 76 people, was held in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, which was at that time a part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The establishing of the association was primarily aimed at the integration of hitherto scattered individuals who were engaged in the observation and monitoring of birds. One of the key initiators of the association was a charismatic poet and essayist Iztok Geister, who already before the inauguration of DOPPS tried to integrate Slovenian volunteers and professional ornithologists possessing sufficient knowledge and skills to collect data on birds, and who could prepare the first Slovenian ornithological atlas (Podjed 2010b).

Shortly after the founding, DOPPS attempted to spread its activities beyond the Slovenian borders by establishing an ornithological union, integrating bird-watchers from all corners of the former Yugoslav state. Three years later, in 1983, they organised the first conference of Yugoslav ornithologists, which was then held every year until 1988. In 1987, the Yugoslav Association of Ornithological Societies (YAOS) was officially formed, which a year later became a member of the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP), later renamed BirdLife International.[2] Simultaneously by linking with the rest of the world, an internal fragmentation of DOPPS began. The division was partially due to the rapid growth of the organisation – in only four years, its membership tripled. To improve decision-making and encourage local initiatives, DOPPS' Executive Board (EB) strove towards regionalisation and passed resolutions every year from 1984 to 1987 trying to begin preparations for the establishment of ornithological societies throughout Slovenia, which were to be joined under the umbrella association (DOPPS EB 1984: 69; 1986: 24; 1987: 28). Regionalisation was later carried out in accordance with the original plans of the DOPPS EB; regional branches of the original association began to spring up. In 1989 the Styrian branch opened, in 1995 the Notranjska branch, in 1997 the Ljubljana branch, in 2006 the Northern Primorska Branch, in 2009 the Pomurje Branch, and in 2014 the Dolenjska Branch. In addition to the six regional sections, DOPPS initiated also a Youth Section in 2006, which aims to connect younger members.

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2 This international organisation has almost 3 million members, 11 million support members and more than 7,000 employees (BirdLife 2016).

In 1991, when socialist Yugoslavia dissolved, the ties between the associations of the former Yugoslav republics were broken or at least significantly weakened. In this landmark year, DOPPS broke relations with YAOS and began to look for new alliances abroad and for recognition at an international level. They sought assistance from organisations that were members of the ICBP, for example the UK Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). In 1993, DOPPS obtained Representative Partner status in BirdLife International and three years later also an Affiliate Trainee Partner status. In 1998, they made a symbolic link with that international association, when the name of the Slovene association was formally changed to DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia. Finally, in 2001 DOPPS acquired the status of BirdLife's Full Partner.

In the 1990s, DOPPS visibly saw a significant change in its ideology, most evidently in the transition from bird watching to nature conservation (Podjed 2013), but also in the professionalisation of several activities with the support of sponsors – mainly the Slovenian telecommunications company Mobitel (Kimovec and Golob 2009). After 2000, the number of members stagnated or even slightly declined, but the professional part, i.e. the DOPPS Office, which employed over 20 people in 2016, simultaneously quickly grew. In addition to Mobitel's sponsorship, the growth of the professional team was enabled by obtaining funds from EU projects, including the LIFE Nature programme. Two grants from this EU programme enabled DOPPS to carry out renaturation of the Škocjan Inlet in Koper and the protection of the corncrake in Slovenia.

At the time of writing these lines, several activities of DOPPS are still connected not only to nature conservation, but also to the original ideas and plans from the 1970s, i.e. to carry out observations and studies of birds. In addition to these, many other activities are carried out by DOPPS; from trainings to lectures, which are too numerous to be registered in this short overview. All in all, the named activities shape the culture and the structure of this NGO, wherein volunteering is intertwined with professionalism (for details see Podjed and Muršič 2008).

VOLUNTEERS MAKING SLOVENIA CLEANER

Almost ten years have passed since two environmentally aware geographers graduated and decided to spend eight months in an Indian village where they "experienced sustainability in practice". Now mar-

ried, Petra and Janez Matos claim this international experience transformed them and subsequently inspired them to establish their own association upon returning to Slovenia. The initial ideas of the newly established Ecologists Without Borders (EWB) were to promote sustainable villages abroad and enable environmental enthusiasts to visit them, but this in the end never happened.

