_____

OLD HABITS DIE HARD?
AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF
COMMUNIST-ERA SOCIAL TIES IN
POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA

Cătălin Augustin Stoica[*]

National School of Political Science and Public Administration, 6-8 Povernei Str., 010648, Bucharest, Romania

Abstract

Some scholars have claimed that the importance of communist-era ties such as 'blat' or instrumental-personal relations will decrease during transition. Others have provided evidence that the importance of such ties has increased in post-communism. Using recent survey data from a nationally representative sample of respondents aged 25 years and over, I examine the types of social ties that have survived Communism in Romania and the factors that influence an individual's social capital or network resources. According to my analyses, in 2010 the frequency of an individual's ties to some domains has increased. Individual level factors that account for a respondent's social capital in 2010 are education, network resources in 1989, former Communist party membership, and occupational status.

Keywords: social networks**,** Communism, Romania, post-communist transition, institutions

1. Introduction

Studies of communist societies (e.g., Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley [1], Ledeneva [2], Verdery [3], Walder [4], Wedel [5]) have drawn attention to the pervasiveness of specific social ties, which intermingled with larger social structures and contributed to the very existence and survival of state socialist regimes. Terms like '*blat*' (in Russian), '*guanxi*' (in Chinese) or '*relaţii*' (relations in Romanian) or '*pile*' (props or files, in Romanian) were employed to denote such communist-era social ties, which owed their very existence to conditions of shortages and a state-sanctioned system of privileges [2, p. 37]. Yet, aside from their instrumental character and illegal aspects, such social ties also involved elements of personal attachment and mutual friendship. According

_____

[*] E-mail and additional contact info: astoica@curs.ro; Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest, 9 Schitu Măgureanu Str., 050025, Bucharest, Romania

to Uslaner [6], "under Communism, [these social ties] were as close to [Putnam's] 'social capital' as most people were likely to get."

With the introduction or market reforms (in China) and democracy (in the former communist countries from Central and Eastern Europe), one would have hoped that the importance of such ties would diminish. According to Staniszkis [7], Stark [8, 9] and Wank [10, 11], communist era-social ties have not only survived the transition but have become pillars of new economic and political institutions in Eastern Europe and China. Guthrie [12-14] claims, however, that the role of such social ties has diminished during market transition.

In this article, I address the current debate about the growing (or declining) importance of communist-era social relations in post-socialist Romania. In doing so, I will employ data from a nationwide survey conducted in Romania in 2010. The survey's questionnaire included a series of items that captured respondents' network ties in a variety of fields (from medical services to police to labour market institutions) in 1989 and in 2010. Given several limitations imposed by the survey's methodology and its measures, my analyses have an exploratory character and focus on the following questions: What was the incidence of the so-called instrumental-personal social ties in 1989? Has the incidence of such social ties decreased or increased during transition? What individual and structural factors account for an individual's network resources in 2010?

This article is structured as follows: In the next section, I will examine the nature of social relations prior to 1989 and I will highlight the multiple aspects of these so-called communist-era ties. In the third part, I will present the survey data and measures I employed in this paper. In the fourth part, I will discuss the results of a series of bi-variate analyses and in the fifth section I will present the results of causal-type analyses highlighting the factors that account for an individual's network resources in 2010. In the last part, I will discuss the implications of my findings for the current debate on the significance of communist-era social ties during transition.

2. Social ties during Communism

For most Romanians, 'having relations' ('*a avea relații*') or – in short 'relations'– remains a necessary condition to get things done even after Ceauşescu's demise. Studying such relations and their (changing) content first requires a historical investigation of their origins. For instance, to denote the pervasiveness of "having relations" during communism, Romanians joked that the acronym for the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) stood for 'Props [or Files], Acquaintances, and Relations' (or '*Pile, Cunoştinţe şi Relaţii*' in Romanian). Such ties, however, were not created by the communist regime in Romania but they existed prior to 1944. Moreover, in their ambitious project of modernization, Romanian communists made desperate efforts to change the nature of pre-1944 social ties among individuals [15-18]).

Jowitt [16, p.121] claims that the communist transformation eventually resulted in 'neotraditionalism'. By 'neotraditionalism' Jowitt refers to the survival of elements of pre-communist (traditional) order despite Leninist parties' emphasis on structural-institutional modernization [16, p. 123]. At the center of 'neotraditionalism' are "informal practices that [became] corrupt practices, practices that subvert[ed], rather than contribute[d] to, the [Leninist] Party's formal goals and general interests; practices that directly threaten[ed] the Party's organizational integrity" [16, p. 121]. Such practices include *blat,* bribery, preferential treatment of some social categories in the attempt to ensure their cooperation and gain their loyalty to the Party, the rise of a rank or status-order based upon Party membership/inclusion into the power elite, and the survival of patron-client relations.

Analyzing authority structures in Chinese industry, Walder [4, p. 10] employs "communist neo-traditionalism" to contrast "modern forms of industrial authority that emphasize independence, autonomy, impersonality and anonymity [with] traditional forms of authority that rely on dependence, deference, and particularism." Central to Walder's 'neo-traditionalism' is Party clientelism, namely the links the Party cultivates with a minority of loyal workers in its attempt to control them and elicit their cooperation. Party clientelism is based on 'principled particularism' – recruiting, promoting, and rewarding a minority of workers that are loyal and committed to the Party (or who, at least, display such attitudes). This privileged relation between workers and the Party has a clientelistic structure because it implies vertical solidarity, power differentials, exchange of benefits (e.g., political support, access to scarce goods and resources), and mutual dependence.

According to Walder, 'neo-traditionalism' also implies a "subculture of social relations that are at the same time personal and instrumental". Soviet Union's *blat* or the Chinese *guanxi* captures the instrumental component of social relations in Communist regimes. As mentioned previously, the Romanian equivalent of such widespread networks of personal exchange and favours has been '*relaţii*' (relations), '*cunoştinţe*' (acquaintances), and '*pile*'. The latter term (pronounced 'pee-la' or – plural – 'pee-le') is particularly revealing for the inner workings of such instrumental ties. Originally, the term denotes 'file' – the metal tool employed to smooth or shape a rough surface. '*A avea o pilă*' ('to have a file') meant knowing someone who can smooth things out and/or get things done; '*a pune o pilă [cuiva]*' meant to facilitate someone's access to certain goods, services, or people.

