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How Transnational Migrants Integrate: The Case of Moldovans Living in Czechia and Italy*

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Abstract: This article examines whether the social, cultural, or economic dimensions of integration into a receiving society have the effect of intensifying or weakening transnational ties to a migrant's country of origin. The article is based on an analysis of unique data gathered in a questionnaire survey conducted among 409 Moldovan migrants living in Italy and Czechia and resident there for more than one year. Transnational and integration indices were constructed in order to investigate the relationships between selected characteristics of the respondents. The analysis reveals that greater socio-cultural integration is accompanied by weaker transnational practices, where key roles are played by the length of stay and age upon arrival. This is found to apply to Moldovans in both countries, although a slightly more positive relationship is observed between Italian Moldovans' economic integration and transnationalism, suggesting that economic resources facilitate the maintenance and development of cross-border networks.

Keywords: transnationalism, integration, Moldovans, Italy, Czechia
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Introduction

Since the early 1990s, several researchers have focused on the increasing intensity and scale of the circular mobility of persons, goods, and information triggered by international migration [Düvell and Vogel 2006; Vertovec 2010]. Different forms of contact with family members and others in an immigrant's country of origin has led to the study of not only what happens in the country of destination, but also what interconnections with the country of origin remain. In this context, a number of studies have focused on transnational migrant typologies [e.g. Da-

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hinden 2010; Engbersen et al. 2013] to explain the migratory behaviour of migrants.

Hand in hand with this 'new' line of research has been the question of migrant integration, which adopts a different perspective centred on the challenges that immigration poses for individual societies [Entzinger and Biezefeld 2003; Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes 2006; Vertovec 2007; Erdal 2013]. While much of the research from the last century addressed the ways in which migrants adapted to new societies and contexts [Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Alba and Nee 2003], early discussions on the transnational context have presented an alternative form of immigrant adaptation [e.g. Itzigsohn et al. 1999; Faist 2000; Cela, Fokkema and Ambrosetti 2013; Morad and Della Puppa 2019]. The new paradigm has argued that immigrants redefine, but do not break, their links to their country of origin [Basch, Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994; Levitt 2001; Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999; Vertovec 1999; Faist 2000]. Many migrants develop and maintain strong modes of community cohesion, both at home and elsewhere among the diaspora, although this does not mean they are not integrating into their places of settlement. According to Vertovec [2010], becoming more transnational does not mean a person is less integrated, and less integrated people do not necessarily display stronger transnational patterns.

Empirical research has demonstrated the complexity of the relationships between modes of transnationalism and integration [Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002; Guarnizo, Portes and Haller 2003; Morawska 2003; Portes 2003; Vertovec 2010; Erdal 2013] that can be explained in various ways. For example, economic transnational practices, such as remittances, can, on the one hand, be positively associated with and accelerate the long-term integration of immigrants [Portes, Haller and Guarnizo 2002]; on the other hand, this can be a limiting factor in other dimensions of integration [Vertovec 2010]. Less is known, however, about how different types of transnational practices are interconnected with the social, cultural, and economic integration of immigrants. Moreover, there has been little direct research into what drives people to engage in transnational practices.

This article is based on a study that sought to expand our knowledge of immigrant integration through an exploration and analysis of their modes of transnational practices and participation. Although immigrant integration and transnational processes may depend on the context of the destination country, most studies focus on one destination country only. To include the important role of context, we deployed our survey in two countries – Italy and Czechia. These countries have relatively recently been transformed from emigration to immigration countries, whilst at the same time they offer different migration conditions given their disparate political and economic development over the second half of the 20th century. For the study, we selected the Moldovan immigrant community, which has exhibited a high degree of transnationalisation, indicated by economic factors, a high emigration rate, the large share of GDP made up of remittances (the largest share in Europe), and geographical proximity within the European

space. Because Moldovans in Italy can take advantage of a smaller difference between their language and the destination country's language and a generally longer length of stay (which definitely plays a role in the integration process; e.g. Faist [2000]) than in Czechia, it can also be expected that their integration outcomes will differ.

Our research questions therefore were: How do the transnational practices and the integration of Moldovans differ between Czechia and Italy and how could their mode of transnational network explain their social and economic integration (i.e. what is the relation between immigrants' transnational activities and ties to their country of origin on the one hand, and their integration into the receiving country on the other?

The first part of the paper provides a brief account of the background to Moldovan migration, with reference to Czechia and Italy as destination countries. We then provide a theoretical framework in which we discuss the different transnational typologies of labour migrants to Western countries and their potential forms of integration. Based on this, we constructed three indices comprising the variables discussed (one transnationality variable and two integration variables) that formed part of our analysis.

We then present the descriptive statistics on the basic characteristics of the respondents, analysing different patterns of migration and integration based on Czech and Italian data and determining five 'ideal' groups of transnational migrants. We then analyse and explain how the degree of integration depends on the mode of transnationalism and show which types of labour migrant are related to the different patterns of integration. The final section situates our findings in the context of the wider debate on transnationalism and integration.