In 2008, in another part of Europe, in Estonia, the grassroots project "Let's Do It!" took shape. Its initial purpose was a (mere) country-wide clean-up, which soon turned out to be the largest campaign activating Estonian civic society since the Singing Revolution in 1988 and managed spread to most countries around the globe. When a Slovenian Nara Petrovič heard about this successful civic movement, he felt strongly motivated to bring this project to Slovenia and started to quite randomly contact people. His email invitation started circulating and eventually attracted several individuals, who did not know each other, but were willing to carry out such a project – the already mentioned Petra and Janez were among them. Their first meetings in 2009 were, according to the interviewed members, rather chaotic, as the heterogeneous prime movers only joined over one collective idea, i.e. to organise a major cleaning campaign in Slovenia, but did not have much else in common.

However, in order for this very successful clean-up to happen in 2010 and involve as much as 12 percent (when it was repeated in 2012 even 14 percent) of the 2 million Slovenian population, the originally flexible and unstructured group of organisers needed to formalise. As they explained, not even waste sacks could be acquired without forming an official organisation. Petra and Janez's "dormant" association, EWB, represented a convenient solution, so the group adopted it. Nevertheless, that was only one of the steps EWB needed to take to effectively carry out such a gargantuan task and the projects that followed. The campaign was an amazing success, to that the media contributed majorly. But ignorant of the collective achievements, the media reports consistently emphasised only the hard work of Petra Matos, who was officially the head of EWB, and not the group as a whole, which would have been fairer, as Petra herself and other collocutors said.

The project "Let's Clean Up Slovenia in a Day" exhausted the group, a fact which all of our collocutors strongly emphasised. Indeed, it even caused one of the organisers to end up in hospital, while another laughingly added it was then that his hair started to turn grey. Although such fatigue caused many volunteers to distance themselves from the movement, others grabbed the chance to do something they believed in and get funded for it as well. They started thinking about

possible future projects and applied for various governmental and other financial backings. In the months following the 2010 event, carrying out smaller projects kept the remaining members busy, yet in 2012 they managed to gather their strength anew and repeated the cleaning action. This time as a part of the World Cleanup[3] campaign and even more Slovenian volunteers participated, more precisely an additional two percent of the population or altogether approximately 280,000 volunteers. An immense amount of skills and hard work was the backbone of this achievement, which has afterwards never been surpassed, mainly because EWB's new motto is "Let's Clean Up Slovenia Forever", which goes hand-in-hand with their mission to improve "the state of our environment, focusing on efficient resource use and active citizenship."[4] The NGO has only been regularly active since 2009 and now works on waste prevention rather than on actual cleaning. The latter would at this point – because of the size of the remaining waste and its difficult location – have to be in fact carried out by cleaning professionals and not merely by volunteers anymore.

After the first clean-up campaign, some of the former volunteers managed to become fully employed through the funding the NGO started receiving to carry out various projects; however, it was still not really about the money, as Janez Matos put it, "there is no money that would make me work as hard as I am willing to work for free" (Tasi 2011). Most of those that currently work in the NGO as professionals are former volunteers with specialized skills, but they work as equals. Jaka, one of the employed members, told us that their NGO could be compared to a meritocracy, but that they still needed to professionalise to get the wanted financial support for their projects and office in Ljubljana. The current activities of EWB are carried out by five employees and plenty of volunteers (in 2015 totalling 48), who are not necessarily official members. This NGO's primary target is not for new members to enrol, but for volunteers to gather, help and make a difference. Unlike DOPPS, they do not strive to expand in the form of regional branches, but keep operating from Ljubljana, even though they most often act on a national level.

This NGO is no longer so media-present and now centred on waste management. It remains influential, but in a subtler and a more

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3 On this occasion millions of volunteers in 96 countries around the world were brought together. The next one is supposed to happen in 2018 and join as many as 380 million volunteers. In 2012, among all the participant countries, Slovenia had the highest percentage of the population participating (http://test.letsdoitworld.org/statistics, 9.6.2016).