'*Blat*' also circulated in Romanian language. According to Ledeneva [2, p. 12] (the Russian term blat came from '*po blatu*' – 'in an illcit, illegal manner'. Seemingly, '*blat*' originates in a Jewish expression designating 'closeness and familiarity' [2, p. 12]. The term was subsequently employed in Polish language for 'someone who provides a cover, an umbrella' and it was eventually imported into Russian as 'ways of obtaining something or arranging something using connections' [2, p. 12]. In Romanian language, however, '*blat*' has retained its reference to illicit activities. For instance '*a face blatul*' ('to make blat') or '*pe blat*' ('by blat') literally refers to 'getting a free ride [on a train, bus, etc]' or

'obtaining something for free'; '*blat*' also designates 'fixing' athletic competitions (with the help of referees, corrupt players, or coaches).

Like in the former Soviet Union where 'Blat was mightier than Stalin', in Romania too '*pilele*', '*cunoştinţele*', and '*relaţiile*' played crucial roles for the very functioning and existence of the communist system. Such instrumental ties served many purposes: 1) acquiring scarce goods (e.g., housing, durable goods, cars, clothing, books, medicines, or – during Ceauşescu's last years in power – gasoline, meat, bread, dairy products, soap, or even toilet paper); 2) getting access to certain services (e.g., abortion, vacationing resorts, obtaining a passport to travel abroad) or to good quality services (e.g., medical care in the Communist Party's medical centers, spas; or, more generally, having a 'personal' physician, dentist, beautician, hairdresser); 3) enrolling one's children in good schools/colleges and/or helping them to obtain passing grades; 5) avoiding the military service or – rarely – criminal prosecution; 6) getting a job and/or obtaining a job transfer. (This list is by no means exhaustive.)

'Relations' also contributed to the smooth operation of the socialist economy. Faced with absurdist economic demands and severe shortages in labour and raw materials, managers of state enterprises had to rely on their personal relations to fulfil the production quotas established by the centre. Through their '*pile*' (connections) with political bosses or higher-ups, managers were able to bargain their plan by "demanding for more investments and raw materials than the amounts actually necessary for their target. Every manager, and every level of the bureaucracy, padded budgets and requests in hopes of having enough, in the actual moment of production" [19]. Good relations among managers of state enterprises helped them cope with (and often times deceive) the center and its irrational policies. Maintaining good relations among state firms often took the form of lending/borrowing much needed raw materials, machinery, and workers (for other general treatments of such phenomena, see Kornai [20, 21] and, for the Romanian case, see Verdery [22])

As I discussed previously, several studies of post-socialist transformations have focused on the extent to which communist-era social ties have survived the formal collapse of state-socialism [7-10, 22-24]. In the Chinese case – with the communist party still in power and in the absence (until recently) of clearly defined property rights – a businessperson's social ties to officialdom (*guanxi*) 'produce' and enforce such rights. For instance, ties to public officials can help an entrepreneur obtain licenses to operate in profitable sectors, which are usually controlled by the state. Furthermore, such ties can provide access to information on the supply and demand of scarce resources and can help "ensuring lower tax bills [and] preventing harassment by government agencies" [11]. Through his or her ties to government officials an entrepreneur can gain access to public resources or siphon off state assets to use them in one's private business. Analyses conducted on the Romanian case also suggest that '*pile*' and '*relaţii*' (or network resources) are central to entrepreneurial activities in post-socialist Romania [25, 26].

Although social relations govern many economic transactions in post-socialism, numerous studies have shown that embeddedness also is a characteristic of economic activities in the Western world (for a classical statement, see Granovetter [27]). One of Guthrie's Chinese interviewees has gone so far as to say that "I told [European interlocutors] that I don't think it matters what country you're doing business in, everyone relies on connections to do business. Otherwise you wouldn't do much business (…) There is nothing special about China in this way of doing business [using connections or *guanxi* – my note]." [13]

Many students of market transition would probably take these words with a grain of salt. Yet, the opinions of Guthrie's respondent deserve a few moments of critical reflection. To paraphrase Gould et al. [28], what if '*guanxi*', '*blat*', and '*pile*' are little more than Chinese, Russian, and Romanian words for 'the personal networks, social capital, and gift economies found in all economies'?

Following Ledeneva [2] and Walder [4], I would like to stress that, despite their similarities with phenomena found all over the world (i.e., bribery, corruption, patron-client relations, business relations, and so on), '*guanxi*', '*blat*', and '*pile*' have distinctive characteristics. Furthermore, other studies of market transition have shown that such social ties should be interpreted in relation to individuals' former positions of power within the Communist party hierarchy. Staniszkis [7], Hankiss [23], Stark [8], Eyal et al. [1] have claimed that, in some countries, the post-communist transition would result in 'political capitalism' defined as an economic and political order in which ex-communist officials would control and privatize public resources for their private benefits. In Bourdieu's terms, ex-communist officials would convert their (communist) political capital into economic capital. In quantitative-oriented analyses of market transition, 'political capital' is measured by variables such as '[Communist Party] cadre' and 'former cadre'. In fact, 'political capital' represents a particular form of social capital or network resources institutionalized through the practices of the Communist Party [1, p. 22].

As discussed previously, such social ties cover phenomena that are also associated with 'social capital'. This notion has received a great deal of scholarly attention in studies related to social stratification, economic development, civic engagement, political participation, and democratization (for excellent overviews of such studies, see Portes [29] and Woolcock [30]). It is beyond the scope of this article to review all of these studies and I limit myself here to distinguish between two major approaches to the study of social capital.

The first major approach is associated with political scientists working within a neo-Tocquevillean theoretical framework (e.g., Fukuyama [31], Putnam [32-34]). For Putnam social capital is a property of communities and nations. Along with social trust, social capital is believed to impact democracy and economic growth. Specifically, individuals who generally trust others are likely to join various associations, which underpin the very existence of a democratic polity. Furthermore, generalized trust, social capital, and democracy positively correlate with levels of economic development and prosperity (for an empirical assessment of Puttnam's claim that Americans bowl alone, see Paxton [35, 36];

for a rebuttal of Putnam's thesis, see Granovetter [37], Portes [29]; Woolcock [30] – to name here but a few critics).

The other major approach to social capital is associated with scholars such as Coleman [38], Bourdieu [39] and Lin [40]. These scholars (among others) view social capital not as a property of communities or nations but as a feature of individuals' relationships. In this article, I employ an individual's network resources or 'social capital' in the sense given by Bourdieu, i.e., "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable networks of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owed capital, a 'credential' that entitles them to credit in the various senses of the word" [39, p. 102]. Notably, in Bourdieu's understanding, social capital can be converted into other forms of capital (including economic capital or financial might, like in the case of post-communist 'political capitalism').