The background to Moldovan migration

Moldova is the poorest country in Europe (EU),[1] with a per capita GDP that is about one-third of that of Italy or Czechia. Its poor socio-economic situation is the result of its long-term development on the periphery of Europe and a prevailingly agricultural economy. In addition, its loss of access to the former Soviet market after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the separation of the Dniester Republic have had a negative impact on Moldova's economy and political situation. Because of this, after 1990 Moldova became a high-emigration country. In 2013 the number of long-term emigrants was estimated at 411 000. (i.e. 12.4% of the total population), with short-term seasonal migration amounting to around 100 000 people [de Zwager and Sintov 2014]. The largest number of Moldovan migrants are in Russia (over 50% of all emigrants) and in the EU, with most of them traditionally centred in Mediterranean countries such as Italy, Portugal, Spain,

[1] Per capita GDP is USD 5698 [World Bank 2018].

Table 1. Moldovan immigrants in Czechia (CR) and Italy in 2017

		CR	Italy
Total number of Moldovans		5459	130 000
Share of Moldovans out of all immigrants		1.09%	3.50%
Share of males		56%	33%
Age group 50+		18%	23%
Permanent residence		71%	71%
Employment by economic sector	domestic and personal services	16%	48%
	industry and construction	46%	19%
	transport and production services	16%	15%
	commerce	12%	15%
	agriculture	11%	3%

Source: Drbohlav et al. [2017].

and Greece. This is mainly because EU countries became easily accessible when the visa-free regime came into effect, as many Moldovans were able to obtain Romanian passports, and Romania has been part of the EU since 2007. It is clear that this significant rate of emigration was linked to remittances, with Moldova ranking among the countries with the highest share of remittances in their GDP (24% in 2015; World Bank [2018]). Moreover, social remittances may also play an important role in accelerating socio-economic transformation processes [Cingolani and Vietti 2019].

The selected destination countries (Italy and Czechia) have features in common and features that differ and were chosen to offer an interesting picture of two EU countries with different political, cultural, geographical, and economic contexts (see Table 1). The Moldovan community in Czechia is the largest among the post-socialist Central European countries [United Nations 2015], while Italy has the overall largest group of Moldovans after Russia. Moldovan migration to Czechia and Italy shares further features, such as the type of immigrant residence and greater employment in the secondary labour market sectors typical for low-skilled labour. On the other hand, the differences between the two countries include employment in Italy being predominantly in domestic services (typical for women), whilst in Czechia men typically find work in the construction and industry sectors. We should also mention that the conditions in Italy may be more favourable for Moldovan immigrants than they are in Czechia. First, Italian and Moldovan are Romance languages, which makes Italian much easier for Moldovans to learn than Czech. Second, Italy has a much higher hourly wage for labour than Czechia does (EUR 28.8 compared to EUR 13.5, respectively, in 2019; Eurostat [2020]), which could affect the outcome of both countries when comparing

the degree of transnationalism and economic integration (and for this reason we have excluded this variable; see below). Third, the length of stay is longer in Italy than in Czechia, which is a potential indicator of a higher degree of socio-cultural integration in Italy.

Based on this knowledge, we would expect different degrees of integration and transnational behaviour to be exhibited by Czech and Italian Moldovans. The question, however, is: how much do their transnational behaviours influence the degree of integration, particularly in economic and socio-cultural terms [e.g. Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas 2016]?

Conceptual framework

In this section, we introduce two concepts to explain the relationship between contemporary transnational migratory processes and the socio-cultural and economic integration of third-country nationals (Moldovans) in the territory of the EU.

Transnational migratory processes

The relationship between migrants and their country of origin has been linked to many different processes and problems [see Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc 1992; Vertovec 2010; Baldassar and Merla 2014]. Several studies on the transnational behaviour of migrants have relied predominantly on small-scale, qualitative data or ethno-surveys. Such studies have often been based on a limited number of interviews and are characterised by the construction of typologies [Düvell and Vogel 2006; Eade, Drinkwater and Garapich 2006; Grabowska and Okolski 2009; Dahinden 2010; Trevena 2013; Janská, Pauknerová and Koropecká 2017; Morad and Della Puppa 2019], although there have also been some quantitative surveys [e.g. Engbersen et al. 2013] similar to ours. Both approaches have been used to develop typologies alongside data analysis as an effective means of sparking the theoretical imagination during the research process.

Transnational processes encompass a wide variety of activities, ranging from individual links to those with transnational institutions. Faist [2000] distinguished three different levels of the institutionalisation of transnational communities: (1) transnational kinship groups based on the linkages and obligations among family and household members or close friends; (2) transnational circuits, such as trading or business networks, or other forms of recurrent transnational activities; and (3) transnational communities that imply the emergence of public institutionalised practices involving the mobilisation of collective representations [Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002]. We have developed the first level of Faist's [2000] classification by assuming that the issue of time (duration of residence in the host society) is a key feature for understanding the evolution of transnational

behaviour towards integration at the individual migrant level. The underlying assumption is a positive relationship between duration of residence and integration [Faist 2000].