4 http://ebm.si/en/, 9.6.2016

professionalised way. For example, the Zero Waste strategy they actively promote was at least partially a reason that made Ljubljana the first zero waste capital of Europe. Unfortunately, they have lately been facing a fairly severe financial crisis that forces them to try and earn money by selling environmentally friendly products in their online shop and seek out other ways of earning income. Carrying out various environmental projects continues to bring bread to this NGO's table, but it is not always sufficient, which creates difficulties, at least for the employed members.

TRANSFORMATION: FROM FAMILY TO ORGUNITY

As we have seen, DOPPS needed more than 20 years for its transformation from a voluntary association to an organisation that is no longer dealing only with the observation of birds, but also – or even primarily – with the protection of nature. During this time, the relationships within the organisation kept changing. In the initial period, i.e. in the years following its establishment in 1979, DOPPS can be understood as an unstructured community, one whose members were more or less equal, while hierarchical relationships were flexible and vague. Both organisations were in their early stage somewhat akin to Victor Turner's *"communitas"* (1969), a rudimentary structured and undifferentiated model in which social topography disappears. Such an amorphous state was well summarised by one of DOPPS' founding members, who said that once "there were fewer commands; everything was more consensual: how to get more members, how to enrich the magazine..." Such decision-making was present in the initial period of both organisations, but not absolute, as those at the helm were still the founding members of DOPPS, but this is actually not at odds with Turner's definition of *communitas* as a community of equals who submit to a universal authority of the ritual elders. The "spirit" was demarcated by solidarity, motivation to participate, and informal communication between the association's members. This initial period, in the case of DOPPS, lasted for almost two decades. During that time, DOPPS recorded an unprecedented growth in the number of members: in the mid-1980s there were only about 250 and at the turn of the century almost a thousand (though since the growth has somewhat stalled).

At the end of 1980s and 1990s, due to the increased number of members, the organisational structure of DOPPS was already more

formalised. This was also the time when within the association two factions with conflicting opinions about the fundamental activities of the organisation appeared. Tensions were escalating until 1999, when a sudden turn occurred. The organisational theoretician Edgar Schein (1992: 310) described just such a transformation, explaining that confrontations between "conservatives", who wish to keep the original culture, and "liberals" or "radicals", who want to change the original organisational culture, partly because they would like to boost the own positions of power, commonly occur in such organisations. An active voluntary member of the association, who meanwhile established his professional biological career in an academic research institute, described the turn in the association as a "revolution". "Since then, it's been quite another DOPPS," he told us in an interview.

The trigger for the sudden change in DOPPS was a seemingly trivial dispute over the association's funding for the association's journal *Acrocephalus.* In a meeting, the DOPPS Executive Board dismissed the "father of the association" from his post as chief editor of the journal. After that, the main initiator of DOPPS lost his formal and informal positions of power in the association and subsequently left. His departure and the sudden change were not entirely unexpected though, as many previous events had suggested that the organisation was willing to break with old values and management practices. Cooperation with BirdLife International, the sponsorship from Mobitel and other adjustments indicated a trend "from observation to conservation of nature" (Podjed 2013), i.e. towards nature conservation and more professional work, which was also the main reason for the paradigmatic shift. One faction was advocating for the professionalisation of the association's activities and emphasised the protection of birds and habitats, while the other insisted that the focus should remain on the work of volunteers, which they thought should continue to deal primarily with the chronicling, recording and study of birds.

Ecologists Without Borders in comparison to DOPPS not only appeared much later (in 2009), but also experienced a significantly shorter period of unstructured relations (*communitas*), which only lasted for a few months. As already stated above, EWB's objective is not to attract new members, but rather active volunteers, another element which distinguishes them from DOPPS. The number of core members is thus much lower than DOPPS's and quite stable, though they can on occasion gather up to 280,000 volunteers. It was precisely because of this extensiveness that the unstructured beginnings needed to formalise rapidly. According to our interlocutors, the first

meetings were relaxed, but somewhat peculiar. The meetings were directed more towards community-building than working. One of the interviewees described them as "a merry go round". Not all of the participants were keen on such an "intimate" approach, which, in addition to the necessity to practically organise the huge cleaning campaigns, transformed this loosely knit community into a more formalised and structured organisation.