To sum up, in the previous pages I have discussed some of the features of the so-called communist-era social ties. Although these social ties share some common elements with phenomena such as the Western 'networking', 'patron-client' ties or with informal networks found in gray or illegal economic activities, the arguments presented previously indicate that '*blat*' or '*relations*' have distinct features. Extremely important, the existence and proliferation of such social ties is fundamentally linked with communist regimes' economies of shortages and politically sanctioned systems of rewards. Before moving on to the next section, I would like to offer a few caveats. Although the data employed in this paper tap issues related to an individual's social capital in the sense of Bourdieu, 'social capital' requires more numerous and complex indicators than those included in my Romanian survey from 2010. (Actually, as I will discuss in the next section, this survey focused mainly on social stratification and mobility issues and not on measuring social capital.) Against this backdrop, the questions and indicators on which I will rely in my analyses refer mainly to the so-called 'useful connections' or instrumental ties of my survey respondents [41, 42]. To the extent to which these instrumental ties still involve phenomena like favouritism, nepotism or corruption, then such ties or network resources could be aptly described as 'anti-social capital' (see Uslaner [6]; for the so-called downsides of social capital, see also Portes and Landolt [43]).

Despite these limitations, my survey data has several merits: first, it assesses respondents' network resources in 1989 and in 2010. Second, the survey's instrument also included questions on Communist party membership prior to 1989. As I argued previously, some market transition scholars have treated 'communist party membership' as a proxy for an individual's 'political capital prior to 1989'. Having information on both network resources and a respondent's political affiliation prior to 1989 allows one to explore the links between these two aspects of communist-era social ties.

3. Data and measures

3.1. Data

The data employed in this paper comes from a survey conducted within the project 'Class structure and social stratification in contemporary Romania. Implications for public, marketing, and cultural policies (Project ID 92-131)'. The project was funded by the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research; this was a collaborative work among the University of Bucharest, the Babeş-Bolyai University (Cluj), the University of Oradea, and the Center for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS, Bucharest); the Principal Investigator was Lazăr Vlăsceanu. Within this project, CURS conducted a survey on a nationally representative sample of 4,508 individuals aged 25 years and older; this age limit is widely employed in stratification and social mobility studies. The sample was random, stratified by Romania's 18 socio-cultural areas, residence (urban and rural areas), and size and type of urban and rural settlements. Localities and households were randomly selected; within each randomly selected household, CURS selected respondents aged 25 years and over using the first-birthday method. Interviews were conducted face-to-face between October 15 and December, 2, 2010. The margin of error at the level of the entire sample was +/-1.46% at a 95% confidence level.

Since in this paper I focus on changes in individuals' network resources between 1989 and 2010, for reasons of comparability, I employ a subset of data which includes respondents who, in 1989, were at least 25 years old. This is the age at which presumably an individual would have completed her education, had entered the labour force and had joined or formed various adult-life social networks. This subset consists of 2,668 respondents.

3.2. Measures

3.2.1. An individual's network resources

The survey's questionnaire included a series of questions that tap a respondent's network resources (or social capital in Bourdieu's parlance) in 1989 and in 2010. The source items read as follows: (In 1989) Did you have relations or acquaintances on which you could rely… (a) to access a medical service such as being seen by a doctor or seeking emergency help (yes/no/refused)?; (b) to solve a problem with public notaries, in courts, or solve a legal issue (yes/no/refused)?; (c) to solve a problem at the city hall (yes/no/refused)?; (d) to solve a problem at the police (yes/no/refused)?; (e) to get a loan from a bank or someone else (yes/no/refused)?; (f) to get a job (yes/no/refused)? The same questions and answer choices were employed to measure respondents' network resources in 2010.

As mentioned previously, state socialist societies were characterized by severe shortages in goods and services. 'Having relations' *('a avea relaţii'* in Romanian) was crucial to overcome shortages in goods, to access quality services, to gain favours or even to solve legal issues (such as avoiding fines or prosecution). The questions employed in this survey refer exactly to situations in which, prior to 1989, individuals might have sought help from others (including public officials) by appealing to informal networks. For instance, having relations at the city hall prior to 1989 would have helped someone to avoid bureaucratic delay in obtaining social benefits, approvals for various constructions, and – most important – to obtain housing. Similarly, having relations at the police prior to 1989 would have translated in obtaining more easily (if not illegally) residence permits, getting rid of various fines or even avoiding prosecution for various delinquent acts. Table 1 presents the percentage point distributions of answers to questions regarding respondents' network resources in 1989 and 2010.

Table 1. Percentage Point Distribution of Answers to Questions Regarding Respondents' Network Resources (Romania, 2010)

Did you/do you have relations or acquaintances on which you can rely …	In 1989				In 2010			
	Yes	No	Refused	Total	Yes	No	Refused	Total
to access a medical service (regular doctor, emergency services etc)?	19.3%	75.6%	5.1%	100.0%	28.0%	70.8%	1.0%	100.0%
to solve a problem in courts, at public notaries or legal assistance (lawyers)?	7.6%	87.1%	5.3%	100.0%	11.1%	87.7%	1.2%	100.0%
to solve a problem at the city hall?	12.2%	82.5%	5.2%	100.0%	17.9%	81.1%	1.0%	100.0%
to solve a problem at the police?	8.4%	86.3%	5.3%	100.0%	11.7%	87.1%	1.2%	100.0%
to get a loan from a bank or someone else?	4.3%	89.8%	5.8%	100.0%	8.3%	90.1%	1.5%	100.0%
to get a job?	6.6%	87.4%	6.0%	100.0%	4.4%	93.3%	2.3%	100.0%

Source: Sub-sample of 2,668 respondents from the nationwide survey "Class structure and social stratification in contemporary Romania. Implications for public, marketing, and cultural policies" conducted by CURS between October – December, 2010.

As shown in Table 1, with the exception of 'having relations to get a job', as compared to 1989, in 2010 more respondents reported having 'useful connections' to access medical and legal services, to solve a problem at the city hall or the police, and to get a loan. Specifically, as compared to 1989, we note an 8.7% increase in the percentage of individuals who now report having network resources in the field of healthcare; a 3.5% increase in the percentage of respondents who have connections in the field of legal services; a 5.7% increase in the proportion of interviewees who know someone who can help them solve a problem at the mayoral offices; a 3.3% increase in the percentage of individuals who have relations that can assist them solve an issue at the police; and a 4%

increase in the proportion of respondents who claim having relations to get a loan from a bank or someone else (private individuals). Furthermore, among respondents who reported having had at least one useful connection or relationship in 1989, for 38.7% of them the number of such useful ties has remained the same as in 1989 and for 24.5% interviewees the number of such instrumental relations has increased as compared to 1989. For 36.8% respondents who had at least one useful social tie in 1989 the number of such ties has decreased in 2010 as compared to 1989.