While Engbersen et al. [2013], among others [Düvell and Vogel 2006; Eade et al. 2006; Grabowska and Okolski 2009; Trevena 2013], focused on Central and Eastern European labour migrants, Dahinden [2010] and Janská, Pauknerová and Koropecká [2017] also considered migrants from third countries, such as Ukrainians, Albanians, and Armenians. These studies attempted to map out the diversity of modern migration patterns. Dahinden [2010] identified four basic transnational types based on the intensity of the migratory relations between the country of origin and the destination country and on connections with a local community in the destination country. While she emphasised important differences between these four 'ideal' types of transnational groups, she also acknowledged the dynamic nature of the development of transnationality, as influenced by the migratory policies of EU countries and, ultimately, by the EU itself. Janksá, Pauknerová and Koropecká [2017] added remittances, marital status, gender, mobility, and the location of immigrants into their model, creating a typology in which the specifics of transnational processes could be assessed. They argued that the different behaviours exhibited by transnational migrants is a reflection of their socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. family status, education, or number of children), which could change over time.

Engbersen et al. [2013] also added variables relating to integration into their model, illustrating how constructive two dimensions can be in contemporary migration typologies. The first related to socio-cultural, socio-economic, and demographic factors, such as a command of the national language, contact with the native population, a strong or weak labour-market position, and cohabiting with a partner and children in the destination country. The second dimension was the degree to which migrants remain attached to their country of origin. The result identified four ideal types of labour migrants.

The identities, activities, and connections linking migrants with their communities in their country of origin are unprecedented, but they are not of a level or type similar to transnational engagement [Vertovec 2010]. Much of this is largely conditioned by a range of factors such as migration channel, legal and marital status, migration history, economic means, political circumstances in the country of origin, or remittances. For instance, Sana [2005] showed that the prominent transnational practice of remitting money correlated with renting a home, a lack of citizenship, and a lack of language knowledge, all of which are also evidence of limited migrant integration.

The relationship between remittances, return migration, and length of stay has already been analysed by Constant and Massey [2002], who used the new economy of labour migration and neoclassical concepts to determine the variables that are linked to who settles permanently in order to maximise earnings and who settles temporarily to achieve a particular earnings target and intend to eventually return home.

Snel, Engbersen and Leekes [2006] also observed that social position (education level, labour market participation) does not play a significant role in transnational activities, which could occur between both migrants with good social standing in the host society and those who are more marginalised. On this basis, we formulated our key hypothesis, H1: If there are different types of transnational migrants, there will also be differences between those same nationals (Moldovans) in different EU countries (Czechia vs Italy) in terms of their transnational behaviours and integration.

Despite the large number of studies that have investigated the transnational lives of migrants, most were conducted on the United States. Consequently, the transnational behaviour of migrants in Europe has been less documented, particularly in post-communist countries. In addition, as far as European studies are concerned, attention has almost exclusively been focused on longer-established migration groups (e.g. Moroccans and Turks) rather than on more recent groups, like those from Central and Eastern Europe [Cela et al. 2013]. Creating new typologies of transnational migrants will allow us to better explain new immigrant practices in different European countries in terms of economic and socio-cultural integration [e.g. Portes et al. 1999].

Socio-cultural and economic integration

Generally, the term 'integration' refers to the process of settlement, interaction with the host society, and the social change that follows immigration. As soon as immigrants arrive in a host society, they must find a home, a job and income, schools for their children, and access to health facilities. They must interact with other individuals and groups, and get to know and use the institutions of the host society [Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas 2016].

Classical assimilation theory argues that the longer migrants remain in the host society, the more they will be integrated and the less they will remain connected to their home country [Gordon 1964; Alba and Nee 1997]. Such studies usually show that greater integration yields durations of stay that are longer than were intended. This paradigm for the analysis of immigration assumes a break with networks in the home country and engagement in the process of integration, with the degree of loyalty towards the country of origin (or that of the parents) becoming the litmus test of successful integration [Mügge in Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas 2016]. In this sense, Engbersen et al. [2013] demonstrated that there is no strong connection between attachment to the homeland and integration, although integration can go hand in hand with either strong or weak forms of transnationalism – and the idea of 'integration here' and 'development there' plays an important role in the relationship between transnationalism and integration.

Immigrants can be incorporated into the host society at different levels and in different dimensions [e.g. Entzinger and Biezefeld 2003] and an understanding

of the determinants concerning migrant integration is important in an analysis of the particular factors that explain return behaviour [e.g. Dustmann 1996; Constant and Massey 2002]. Apart from political involvement, there are degrees of socio-cultural and economic integration that play an important role in the integration process and the transnational activities of immigrants. While the socio-cultural integration of immigrants can be described in terms of, for example, host-country language skills and ties with the indigenous population, economic integration is related to a person's position in the foreign labour market. Economic integration is generally discussed in terms of the earnings parity between immigrants and natives with similar characteristics and the rise in immigrant income over time. Moreover, many researchers have stressed that immigrant entrepreneurs engage in different business activities from native-born persons, owing to the particularities of their human and cultural capital (differences in education, profession, cultural norms, beliefs, and values derived from the person's background culture; Kushnirovich [2015]).

Relevant studies have tended to demonstrate that migrants who are economically well integrated into the host country are more likely to maintain meaningful transnational engagement with their origin-country society, including sending remittances and engaging in other actions with positive developmental outcomes, such as business investments. On the other hand, migrants who are socio-culturally well integrated are more likely to become detached from their home country, therefore becoming less actively involved in transnational activities that might lead to development. King and Collyer [2016] argued that this contrasting correlation – positive for economic integration, transnationalism, and development and negative for impact of socio-cultural integration – seems to hold for both first- and second-generation migrants. A survey of more than 3000 immigrants in Norway and an ethnographic study of Somalis in the UK [Hammond 2013] confirmed that economic integration is decisive for sending remittances. On the other hand, Portes, Haller and Guarnizo [2002] found that economic transnational practices are positively associated with and accelerate rather than slow long-term integration, and vice versa.