When the first cleaning campaign started to look achievable, the tasks were divided and more serious work began. As mentioned above, the community needed a formal frame to be able to organise "Let's Clean Up Slovenia in a Day", so they adopted Matos' latent association "Ecologists Without Borders" and started working within the organisation's framework. Their goals were set high from the very beginning (though they were later to be surpassed) and required active volunteers with expertise in a number of fields. One of the most crucial and demanding tasks was to draw up a register of illegal waste tips, the first such countrywide, there was also a need to establish contacts with Slovene municipalities, form a national volunteer network, and get the attention of the media. In most of these activities, professionals were needed (Matoses, for example, graduated specialising in waste management). Such a fast, but obligatory shift was therefore in the case of EWB not completely unexpected because some sort of orderliness as well as knowledge, were and remain a must when trying to make a change, regardless of the lingering volunteer component. Shortly after the first cleaning campaign, EWB decided to carry out additional projects and so they became "a real NGO", as they told us. They, however, still exist also as a community, one where equality is of primary importance.

There were several potential scenarios for the future development of both associations. In the first version, DOPPS could return to its starting point and continue dealing with bird monitoring and EWB could remain a small group of environmental enthusiasts focused more on their own community than the potential results of its efforts. Another possible path could lead to the splitting of the organisations into voluntary and professional parts, which was, as the interviewees from DOPPS told us, an option which was seriously considered. The third option, which was in the end realised in both, was the coexistence of volunteer and professional activities within a single framework, which meant that a hybrid model had to be established, based on somewhat utopian ideas that professional and volunteer, expert and amateur activities can coexist in one institution.

Which features of orgunities, following Parker's theory (1998), can then be identified within DOPPS and EWB. The members, especially the most active ones, are certain about a collective allegiance to the association that stands for their own personal values, be it bird protection, waste management or simply nature conservation. Furthermore, the frontier between work and leisure is in fact unseen because the employed members regularly attend the leisure activities, while their work was (and indeed still is) primarily a hobby, albeit one which is taken seriously. They enjoy working and see their employment as more than merely a nine-to-five job. In addition to the time component, the spatial dimension is also telling. DOPPS or EWB can hardly be spatially located. Both have a central office in Ljubljana, but the only people spending time there are those employed in the NGOs (and not even all of them). EWB do not, for instance, even have a big enough office to accommodate all five employees, or for that matter sufficient heating to keep them warm in the winter. To test another of Parker's (ibid.) arguments, the hierarchical structure of both NGOs is not completely flat, as the presidents, vice-presidents and boards have plenty of prerogatives and can possibly modify their NGOs' tendencies. However, in both organisations the Members' Assembly represents the most important institutional body, which can accept or reject the initiatives of the board of members and regularly elect the few decision-taking members. The democratic rewarding, which is another one of the features of orgunity that Parker (ibid.) mentions, causes further issues: the volunteers do not receive any payment for their work, while those employed clearly do, a state of affairs that can cause frictions. The sixth feature of orgunity, according to Parker (ibid.), is connecting like-minded individuals, which can be seen in both of the organisations studied. However, the choosing of suitable members is not made by those in charge of the organisation, as Parker suggests; rather the recruitment is automatic and initiated by candidates: those joining feel close to nature conservation, environmental protection, bird watching and so on.

Thus, three of the six characteristics of orgunity that Parker put forth can be confirmed in the case of both of the NGOs examined, while the other three at least partially. This lends weight to the idea that the approximation to orgunity, as a social entity bridging the gap between community and organisation, in fact exists.

Our ethnographic studies reveal that the absence of a fine borderline between work and leisure is one of the elementary conditions

for the establishment of orgunity as a combination of a more formally defined organisation and an informal and unstructured community. The Canadian sociologist Robert A. Stebbins described this in terms of "serious leisure" (2006), defining it as a systematic pursuit of a leisure activity by amateurs and volunteers that perceive it as sound and interesting. Such an activity is then often changed from being purely a leisure activity into a professional career (Stebbins 1992: 3). Ethnographic cases further reveal that only a step separates such serious leisure enthusiasts from becoming "devotee workers". In his monograph *Between Work and Leisure,* Stebbins (2004) explains that such work aficionados completely surrender themselves to work that motivates them. They see work in a very positive light; it fulfils them and gives them the satisfaction of being successful at something. Their activities at work appear to be so attractive that they manage to erase the boundary between work and leisure. In such cases, the boundary between community and organisation seems to be melting, which as a result produces a unified, dynamic orgunity.