As mentioned previously, the only domain in which fewer respondents report having connections in 2010 as compared to 1989 is related to the job market (i.e., 'knowing someone who can help you to get a job'). As I will discuss in the next sections, this is partly due to the fact that 55.0% of the total sub-sample consists of retirees.

From the source-items presented in Table 1, I constructed a series of 12 dummy variables (1 = yes; 0 = no) to tap a respondent's network resources in 1989 and 2010 in fields such as medical care, legal assistance (e.g., lawyers, public notaries), law enforcement, local level bureaucratic structures (i.e., city hall and communes' mayoral offices), job market, and financial services. (The percentage point distribution of answers to these questions is presented and discussed in the next section.) Also, from these source-items I have constructed two quasi-metric variables as follows: 1) a respondent's network resources in 1989, which is the sum of all contacts/relations reported by an individual prior to the collapse of communism; 2) a respondent's network resources in 2010, which is calculated as the sum of relations reported by a subject in 2010. The values of these two variables vary from 0 (no contacts) to 6 (contacts in all of the fields mentioned previously).

3.2.2. Independent variables

An individual's network resources (or social capital) is influenced by a series of factors such as gender, age, education, residence, occupational status, and – as I discussed previously – Communist party membership (in 1989). From the survey's questionnaire, I have constructed a series of dummy variables as follows: gender (1 = male); education level - less than high school (1 = yes); high school and post-high school graduate (1 = yes); university graduate (1 = yes); respondent was an ordinary Communist party member in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent held an authority position within the Communist party/'cadre' (1 = yes); respondent was not a Communist party member in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent is a urban resident in 2010 (1 = yes). In the descriptive analyses presented in the next section, I will also employ a series of dummy variables for a respondent's occupation and occupational status in 1989 and in 2010. Several cautionary remarks are in order: in this survey, a respondent's occupation and his/her occupational status in 1989 were recorded through a series of open-ended questions. This mode of recording the interviewees' occupational history prior to 1989 generated a rather large percentage of missing information ('no answers' and 'don't knows') on respondents' occupations and occupational statuses in

1989 (i.e., 30%). To avoid biased estimates in subsequent causal-type analyses, I have created a dummy variable for situations where I lack information about respondents' occupation in 1989.

In contrast, respondents' occupation and occupational status in 2010 were recorded through a series of open-ended and closed questions. As a result, the proportion of 'refusals to answer' and of 'no answers' to questions pertaining to occupational status in 2010 is small (i.e., 1.5% of the total sub-sample). Specifically, I have recoded the answers to questions regarding interviewees' occupation and occupational status in 2010 into a new variable 'Respondent's occupation in 2010'. This variable is similar to the ISCO-88 occupation scale (one digit); in addition, my variable also has several categories to account for those who, at the time of the survey, were retirees, stayed at home, or were unemployed.

4. Descriptive analyses

In this section, I discuss the main results of bi-variate analyses of respondents' network resources in 2010 taking into account factors such as gender, residence, communist party membership, and occupation in 2010. Table 2 presents the results of these bi-variate analyses; figures in bold indicate statistically significant differences at $p < .05$ or less, calculated through Chi-square tests and t-tests for mean differences (in the case of age).

First, I note that the gender-based inequalities that characterize other domains of Romania's social structure (among other countries) seem to be reproduced in the field of individuals' network resources or social capital. Specifically, although women make up 54.1% of the total sub-sample, fewer women than men report having useful relations on most fields under scrutiny. The only exception to this fact is 'having relations to access medical services'; on this point, more female respondents (52.1%) than males (47.9%) report having such connections. This might be partially explained by the following factors: the relatively aged structure of the sub-sample employed in these analyses and women's higher life-expectancy as compared to men's; the persistence of traditional gender role models, according to which women are care-takers of the family and their responsibilities also include managing relations with doctors for their husbands and/or children.

Gender imbalances in the opportunity structures are highly visible in regard to 'having relations to get a job'. Specifically, although men represent 45.9% of the total sub-sample, 59.0% of them report having relations that could help them get a job as compared to 49.0% of female respondents who declared having such relations. Opportunity structures and inequalities are also shaped by residence area. As compared to rural areas, cities present individuals with more opportunities in terms of accessing medical, financial, and legal services or finding jobs (see Table 2). Yet, as compared to urban residents, more rural residents report having relations that can help them solve a problem at the mayoral office. This is unsurprising given the fact that rural settlements consists

of relatively small and close-knit groups, where everybody seems to know everybody else (including the mayor, the vice-mayor or other local bureaucrats). Furthermore, mayoral offices are central pillars of rural communities; as compared to urban residents, rural residents interact more often with local authorities (i.e., paying taxes in person at the mayor's office, obtaining various documents and/or accessing social services, gathering at the mayoral office for informal discussions etc).

As discussed at the beginning of this paper, some scholars have claimed that an individual's communist-era political capital has been a key asset during market transition. Communist-era political capital is a particular form of social capital or network resources institutionalized through the practices of the Communist party [1, p. 22]. According to Hankiss [23] and Staniszkis [7], once marketization policies were set in motion, former party cadres and other communist officials started converting their former positions of power (or social capital) into financial might. In quantitative-oriented analyses of market transition, 'political capital' is measured by variables such as '[Communist Party] cadre', 'former cadre', and '[former] ordinary Communist Party member'. The results of my bi-variate analyses indicate that, more than twenty years after Ceauşescu was sent into the dustbin of History, both 'former cadres' and 'former communist party members' fare better than non-Party members in terms of their network resources (see Table 2).

Network resources are influenced by individuals' occupation and occupational status. As shown in Table 2, not being in the labour force negatively impacts respondents' social capital (as defined in this paper). Specifically, as compared to those who are employed, significantly fewer retirees and those who stay at home (e.g., housewives) report having useful relations in all of the fields under scrutiny. Furthermore, as studies conducted in other countries attest, in Romania too, an individual's social capital seems to vary by his/her position in the occupational hierarchy. Specifically, "individuals who work in occupations for which social skills are relatively important accumulate more social capital" [44]. As shown in Table 2, those at the top of the occupational ladder (i.e., senior officials, managers, entrepreneurs, and professionals) report more frequently having relations in all of the fields under consideration as compared to individuals at the bottom of the occupational ladder (e.g., agricultural workers, craft and related workers, plant and machine operators, and those in elementary occupations).