Can transnationalism and integration thus be mutually beneficial, or is it a zero-sum relationship? Research on the relationship between migrant transnationalism and integration has resulted in mixed findings rather than evidence that conclusively points in any particular direction. Some studies have supported the idea that integration and transnational ties are not necessarily substitutes but can be complementary, particularly in the case of economic integration [Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002; Guarnizo, Portes and Haller 2003; Sana 2005; Van Dalen, Groenewold and Fokkema 2005; Fokkema et al. 2012]. Other studies have disagreed with the assumed positive relationship between migrant integration and transnationalism [Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994; Portes 1997]. Itzigsohn and Saucedo [2002], in their attempt to analyse integration and transnationalism, identified three forms of transnationalism: (1) the linear form, which

suggests that, as time passes, integration increases and transnationalism slowly decreases; (2) dependent transnationalism, which implies that time and financial resources are necessary in order to engage in cross-border practices and, thereby, assume a positive relationship between duration of residence, integration, and transnationalism; and (3) reactive, which results from discrimination or a negative experience with integration faced by migrants in the host society. Therefore, a positive relationship between duration of residence, exclusion (negative integration), and transnationalism is assumed.

Thus, we formulated hypothesis H2, concerning the relationships between duration of residence, integration, and transnationalism: Those who have frequent contact with their home country (e.g. travel home) and a shorter stay of residence in their chosen country are more likely to experience less socio-cultural integration than those who have almost no contact and who have lived longer in the receiving country.

It should be noted that the two hypotheses are complementary in explaining the transnational activities of immigrants together with their modes of integration.

Data and methods

In this study we used a dataset stemming from a questionnaire survey of two immigrant groups from Moldova (N = 409),[2] one living in Czechia (in the capital city of Prague and the surrounding region of Central Bohemia; N = 203) and the second in Italy (the city of Turin and surrounding neighbourhoods; N = 206) fielded between September 2017 and March 2018. The common mandatory criteria for taking part in the survey were: (1) they have, or had in the past, Moldovan citizenship (including citizenship of the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic); (2) they were at least 18 years old; (3) they had lived in Czechia/Italy for at least one year; and (4) they were still in touch with someone in Moldova. In order for the participants to fully understand the questions, the questionnaire was translated into five languages (Moldovan, Italian, Czech, Russian, and English).

In both countries, the snowball method was used to select respondents. This method is particularly useful when a population is hidden and thus difficult to identify [e.g. David and Sutton 2004]. While for Czechia we used the help of Orthodox Church priests, certain Moldovan interpreters used by Moldovan migrants, and selected managers of hostels where Moldovan migrants were known to find accommodation, in Italy we predominantly used cultural associations and parishes of the Orthodox Church. The aim of the sample collection was to gain as wide a spectrum of Moldovan migrants as possible, although the snowball method has clear limitations in terms of obtaining a fully representative

[2] Slightly more than 100 persons (altogether in the two countries) refused to take part in our surveys.

Table 2. Characteristics of immigrants' transnational behaviour

Score	0	1	2	3
Number of stays abroad prior to their current stay, with the answer categories	0	1	2	3
Frequency with which remittances are sent	Never	Max. once per year	1–2 per year	More than twice a year
Number of trips to the country of origin in the past 3 years	0	1–2	3	4 or more
Frequency of contact with family in Moldova	Never	Less than once a week	Weekly	Multiple times a week
Frequency of contact with friends in Moldova	Never	Less than once a week	Weekly	Multiple times a week

sample because it can result in respondents being selected from relatively closed social networks, which thus may result in them having similar characteristics. This was a limitation on the generalisability of the results, which should thus be treated with some caution. We tried to avoid being left with incomplete or missing answers by ensuring that members of the research team were always present when the respondents were filling in their questionnaires and could assist with any problems. We met the respondents in places such as a university campus, a church, coffee bars, restaurants, etc. Filling in the questionnaire took on average 60 minutes, and the respondents were rewarded for their participation (EUR 10[3]).

The aim of the survey was to gain insight into the transnational migratory behaviour of Moldovans in two different EU countries and into their mode of socio-cultural and economic integration. We also gathered information on basic socio-demographic characteristics, family composition, migration history, work and earnings, financial and social remittances, what remittances were used for, and new experiences connected to migration and related issues.

In accordance with the aims of this work, the empirical section consists of two parts. In the first, k-means cluster analyses were used to create a typology of migrants on the basis of five variables describing their transnational behaviour. All variables were standardised to a four-point ordinal scale from 0 to 3 (Table 2).[4]

[3] In addition, mediators who found new respondents in Czechia were rewarded with EUR 10.

[4] Two variables (frequency of remittances and number of visits to Moldova) were originally designed to use a five-point scale, and we used this full scale in the remainder of the study (e.g. Table 3 and the transnationalisation index). For the cluster analysis, however, we had to merge categories to get a four-point scale.