ORGANISATION, COMMUNITY OR NETWORK?

On the one hand, the two NGOs presented above can be perceived as groups of volunteers joined by the same value – nature conservation. On the other hand, DOPPS and EWB can also be understood as formal organisations with transparent and well-defined hierarchical structures. They can thus be viewed either from the perspective of "classical" organisation theories that discuss the order present in the organisations or from the viewpoint of community and network theories that recognise the relationships in an egalitarian group as complex, fluid, and hardly depicted by simple and clear models. Nonetheless, our case-studies seem to suggest that these two configurations

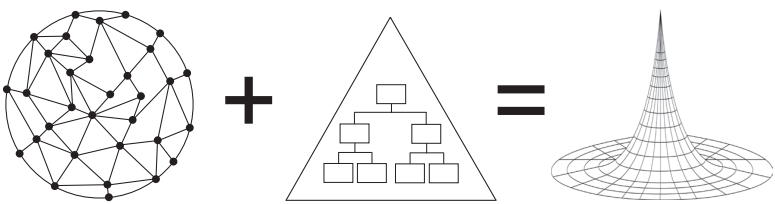

Figure 1: Orgunity as the sum of community (network) and organisation.

can coexist. Both DOPPS, which transformed into a blend of organisation and community in the late 1990s, and EWB, which experienced a similar change ten years later, demonstrate the challenges of portraying group structure with traditional two-dimensional organigraphs. If anything, such organisations are better depicted using a three-dimensional model that somehow looks like a pancake with a bulge.

The "pancake" here stands for a volunteer network or community of more or less equal interconnected ("networked") individuals. The "bulge" rising above the network can be described with a classic organigraph that shows a clearly structured hierarchy of relationships between individuals (vertical), amalgamated with the egalitarian (horizontal) network or community.

The image of orgunity fuses organisation, network and community. It is at the same time both neat and messy, both stable and flexible, both limited and open. Parker's orgunity is, in a word, "chaordic", as Dee Hock (1999) described a system of organisation that blends characteristics of chaos and order, with neither chaotic nor ordered behaviour dominating. This perspective assists our understanding of internal conflicts, oppositions, sectioning, divisions and their constructive importance. At the same time, we are able to lucidly see that the "organisational life is more indeterminate, more differentiated, more chaotic than it is simple, systematic, monological and hierarchical" (Boje 1995: 1001). In addition, we can without difficulty confront the fact that organisations maintain the appearance of order, while in truth confronting confusion, chaos and disorder that the members know how to disguise and collectively enact symbiosis.

CONCLUSION

This paper presents DOPPS and Ecologists Without Borders as unities consisting of two parts, i.e. of idealised organisations (*formal organisations*) and of actual complex networks that link individuals to a community (*informal organisations*). In closely examining the two organisations, two images seem to keep alternating: fleetingly organisation, then network or community, then again to organisation and so on. Organisation, community and network hence coexist; they symbiotically complement each other and form an entity that can be considered as orgunity.

The fundamental condition of orgunity is that it is a platform or, in other words, a way of cooperating amid two different concepts or even ideologies. A self-organised group of people is in many ways different from the organisations where structure usually has a lot to do with hierarchy and domination (Morgan 1986). Communities and networks conversely lack a clearly defined structure and hierarchy is so fluid that it can hardly be outlined. However, dynamics and variability are constant when it comes to orgunities, which can – precisely because of their organised nucleus – function successfully, although that seems fairly possible in the complexity of the dissimilar opinions, ideas and aims that members of such organisations have. Goals of an organisation can be individually interpreted by each of its members. Nevertheless, the organisation functions as a whole and reaches joint flexible and loose aspirations that are rooted in altruism, cooperation and volunteering.