Finally, an individual's network resources seem to vary inversely by age; that is, younger individuals report more frequently having relations in all of the domains analyzed in this paper. This is consistent with other studies, which show that "lifecycle effects predict that social capital rises and then declines with age, *just like other forms of capital*" [44, mine italics].

Table 2. Network Connections in Various Fields by Socio-Demographic Variables (Romania, 2010).

Socio-demographic Variables	Total sub-sample values (n=2668)	Respondent has relations to access medical services (yes)	Respondent has relations in courts, at public notaries or legal assistance (yes)	Respondent has relations at the city hall (yes)	Respondent has relations at the police (yes)	Respondent has relations to access a loan (yes)	Respondent has relations to get a job (yes)
Gender							
Males	45.9%	47.9%	**53.7%**	**54.5%**	**53.8%**	**56.3%**	**59.0%**
Females	54.1%	52.1%	46.3%	45.5%	46.2%	43.7%	41.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Residence							
Urban area	52.1%	**57.0%**	55.7%	40.9%	52.2%	**56.3%**	**65.8%**
Rural area	47.9%	43.0%	44.3%	**51.9%**	47.8%	43.7%	34.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Education							
Less than high school	60.4%	43.0%	36.1%	46.3%	42.6%	31.5%	**28.2%**
High school and post-high school	27.4%	**35.2%**	**34.1%**	**32.7%**	**34.6%**	**37.8%**	32.5%
University and beyond	12.3%	**21.8%**	**29.8%**	**21.0%**	**22.8%**	**30.7%**	**39.3%**
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Communist party membership in 1989							
Cadre	5.2%	**8.3%**	**7.8%**	**10.3%**	**8.7%**	**11.3%**	**10.2%**
Ordinary member	26.9%	**35.2%**	**41.2%**	**35.0%**	**35.6%**	**35.0%**	30.8%
Not a party member	67.2%	56.1%	49.7%	54.3%	55.1%	52.3%	**56.4%**
Party membership missing	0.7%	0.5%	1.4%	0.4%	0.6%	1.4%	2.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Sub-sample of 2,668 respondents from the nationwide survey "Class structure and social stratification in contemporary Romania. Implications for public, marketing, and cultural policies" conducted by CURS between October – December, 2010. Figures in bold indicate statistically significant differences at minimum $p < .05$ calculated through Chi-square tests or through t-tests for mean differences in case of age.

Table 2. (Continued) Network Connections in Various Fields by Socio-Demographic Variables (Romania, 2010).

Socio-demographic variables	Total sub-sample values (n=2668)	Respondent has relations to access medical services (yes)	Respondent has relations in courts, at public notaries or legal assistance (yes)	Respondent has relations at the city hall (yes)	Respondent has relations at the police (yes)	Respondent has relations to access a loan (yes)	Respondent has relations to get a job (yes)
Occupation in 2010							
Senior officials and managers	1.6%	**2.7%**	**4.1%**	**3.6%**	**4.2%**	**5.6%**	**5.3%**
Professionals	4.2%	**9.2%**	**13.9%**	**9.6%**	**10.3%**	**13.1%**	**19.7%**
Technicians and associate professionals	4.2%	**6.9%**	**7.4%**	**9.0%**	**7.1%**	**7.7%**	**7.7%**
Clerks and functionaries	1.7%	2.3%	**3.7%**	**3.4%**	1.9%	3.2%	**4.3%**
Service workers, shop, and market sales	3.0%	3.7%	**5.7%**	**4.4%**	**6.4%**	4.5%	**7.7%**
Individual agricultural workers	7.3%	4.9%	7.1%	9.0%	8.7%	**4.1%**	**1.7%**
Craft and related trades workers	6.4%	6.9%	7.1%	8.4%	8.7%	7.7%	10.3%
Plant and machine operators	1.6%	3.1%	2.4%	**2.9%**	**3.2%**	1.4%	2.6%
Elementary occupations	1.9%	1.7%	1.4%	2.1%	**1.3%**	3.2%	2.6%
Armed forces	0.3%	0.9%	0.7%	0.6%	1%	**1.4%**	**1.7%**
Stays at home (housewife)	8.8%	**5.5%**	**4.4%**	**3.2%**	**6.2%**	4.5%	2.6%
Retiree	55.0%	**47.9%**	**36.8%**	**40.5%**	**38.1%**	**38.7%**	**29.9%**
Unemployed	2.5%	2.1%	3.4%	1.5%	1.3%	2.7%	1.7%
Missing information	1.5%	2.1%	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	2.7%	2.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Age in 2010							
Average age (in years)	62.77	**61.05**	**59.60**	**60.59**	**59.75**	**58.25**	**57.23**
Median age (in years)	62.00	60.00	58.00	59.00	58.00	56.50	54.00

Source: Sub-sample of 2,668 respondents from the nationwide survey "Class structure and social stratification in contemporary Romania. Implications for public, marketing, and cultural policies" conducted by CURS between October – December, 2010. Figures in bold indicate statistically significant differences at minimum $p < .05$ calculated through Chi-square tests or through t-tests for mean differences in case of age.

This finding should also be interpreted in connection to respondents' occupational status as older individuals are more likely to have retired from the labour force; in turn, as I argued previously, exiting from the labour force often translates into fewer contacts with other individuals from various domains associated with working life.

5. Results of causal-type analyses

In this section, I move beyond simple bi-variate analyses and I explore the factors or causes that influence an individual's network resources. In doing so, I resort to multivariate regression analysis to account for the determinants of a respondent's social capital in 2010.

5.1. Determinants of an individual's network resources in 2010

5.1.1. Dependent variable

In the following analysis the dependent variable is '(a respondent's) network resources in 2010', which is calculated as the sum of relations reported by an interviewee in 2010 (see section 2 for the source-items of this quasi-metric variable and its construction). This variable varies from 0 (no contacts) to 6 (contacts in all of the domains under consideration); cases with missing information are excluded from the analysis. The descriptive statistics for this variable is presented in Table 3.