The aim of this study is to identify more general types of migrants; therefore, the data for both countries were analysed and subsequently monitored together. The calculation was repeated for various numbers of clusters, and the most appropriate solution was selected. The resulting clusters were then described on the basis of the variables that indicated the transnational behaviour of migrants, as well as other key characteristics.

In the second part, we examined whether transnationalisation explained socio-cultural and economic integration. Linear regression was used where the dependent variables were both indicators of integration, with the degree of transnationality being the main explanatory variable and the characteristics of the respondents the control variables. Because of the different contexts of migration in the two countries, the Czech and Italian respondents were analysed separately, and the results were then compared. All three indicators were drawn up so that the answers to the individual questions ranged from 0 (lowest rate of transnationality/integration) to 1 (highest rate of transnationality/integration). Subsequently, the response indicators were averaged (from 0 to 1).

The degree of transnationality was based on similar characteristics to those used in part one (see Table 2). We proposed that a migrant with strong transnational ties would be more likely to send money home and have frequent contacts with relatives in their country of origin (which does not mean that they were not sufficiently integrated). Therefore, we chose selected characteristics for assessing transnationalism, as well as for constructing the transnational index.

Variables were selected according to the literature (see above) that deals with issues of both transnationalism and integration. Socio-cultural integration was based on: (1) knowledge of the language of the destination country – one of the most important variables in this dimension [e.g. Dustmann 1996; Sana 2005; Engbersen et al. 2013] (categories 0–2) – (2) the time dedicated to certain activities, such as cultural activities with Czech/Italian friends and with Moldovans (categories 0–4), where all the indicators were averaged, and (3) sources from which immigrants obtained information about the host society (Moldovan vs Czech/Italian friends). Economic integration was then monitored from a limited sample of economically active immigrants using three variables: (1) having a permanent work contract;[5] (2) integration with the labour market;[6] and (3) employment

[5] The permanent-contract variable was constructed as follows. Immigrants with partial contracts were given a score of 0.5 and those with permanent contracts were given a score of 1. Retired immigrants who were still employed were given a score of 0.75 because we did not know how large their contracts were. When respondents declared they were unemployed, in both this question and the question about their occupation, their economic integration index was scored as 0. Some respondents, however, declared they were unemployed but gave conflicting answers about their occupations and job satisfaction, meaning they were (probably) only *officially* unemployed but worked in the shadow economy. These respondents were given a score of 0 for this item only, while the aggregate index was computed as an average of all three items like other respondents who had stated that they were employed.

satisfaction [e.g. Dustmann 1996; Constant and Massey 2002; Kushnirovich 2015]. We should state that our economic integration index is not ideal, as its construction was limited by the available data. The primary sense of the survey was directed towards transnationalism and social remittances, leaving limited space for questions on the topic of economic integration. The results are presented as standardised regression coefficients, and the coefficient of determination (R2) describes the overall fit of the model.

Descriptive results

Before introducing the statistical analysis, it is first necessary to introduce the basic characteristics of our respondents. Table 3 shows the average indicators of the key dependent and independent variables according to the country of destination. Despite the fact that our survey was not representative, the basic characteristics (gender, age) of our sample approximate the data for the entire population (Table 1). From the data, it is clear that the Czech Moldovans are more transnational than the Italian Moldovans (according to all four sub-indicators from which the transnationalisation index was constructed), although they are less socio-culturally integrated.

One of the most important indicators of socio-cultural integration is the degree of language knowledge of the destination country. Moldovans in Italy have much better knowledge of the Italian language than Moldovans in Czechia have of Czech, probably due to their being from the same Romance language group, which means both languages are somewhat similar. According to Mosneaga [2012], it takes only 1–2 months for Moldovans to learn Italian. Moreover, the major EU languages, including Italian, are often taught in Moldovan schools [Mosneaga 2012].

The age and gender structure of our respondents also differed. While the Czech Moldovans migrated at an older age and alone (often leaving their partners in Moldova), with an equal distribution among males and females, women predominated among the Italian Moldovans. Furthermore, both respondent groups had a relatively high share of persons with university degrees, although the Italian Moldovans had slightly higher qualification levels.

These data correspond relatively well with the observation that Moldovan migration to Czechia is a recent phenomenon (with a relatively higher share of men with primary-level educational attainment, most of them employed in industry and construction). On the other hand, there is a longer tradition of Mol-

[6] This variable compared the level of qualification required for the current occupation with the level for this job in the mother country and the level of a respondent's education to show whether the professional level of their occupation corresponded with their real qualification level.