In the case of DOPPS, the original goals were to observe and study birds, which later morphed into protection of birds and their habitats. Alternatively, in the case of EWB there was a shift from "mere" cleaning to a general decrease in the amount of waste production and an aim to improve waste management as a whole. Such general orientations were additionally implemented by the professional members and a partial formalisation, but the two orgunities nonetheless preserved a dynamic structure that is neither ideal nor utopian but represents a participatory model whose specifics can be traced and applied to other NGOs or even to the profit sector, especially so when we move beyond Parker's romantic, idealistic and utopian representations, and focus merely on setting up a balance between a participatory community and an orderly organisation.

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Jadran Kale
Komunjsko, Skupno, and Seljansko - Legacy of Eastern Adriatic Commons

Three historical pasturelands are briefly presented here as the commons. According to existing documentation and literature, they represent the only survivals in the Eastern Adriatic. Locations made them interesting for new markets, with tourism being an important force mobilizing communities for new initiatives. Located in sparsely inhabited island or mountain periphery lacking economic basis, which gave reason for the commons in the first place, these properties demonstrate vital capacities of their communities. Aside of problems posed in an integrated and globalized world, their reach break the bonds of historical commons and produce new forms and practices.

PETER SIMONIČ
Communitarian Institutions in Trenta Valley

Political sciences and sociology assume that society went through radical alteration of social relation after the introduction of market and industrial economy and individualisation. The case of social organisations in Trenta Valley in the Slovenian Julian Alps shows how community actively participated in securing their basic living conditions. They have achieved that by practicing common highland pastures and forests in the Middle Ages, by later law on agrarian communities, common cheese production in the 19th century, by 20th century cooperatives, contemporary tourism societies, and certainly by fairs and rituals. Communitarianism was, therefore, not lost in history, but permanently reshaped to serve local interests as an adaptation to environmental and social possibilities and constrains.

Silvia Contessi, Cristina Grasseni
Co-Producing Participatory Guarantee Systems – Limits and Potentials
In the agricultural system, soil science and social sciences meet. Through ethnography and environmental expertise we analyse a network of small organic farmers and citizens (members of Solidarity

Purchase Groups) who collaborate through Participatory Guarantee Systems in northern Italy. The project requires the active participation of all stakeholders who fall outside of conventional agriculture. It can thus be a space of observation, to investigate how ′co-producers′ relate to the ground as a complex system in the construction of the concept of food quality.

Hosaralmo Collective
Cooperative Practices: Survival Strategies, "Alternative" Movements or Capitalism Re-Embedding?

Cooperative practices are the backbone of social reproduction in human society. Through two ethnographic cases in the region of Catalonia, we argue that solidarity practices can be read as a place of struggle as well as an object of capitalist integration. Both examples, agroecological and financial services cooperatives, show the difficulty of a real coexistence of diverse and plural economies in a world which is violently "capitalocentric".

Valentina Gulin Zrnić, Tihana Rubić
New Transition: Community Gardens and Civic Engagement in the City of Zagreb

The paper is based on ethnographic research of urban community gardens in Zagreb and on analyses of their organization and contexts of their foundation, particularly differentiating gardens from the socialist period and recent gardening initiatives. The latter consist of various local activist groups and of a municipality-led program on urban gardens. The discussion focuses on these various projects and their discourses and practices, negotiations and realizations of community building, solidarity, ecological and sustainability issues within the context of the politics of public space and urban governance.

Irene Sabaté
Reciprocity and Solidarity in the Face of the Spanish Home Repossessions Crisis

After the 1997-2007 housing bubble in Spain, mortgage default escalated to unprecedented rates. In order to cope with this,

households resorted to strategies based both on reciprocity and market logics. Parallel to this, a social movement, the Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH), promoted mutual support and the circulation of technical knowledge among defaulters, while lobbying for legislative changes. How effective are mortgagors' strategies to secure domestic reproduction? And what is their potential to transform the structures of financial capitalism that are endangering such reproduction?