5.1.2. Independent variables

The list of my independent variables includes the following dummy variables: gender (1 = male); respondent's residence in 2010 (1 = urban area); university degree (1 = yes); less than high school completed (1 = yes); respondent was (a Communist party) cadre in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent was an ordinary party member in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent was a manager or a professional in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent was a technician, clerk or service worker in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent was an individual farmer in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent was a worker in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent was not in the labour force in 1989 (1 = yes); respondent is not in the labour force at the time of the survey in 2010 (1 = yes). As discussed previously, due to the large number of missing information about a respondent's occupation in 1989, to avoid biased estimates, I created a specific category for cases with missing information on respondent's occupation in 1989; this will be the reference category in the causal-type analyses presented in the following pages. (For the construction of the other dummy variables, see please, the previous section; the reference categories for the remaining dummy variables are presented at the bottom of Table 4.) I also include as covariates a respondent's age in 2010 (in years), respondent's age squared and a respondent's network resources in 1989. (I

include age squared in the list of independent variables due the fact that age per se might not be linked with my dependent variable in a perfectly linear fashion.) The descriptive statistics for all of the independent variables are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for the Variables Employed in Causal-Type Analyses of Network Resources and Changes in Network Resources (Romania, 2010).

Variable	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation	Valid N
Dependent				
A respondent's network resources in 2010 (0-6) [a]	.00	0.82	1.42	2,668
Independent				
Age (in years)	62.00	62.77	10.55	2,668
Gender (1=male)		0.45		2,668
College degree (1=yes)		0.12		2,668
Less than high school (1=yes) [b]		0.27		2,668
Network resources in 1989 (from 0 to 6)	.00	0.61	1.33	2,668
Respondent was a party cadre in 1989 (1=yes)		0.05		2,668
Respondent was an ordinary party member in 1989 (1=yes)		0.26		2,668
Party membership information missing (1=yes) [c]		0.01		2,668
Respondent was a manager or a professional in 1989 (1=yes)		0.07		2,668
Respondent was technician, clerk or service worker in 1989 (1=yes)		0.15		2,668
Respondent was an individual farmer in 1989 (1=yes)		0.05		2,668
Respondent was a worker in 1989 (1=yes)		0.32		2,668
Respondent was not in the labour force in 1989 (1=yes) [d]		0.08		2,668
Respondent was not in the labour force in 2010 (1=yes) [e]		0.67		2,668

Source: Sub-sample of 2,668 respondents from the nationwide survey "Class structure and social stratification in contemporary Romania. Implications for public, marketing, and cultural policies" conducted by CURS between October – December, 2010.
[a] Dependent variable in the regression of network resources on selected independent variables
[b] Reference category for education is "high school and post-high school graduate"
[c] Reference category for party membership is "respondent was not a communist party member in 1989"
[d] Reference category for occupation in 1989 is "missing information about a respondent's occupation in 1989"
[e] It includes retirees, individuals who stay at home (housewives), and unemployed. Reference category is "respondent is in the labour force at the time of the survey (in 2010)"

5.1.3. Results of regression analysis of network resources on selected independent variables.

Given the fact that my dependent variable is a 'count' (a non-negative integer) and that a linear regression would have predicted 'negative' number of network connections, I will employ a nonlinear Poisson model. Table 4 presents

the results of a Poisson model predicting an individual's network resources in 2010.

Table 4. Poisson Regression Coefficients Showing the Effects of Selected Independent Variables on Individual's Overall Level of Network Resources in 2010 (Romania).

Independent Variable	Full model
Age (in years)	.026
	(.029)
Age squared	.020
	(.020)
Gender (1=male)	-.008
	(.0486)
Urban resident in 2010 (1=yes)	-.055
	(.048)
College degree (1=yes)	.252***
	(0.069)
Less than high school (1=yes) [a]	-.233***
	(.058)
Network resources in 1989 (from 0 to 6)	.352***
	(.010)
Respondent was a party cadre in 1989 (1=yes)	.078
	(.083)
Respondent was an ordinary party member in 1989 (1=yes)[b]	.223***
	(.050)
Respondent was a manager or a professional in 1989 (1=yes)	.082
	(.088)
Respondent was a technician, clerk or a service worker in 1989 (1=yes)	.120†
	(.067)
Respondent was an individual farmer in 1989 (1=yes)	-.318 **
	(.147)
Respondent was a worker in 1989 (1=yes)	.077
	(.063)
Respondent was not in the labour force in 1989 (1=yes) [c]	-.046
	(.112)
Respondent is not in the labour force in 2010 (1=yes)	-.508***
	(.053)
Constant	-.914
	(.892)
Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square (15 degrees of freedom)	1603.95

Notes: Figures represent unstandardized regression coefficients; standard errors are in parentheses. †$p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$;
[a] Reference category for education is "high school and post-high school graduate"
[b] Reference category for party membership is "respondent was not a communist party member in 1989"
[c] Reference category for occupation in 1989 is "missing information about a respondent's occupation in 1989"

The chi-square value is significant at $p < .001$ and the fit of the full model shows a significant improvement against the intercept-only model. In the full model, age, gender, and urban residence have no statistically significant effects on the level of an individual's network resources in 2010.

Consistent with the literature on social capital, education seems to impact an individual's network resources in significant ways. For instance, as compared o being only a high school graduate, having a university degree increases an individual's network resources by 28% ($e^{.252} = 1.286$). The net positive effects of various independent variables on individuals' network resources are obtained from the coefficients presented in Table 4 by applying the formula $100*(e^b-1)$. In case of net negative effects, the formula is $100*(1-e^b)$. Conversely, having completed only general education (i.e., less than high school) decreases an individual's network resources by 21% ($e^{-.233} = 0.792$). My findings are consistent with those found in other countries, which attest that there is a positive relationship between education level and social capital. As Glaeser argues, one of the most plausible interpretations of the relationship between social capital and education is that "a significant part of education is learning social skills" [E. Glaeser, The Formation of Social Capital, unpublished manuscript, Harvard University and National Bureau of Economic Research, 2001, p. 17, on-line at http://www.sisreg.it/site/administrator/components/ com_jresearch/files/publications/Glaeser_formation%20social%20capital_2001. pdf, accessed on March 15, 2012]. In addition, increased human capital (or education) is associated with prestigious and powerful positions in the occupational structure. In turn, occupying top positions in the occupational hierarchy translates into having numerous contacts or useful connections with other individuals from a variety of fields [44].

An individual's network resources in 2010 are influenced significantly by his/her social ties in 1989. An increase with one unit on the scale of network resources in 1989 leads to a 42% increase on the scale of an individual's network resources in 2010 ($e^{.352} = 1.421$), all other factors being equal. Put another way, the larger a respondent's network resources in 1989, the larger his/her network resources more than twenty years after the collapse of state socialism, *ceteris paribus*.