Table 3. Selected characteristics of Moldovan respondents living in Czechia (CR) and Italy

	CR	Italy	p-value
Index of transnationality	0.512	0.368	< 0.001
Number of previous stays abroad	0.150	0.030	< 0.001
Frequency of remittances	0.355	0.285	0.040
Number of visits to Moldova	0.755	0.570	< 0.001
Contact with family and friends	0.787	0.587	< 0.001
Index of socio-cultural integration	0.381	0.580	< 0.001
Knowledge of the language of the destination country	0.266	0.697	< 0.001
Time dedicated to certain activities	0.360	0.430	< 0.001
Sources of information about the receiving society	0.495	0.615	< 0.001
Index of economic integration	0.703	0.612	0.003
Have a permanent contract	0.803	0.773	0.424
Integration in the labour market	0.700	0.553	< 0.001
Level of job satisfaction	0.653	0.583	0.009
Age at arrival	29.2	26.4	0.010
Number of years spent in CZ/IT	5.3	12.8	< 0.001
Current age 50 or under [ref.]	88.7%	79.1%	0.009
Over 50	11.3%	20.9%	
Females [ref.]	47.3%	63.9%	0.001
Males	52.7%	36.9%	
Without partners/children [ref.]	28.7%	31.6%	0.005
Partners and children in CZ/IT	47.0%	57.3%	
Partners and children in Moldova	14.4%	5.3%	
Partners and children in CZ/IT and in Moldova	9.9%	5.8%	
Primary education [ref.]	17.8%	6.8%	0.004
Secondary education	41.9%	47.3%	
University education	40.3%	45.9%	
Salary up to 500 EUR [ref.]	22.8%	12.9%	< 0.001
Salary 501–1000 EUR	54.4%	28.0%	
Salary 1001–1500 EUR	19.2%	39.8%	
Salary 1501 EUR+	3.6%	19.4%	

Note: The p-value denotes the statistical significance of differences between respondents in Czechia and Italy and was calculated by two independent sample t-tests (continuous variables) and a chi-square test (age groups, gender, partner/children status, education, and gross salary), respectively.

Table 4. Characteristics of respondents based on their cluster membership – first part

	Cluster	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Number of respondents		103	70	72	62	102
Key variables – average values	Number of previous stays abroad	0.49	0.30	0.17	0.13	0.20
	Frequency of remittances	2.86	0.16	2.49	0.18	0.24
	Number of visits to Moldova	3.45	3.77	2.17	2.35	1.59
	Contact with family	2.94	2.79	2.38	1.06	2.74
	Contact with friends	2.27	2.16	0.94	1.05	1.40
Explanatory variables – average values	Index of transnationality	0.653	0.480	0.445	0.257	0.305
	Index of socio-cultural integration	0.403	0.463	0.433	0.599	0.537
	Index of economic integration	0.690	0.636	0.656	0.611	0.668
	Number of years spent in IT/CZ	7.4	7.8	10.3	11.5	9.5
	Age	38.3	34.9	41.1	36.6	34.1

dovan migration to Italy, represented by a larger and more strongly integrated community with a more homogeneous composition (e.g. more female carers in domestic and personal service; Drbohlav et al. [2017]), and higher salaries. Not surprisingly, the lower transnational index in Italy relates to the higher socio-cultural integration of Moldovans in Italy (see the theoretical part above).

The transnational behaviour of migrants – a typology

The next step in the analysis was to select the most suitable clusters/types of transnational behaviour among Moldovans in Italy and Czechia. First, using five key variables (Table 4) to explain transnational activities, we identified five transnational clusters of migrants. We also added explanatory variables, which enabled us to better characterise particular clusters/types. Each variable in Table 4 indicates the average characteristics of the respondents. The last category of variables is composed of the percentage representation of selected 'other' variables. These indicators were intended to make it easier to understand what kind of migrants are represented in a given cluster/type.

Table 4. Characteristics of respondents based on their cluster membership – second part

	Cluster	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
'Other' variables – percentage shares	Czechia	68.9%	72.9%	31.9%	27.4%	40.2%
	Females	46.6%	57.1%	61.1%	51.6%	60.8%
	Education – Basic	15.2%	7.5%	11.8%	14.8%	10.9%
	Education – Secondary	40.4%	43.3%	45.6%	54.1%	43.6%
	Education – University	44.4%	49.3%	42.6%	31.1%	45.5%
	Salary up to 500 EUR	7.9%	16.4%	7.2%	25.5%	33.0%
	Salary 501–1000 EUR	47.5%	59.0%	37.7%	35.3%	29.9%
	Salary 1001–1500 EUR	35.6%	18.0%	40.6%	25.5%	23.7%
	Salary 1501 EUR+	8.9%	6.6%	14.5%	13.7%	13.4%
	Age group 18–25	14.7%	27.5%	2.8%	32.3%	27.5%
	Age group 26–35	32.4%	34.8%	27.8%	22.6%	36.3%
	Age group 36–45	24.5%	15.9%	36.1%	14.5%	18.6%
	Age group 46+	28.4%	21.7%	33.3%	30.6%	17.6%
	Without partners/ children	20.4%	31.4%	14.1%	43.5%	42.2%
	Partners and children in IT/CZ	41.7%	57.1%	71.8%	41.9%	52.0%
	Partners and children in Moldova	24.3%	4.3%	9.9%	3.2%	2.9%
	Partners and children in IT/CZ and in Moldova	13.6%	7.1%	4.2%	11.3%	2.9%

An analysis of variance confirmed the statistically significant differences in all the key variables presented in Table 4, with the exception of the economic integration index. A Chi-square test also proved that respondents assigned to all five clusters/types differed significantly by destination country, salary, age category, and partner status, but not by gender and education.