Cirila Toplak
For a New Social Order. A Genealogy of Self-Management in SFRY

The author of this paper first considers the historical evolution of the concept of self-management designed and theorized by utopian Socialists and anarchists of the 19th century. In Slovenia, the Christian Socialist Andrej Gosar was the first to develop this concept in the 1930s, while after World War II Edvard Kardelj authored the legislation by which self-management was introduced in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In the paper the following questions are addressed: Why didn't self-management in Socialist Slovenia/Yugoslavia work? How can we consider and revive the concept of self-management in the present Slovenian political and economic situation? Can autonomism as one of the theoretical foundations of self-management constitute an efficient alternative/threat to today's neoliberal global capitalism?

Nina Vodopivec
Solidarity and the Feelings of Belonging: Textile Industrial Workers in the Socialist and Post socialist Slovenia

The article provides an overview of the different forms of solidarity in socialist Slovenia and within the changed structural conditions in postsocialism, in relation to work experiences and sentiments of belonging in textile factories. The article is based on material gathered through work at the spinning factory of Litija and interviews conducted with workers, managers and directors in Slovenia (between 2000 and 2011).

Gorazd Kovačič
Trade Unions Fragmentation in Slovenia. Causes and Lessons

The article treats trade unions as a form of an institutionalized solidarity. It focuses on the reasons, why the unions of the public sector in post-socialist Slovenia experienced interest fragmentation and separatism, which worsened their coordinated class policies. Its main cause has been interest hegemony of the core professions within every branch. The response by the other groups of workers has been to establish separate unions. The only possible way of stopping the process of organizational fragmentation includes diversification of agenda within every union, and reinforcement of solidarity between different groups of workers.

Tanja Ahlin
'Repaying the Suffering' in Transnational Families from Kerala, South India

The South Indian state of Kerala is known for its highly educated population and also for high levels of international migration. Many people, especially Syrian Christian women, become nurses with the view of migrating to the Gulf countries, the United States of America, Australia or elsewhere. How does this influence the family dynamic and intergenerational care which is often assumed to require physical proximity? Based on data gathered during extensive fieldwork in Kerala and Oman, I argue that rather than an act of abandonment, migration may be an act of filial reciprocity. I further show how care continues to be reciprocated between parents and their children at a distance, a practice which is essentially facilitated by everyday information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Eugene Sensenig
Looking for a City with Foundations: Intentional Urban Communities as a Christian Response to Justice and Power

Intentional Christian urban communities represent an attempt combine social activism and solidarity with a spiritual approach to just governance. Reba Place Fellowship was founded in 1957 as a response to the disappointing track record of the churches in Europe when confronted with the horrors of National Socialism during WWII.

It is the oldest Protestant urban community in North America and has successfully countered racist real estate speculation, refugee and minority exclusion, and authoritarian forms of collective internal decision making.

Boštjan Kravanja
The Spirit of Social Cohesion and Sharing in Relation to Dance Consumption Practices in Contemporary Swing Dance Communities

Swing dances evolved in America's jazz era between the 1920s and 1940s. They have been revived in the 1980s and 1990s, and are today spreading from the USA and Europe to many countries all over the world. Feelings of togetherness and sharing at large gatherings of swing dancers on numerous international festivals and exchanges create a sort of communitas, where participants reproduce their 'enchanting' social world. However, the chapter shows how the profoundly organized nature of the contemporary swing dance scene makes its social solidarities multilayered, polivalent and often limited to various status groups. The exclusivity of swing dancing is not confined only to historical macro-levels of race, ethnicity, social class, age and gender, but also stretches to the contemporary swing dance communities. Discourses of social cohesion, which are pursued among members of the scene in terms of a big, happy community, are therefore not always complementary to mutuality and sharing, which are at the core of partner dances.

Dan Podjed, Daša Ličen
Orgunity as a New Form of Cooperation: Case Studies of Two Environmental NGOs

The authors seek to intertwine three different terms proliferating in public discourse: organisation, community and network. It is through them that they attempt to explain how a hybrid organisational structure, an "orgunity" that is simultaneously fuzzy and clearly defined, flexible and dynamic can appear. The chapter aims to connect theory with practice in presenting two examples of such organisational structure. First, it presents the Bird Watching and Bird Study Association of Slovenia, a nature conservation and birdwatching non-governmental organisation. Second, the authors look into the case of another Slovenian NGO, Ecologists Without Borders, which initiated a popular environmental action for cleaning the country.

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