As discussed previously, market transition studies have highlighted the role of an individual's 'political capital' during post-communism. Usually measured by 'former Communist party membership' and/or by 'former Communist cadre', an individual's political capital prior to 1989 has been interpreted as signaling a specific form of social capital, which was institutionalized through the organizational structures of the communist parties. As shown in Table 4, as compared to individuals who were not members of the Romanian Communist Party, respondents who were ordinary party members prior to 1989 fare better in terms of their network resources in 2010, all other factors being equal. (Results of analyses not shown here indicate that former party members had more network resources even in 1989, as compared to non-members.) Specifically, having been an ordinary party member prior to 1989 increases an individual's network resources in 2010 by 24% ($e^{.223} = 1.249$).

Former party cadres do not seem to enjoy any significant advantages in terms of their network resources in 2010, as compared to respondents who were not party members. The results of my analysis partially confirm the fact that former party members have more network resources than individuals who were not affiliated with the communist party. My survey data, however, does not allow me to assess the extent to which former party members have employed their network resources and political capital to weather the transition.

Among the variables related to a respondent's occupation in 1989, only 'individual farmer in 1989' has significant effects on a respondent's network resources in 2010. Specifically, as compared to respondents for whom I lack information about their occupation in 1989, having been an individual farmer in 1989 leads to a 28% ($e^{-.318} = 0.727$) decrease in a respondent's network resources in 2010. Despite the official communist discourse, farmers – be they independent or members of collective agricultural enterprises – had a relatively low socio-economic status in Ceauşescu's Romania. Living in rural areas with extremely poor infrastructural conditions and limited opportunities for social mobility, Romanian farmers (or peasants) represented a severely disadvantaged category during communism. In post-communism, current and former farmers still cope with poor infrastructural and living conditions in Romania's rural areas. These facts might explain partially farmers' disadvantages in many domains (including their network resources or social capital).

An individual's current occupational status significantly impacts his/her network resources. As shown in Table 4, not being in the labour force in 2010 sharply decreases an individual's level of network resources by 40% ($e^{-.508} = 0.601$). Consistent with findings of other studies [44], social capital, like other forms of capital, tends to decrease if individuals exit labour force and it also declines with age (like in the case of retirement).

6. Discussion

According to the analyses presented previously, the so-called communist-era social ties have survived Romania's transition. Predictors for individuals' network resources (or social capital) in 2010 are education, former communist party membership, and occupational status (whether an individual still is in the labour force or not).

The results of my analyses could lend themselves to two, opposite interpretations. In one interpretation – or what I call the 'pessimistic view' – '*pile*' and '*relaţii*' (relations) still open many doors and guide individuals' behaviours more than twenty years after the collapse of communism. To the extent to which these network resources or social ties involve, like in the old-days of communism, corrupt practices such as nepotism, favouritism, political protection from the law, and preferential access to various (or high quality) services, one could pessimistically speak of post-communist involution and destitution.

The opposite or the optimistic interpretation of my findings might run as follows: network ties among various individuals (public officials, private businesspersons, ordinary citizens) exist even in advanced economies and democracies (see Granovetter [27, 37] and Evans [45]). The increase in the frequency of such network ties in post-socialist Romania need not be viewed as a sign of involution; the mere presence of network resources does not necessarily indicate that these social ties are corrupt or inimical to the well functioning of this former communist country (among others).

My own view diverges somewhat from the two opposite interpretations mentioned previously. On the one hand, along with optimists, I contend that my survey measures and data do not allow me to assess the 'quality' of such ties in post-socialism. Put another way, the survey's questionnaire did not include indicators regarding the corrupt or illicit character of an individual's network resources in 2010. Furthermore, this survey did not include additional questions that would have allowed me to assess the extent to which respondents have used their social ties to solve various things in the domains under scrutiny (i.e., medical services, law, police, mayoral offices, labour market).

At the same time, the relative persistence of (or the increase in the number of) individuals' useful ties in various fields might have been generated by other structural processes. A case in point is represented by respondents' current relations with public officials (at the police or mayoral offices). As Verdery [22, p. 23] claims, "socialism produced a split between 'us' and 'them', workers and Party leaders, founded on a lively consciousness that 'they' are exploiting 'us'." This conception of 'us (the ruled) versus them (the rulers or public officials)' was indeed widely shared under state socialism. According to Jowitt [16, p. 70] "as in the past and as in a ghetto, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the regime or official sphere represented 'trouble,' being identified as the locus of demands and sanctions rather than of political support or recognition."

Thus, during communism, many individuals did their best to avoid interacting with representatives of the official sphere (from Communist Party bosses to other local level public officials, including representatives of the law-enforcement agencies such as the police). The post-1989 period also translated into an opening of the official sphere as many public officials are now democratically elected by citizens. If anything, during post-communism, many Romanians have learnt that, in theory, public officials are accountable to voters, who could use various legal means to make sure that elected or appointed bureaucrats respond to their demands. In addition, Romania's transition has also implied a restructuring of the State based on available Western democratic blueprints and bureaucratic models that regulate interactions between free citizens and holders of public offices. Against this backdrop, as the optimists would have it, an increase in the number of individuals' contacts with representatives of law-enforcement agencies (i.e., the police) or local bureaucratic structures (i.e., mayoral offices) cannot be interpreted as signs of involution and corruption.

On the other hand, studies conducted in post-socialist Romania (among others) lend some support to 'pessimistic' views on the survival of communist-era social ties during transition. According to Eyal et al [1] countries such as Romania or Bulgaria come close to the ideal-type of political capitalism. Inspired by Weber's [46] ideas, post-communist political capitalism is defined as an economic and political order in which ex-communist officials control and privatize public resources for their private benefits. Key elements of post-communist political capitalism are the pervasiveness of communist-era corrupt social ties and – according to Ganev's excellent analysis [47] – the de-bureaucratization of the post-communist state. The de-bureaucratization of the state implies that public institutions are "transgressed by social predators … [and that] the civil service behaves as an uncoordinated multitude of self-interested agents pursuing immediate financial gratification" [47, p. 656].

Observing the mixture between local politics and business interests in Romania, Verdery suggested that this country might be transitioning not to capitalism but to a neo-feudal order. This neo-feudal order had at its center the so-called "local barons" – public (local) officials who have become incredibly rich by siphoning off state resources. Against this backdrop, political parties in Romania could be aptly described as a "formally institutionalized network of friends, relatives, and other associates who engage corporately in the electoral and legislative process" [22, p. 193].

One would have hoped that free elections would result in a higher accountability of public officials. But despite some positive formal changes, the structures of post-socialist Romanian bureaucracy have also become, for want of another term, extremely 'volatile'. This volatility is rooted in the practices of altering the composition of local governing bodies and other state agencies after every local and central election. There is a widespread perception that every newly elected public official brings to office not only photos of his family and friends but also the people themselves. Seemingly, every election is followed by top-down radical changes in the composition of local and/or central bureaucracies.