The distribution of the respondents across five clusters helps us to better understand the transnational behaviour of Moldovans, which we further described as transnational types. We identified the key difference between those who showed higher or lower degrees of transnationality. According to certain empirical surveys, it is clear that the greater the transnationality, the lower the (especially socio-cultural) integration [e.g. Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes 2006], and vice versa. Table 5 describes all of the types, together with their characteristics, including the different migratory behaviours of Moldovans living in Italy and Czechia.

Table 5. Different types of transnational migrants: strong vs weak ties with country of origin

	Personal characteristics	Level of integration – socio-cultural vs economic*	Typical for Moldovans in
Strong transnationality with remittances [C1]	Middle-aged migrants, short period of stay, less educated	–/+	Czechia
Strong transnationality without remittances [C2]	Young immigrants, short period of stay, educated, lower salary	–/0	Czechia
Weak transnationality with remittances [C3]	Older migrants, longer period of stay, higher salary	–/0	Italy
Weak transnationality [C4]	Both young and old, longer period of stay, less educated	+/–	Italy
Weak transnationality with contacts in Moldova [C5]	Young, families or singles in the country of destination	+/0	Italy/Czechia

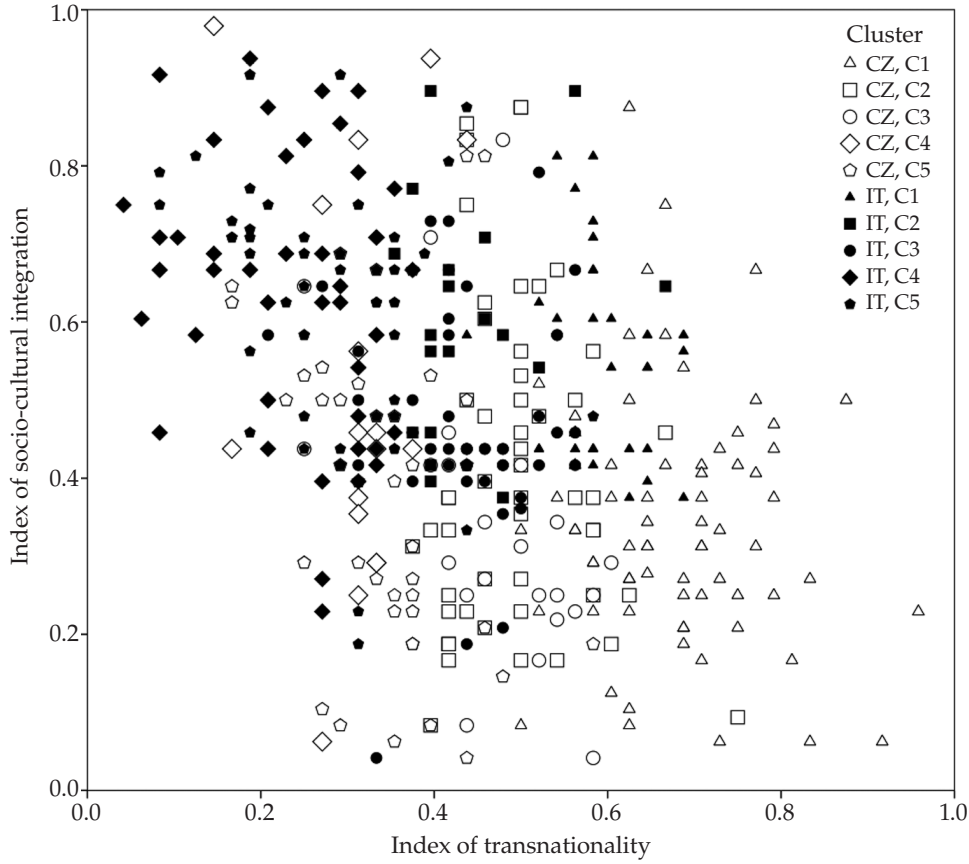
Note: * Low [–], Moderate [0], High [+] socio-cultural vs economic level of integration.

While migrants who have strong contact with their home country predominated in Czechia, the Italian Moldovans maintained rather weak contact. Together with length of stay, this indicates a close relationship between the Italian Moldovans and their socio-cultural integration in the country of destination. The premises in the theoretical section assumed the opposite relation between transnationalism and integration, because highly socio-economically integrated immigrants tend to have fewer contacts with their country of origin than do those maintaining a low degree of integration.

Second, because we found differences in the behaviour of Moldovans living in Czechia and Italy, we examined the issue separately. Figure 1 shows the value of both key indices (of transnationalism and socio-cultural integration) vs cluster membership and destination country for each respondent.

The distribution of Moldovans in Italy is mostly located at the upper end of the integration axis, while the Moldovans in Czechia are located mostly at the upper end of the transnational axis. What does this mean in light of the concepts dis-

Figure 1. Immigrants according to type of cluster, destination country, and indices of transnationality and socio-cultural integration



cussed? Even though cluster membership should not be taken in absolute terms, Figure 1 shows a clear distinction between the Moldovans in the two countries (in accordance with H1). Again, while the Italian Moldovans are more socio-culturally integrated into the majority society (clusters C3 and C4), the Czech Moldovans are more transnational (clusters C1 and C2) and (as already indicated in Table 3) also slightly more economically integrated than the Italian Moldovans. There are also many respondents concentrated at the centre of both axes from both destination countries that belong to type C5. These could be termed 'on the way to cluster C4', meaning that the respondents still had a significant attachment to their country of origin via contact with family members, but are already socio-culturally integrated.