It is against this backdrop that for Romanians, '*pilele*' (props), '*cunoştinţele*' (acquaintances) and '*relaţiile*' (relations) – the local equivalents of '*blat*' – still open many doors and get many things done more than twenty years after Ceauşescu's demise. Cultivating and maintaining useful (albeit corrupt) relations with public officials is a means to ensure a minimal degree of predictability in an institutional environment marked by a high uncertainty, relative chaos, and anomie.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, my analyses have had an exploratory character, which was due to several limitations imposed by my survey data and its measures. Further research is needed to investigate more closely the issue of communist-era social ties in the current context. Possible research questions might include: How has the post-communist transition changed the content of communist-era ties in terms of social trust? In what domains of life have such social ties preserved their corrupt and illicit character?

In what domains of life has the importance of 'relations' decreased and in what domains it has increased? What larger structural configurations can account for the survival of such communist-era social ties? What is the relationship between social class and an individual's network resources? More generally, what are the determinants of an individual's network resources or social capital and how do individuals use their network ties to improve their socio-economic status? Answering these and other questions requires a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to shed further light on the complex phenomena under the umbrella of social capital.

Acknowledgement

References

[1] G. Eyal, I. Szelényi, and E. Townsley, *Making Capitalism without Capitalists: The New Ruling Elites in Eastern Europe*, Verson, London, 1998.
[2] A. Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favours: Blat, Networking and Informal Exchange*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.
[3] K. Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996.
[4] A. Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism: Work and Authority in Chinese Industry,* University of California Press, Berkeley, 1986.
[5] J. Wedel, *The Private Poland*, Facts on File Books, New York, 1986.
[6] E. Uslaner, *Coping and Social Capital: The Informal Sector and the Democratic Transition*, in *Trust and Transitions: Social Capital in a Changing World*, J. Lewandowski and M. Knoz (eds.), Cambridge Scholars Press, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2008, 3-28.
[7] J. Staniszkis, East European Politics and Societies, **5** (1991) 127.
[8] D. Stark, Eastern European Politics and Societies, **4** (1990) 351.
[9] D. Stark, Eastern European Politics and Societies, **6** (1992) 17.
[10] D. Wank, *Commodifying Communism: Business, Trust and Politics in a Chinese City***,** Cambridge University Press, New York, 1999.
[11] D. Wank, *Producing Property Rights: Strategies, Networks and Efficiency in Urban China,* in *Property Rights and Economic Reform in China*, J.C. Oi and A.G. Walder (eds.), Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1999, 248-276.
[12] D. Guthrie, American Journal of Sociology, **102** (1997) 1258.
[13] D. Guthrie, The China Quarterly, **2** (1998) 255.
[14] D. Guthrie, *Informational Asymmetries and the Problem of Perception: The Significance of Structural Position in Assessing the Importance of Guanxi in China*, in *Social Connections in China: Institutions, Culture, and the Changing Nature of Guanxi*, T. Gould, D. Guthrie and D. Wank (eds.), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, 37-56.

[15] D. Dobrincu and C. Iordachi, *Introduction*, in *Transforming Peasants, Property and Power: The Collectivization of Romanian Agriculture, 1949-1962*, C. Iordachi and D. Dobrincu (eds.), Central European University Press, Budapest, 2009, 1-24.

[16] K. Jowitt, *New World Disorder: The Leninist Extinction*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1992.

[17] C.A. Stoica, *One Step Back, Two Steps Forward: Institutionalizing the Party-State and Collective Property in Two Romanian Villages (Galaţi Region),* in *Transforming Peasants, Property and Power: The Collectivization of Romanian Agriculture, 1949 1962*, C. Iordachi and D. Dobrincu (eds.), Central European University Press, Budapest, 2009, 423-454.

[18] K. Verdery *The Vanishing Hectare: Property and Value in Postsocialist Transylvania,* Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2003.

[19] K. Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996, 21.

[20] J. Kornai, *Economics of Shortage,* Elsevier, New York, 1980.

[21] J. Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism,* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1992.

[22] K. Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996.

[23] E. Hankiss *East European Alternatives*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990.

[24] A. Róna-Tas, American Journal of Sociology*,* **100** (1994) 40.

[25] Å.B. Grødeland, Europe-Asia Studies, **59** (2007) 217.

[26] C.A. Stoica, East European Politics and Societies, **18** (2004) 236.

[27] M. Granovetter, American Journal of Sociology*,* **91** (1985) 481.

[28] T. Gould, D. Guthrie and D. Wank, *Introduction* in *Social Connections in China: Institutions, Culture, and the Changing Nature of Guanxi*, T. Gould, D. Guthrie and D. Wank (eds.), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998.

[29] A. Portes, Annual Review of Sociology, **24** (1998) 1.

[30] M. Woolcock, Theory and Society, **27** (1998) 165.

[31] F. Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity,* Hamish Hamilton, London, 1995.

[32] R. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993.

[33] R. Putnam, Journal of Democracy, **1** (1995) 65.

[34] R. Putnam, *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2000.

[35] P. Paxton, American Journal of Sociology, **105** (1999) 88.

[36] P. Paxton, American Sociological Review, **2** (2000) 254.

[37] M. Granovetter, *A Theoretical Agenda for Economic Sociology*, in *The New Economic Sociology: Developments in an Emerging Field*, M. Gullien, R. Collins, P. England and M. Meyer (eds.), Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2002, 35-59.

[38] J. Coleman, American Journal of Sociology, Supplement: Organizations and Institutions: Sociological and Economic Approaches to the Analysis of Social Structure, **94** (1988) 95.

[39] P. Bourdieu, *The Forms of Capital*, in *The Sociology of Economic Life. Second Edition,* M. Granovetter and R. Swedberg (eds.), Westview Press, Boulder, 2001, 96.

[40] N. Lin, *Social Capital. A Theory of Social Structure and Action,* Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001.

[41] D. Sandu, *Sociologia tranziţiei. Valori si tipuri sociale in Romania. [The Sociology of Transition. Values and Social Types in Romania]*, Staff, Bucureşti, 1996.

[42] D. Sandu, Sociologie Românească, **2** (1999) 123.

[43] A. Portes and P. Landolt, American Prospect, **26** (1996) 18.

[44] E. Glaeser, D. Laibson and B. Sacerdote, NBER Working Paper, **7728** (2000) 5.

[45] P. Evans, *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation,* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1995.

[46] M. Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, G. Roth and C. Wittich (eds.), Bedminster Press, New York, 1968.

[47] V. Ganev, Comparative Studies in Society and History, **51** (2009) 648.