How transnationalism influences the integration of immigrants

The second hypothesis concerned the relationship between duration of residence, integration, and transnationalism. The assumption was that the transnational involvement and integration of migrants are mutually exclusive [Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes 2006]. However, there are also other potential development trajectories available, such as those demonstrated by degree of integration [e.g. Vertovec 2010] and empirical research [e.g. Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002; Portes 2003]. In this section, we examine the relationship between transnational activities and the dimensions of integration.

Transnational practices and socio-cultural integration

First, we examined the relation between transnational practices and socio-cultural integration. This was done using three models (one for each country), to which we added step-by-step variables to predict socio-cultural integration. Table 6 presents the results of the regression analyses. The first models (CZ1, IT1) included only personal characteristics that were important for socio-cultural integration [see, e.g., Janská, Pauknerová and Koropecká 2017], such as the gender and family status of the respondents (i.e. whether a respondent was single or living with a partner/children, and where they lived). While the role of gender was not significant for either country, the respondents with partners did show a lower degree of integration (compared to the reference group of respondents without partners or children). Viewed at the country level, significantly less integration was found in Czechia for respondents who had part of their family in Czechia and another part in Moldova. This could include those who had left their children in their country of origin. In Italy, all of the respondents with partners/children were found to be less integrated.[7] This may be because they lacked the time for cultural activities, as they needed to earn money and care for their families. The second models (CZ2, IT2) also included variables describing the migration backgrounds of the respondents (length of stay abroad, age upon arrival). Both were found to be significant; however, surprisingly, in the Czech context, it was clear that length of stay was more important for socio-cultural integration, while age upon arrival played a greater role in Italy. Moreover, the importance of family status diminished, meaning its effect in models CZ1 and IT1 was caused by the different migration backgrounds.

This finding is in accordance with traditional assimilation theories [e.g. Alba and Nee 1997], where integration into the mainstream is believed to increase

[7] Surprisingly, those who had close relatives in Moldova appeared to be more highly integrated than those who had family in Italy. In view of the low proportion of migrants who had relatives in Moldova, however, this result cannot be taken as definitive.

Table 6. Determinants of the level of socio-cultural integration among Moldovan immigrants in Czechia and Italy

		Czechia			Italy		
Model		CZ1	CZ2	CZ3	IT1	IT2	IT3
1	Sex [male]	–0.028	0.042	0.054	–0.056	–0.056	–0.064
	Partner/children only in CZ/IT	–0.016	–0.079	–0.082	–0.425***	–0.190**	–0.137
	Partner/children only in Moldova	–0.145*	–0.073	–0.039	–0.287***	–0.032	0.010
	Partner/children in Moldova and CZ/IT	–0.193**	–0.149*	–0.130	–0.236***	–0.015	0.007
2	Length of stay abroad [CZ/IT]		0.346***	0.320***		0.114*	0.112*
	Age at arrival		–0.160**	–0.161**		–0.479***	–0.463***
3	Index of trans-nationalisation			–0.126*			–0.126*
	R^2	4.8	17.7	19.0	18.5	31.6	32.7

Note: *p < 0.10; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01 ; the table presents the standardised regression coefficients.

with the length of stay in the destination country. Age upon arrival also plays an important role, with those arriving in the destination country at a young age being more integrated [e.g. Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes 2006], and vice versa. These results indicate that the degree of integration clearly increases with the length of stay and age upon arrival, which still held when we added the key variable of index of transnationalisation (models CZ3, IT3). It can be concluded that the more transnational migrants are, the less likely they are to be socio-culturally integrated, as has been well described in the literature [e.g. ibid.].

Transnational practices and economic integration

An important part of the integration process is represented by economic activity. We were interested in how such activity could be influenced by transnational practices and in the importance of these practices when comparing transnational practices with socio-cultural integration. The same logic applied to the previous regression analysis (Table 7) provided different results for the variables. Unambiguously, the main predictor of economic integration was gender. The emergence of transnationalism parallels successful economic integration in the Ital-

Table 7. Determinants of the level of economic integration among Moldovan immigrants in Czechia and Italy

		Czechia			Italy		
Model	Variables	CZ4	CZ5	CZ6	IT4	IT5	IT6
1	Sex [male]	0.142*	0.162*	0.166*	0.265***	0.254***	0.265***
	Partner/children only in CZ/IT	0.061	0.048	0.046	0.040	0.106	0.056
	Partner/children only in Moldova	–0.009	0.049	0.061	–0.006	0.049	0.005
	Partner/children in Moldova and CZ/IT	–0.028	0.014	0.020	0.048	0.101	0.082
2	Length of stay abroad [CZ/IT]		0.158*	0.147*		–0.063	–0.068
	Age at arrival		–0.113	–0.114		–0.083	–0.106
3	Index of trans-nationalisation			–0.049			0.136
	R^2	2.7	6.0	6.2	7.3	7.8	9.2

Note: *p < 0.10; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01 ; the table presents the standardised regression coefficients.

ian case, with an increase in transnational practices being slightly related to the process of economic (and social) mobility [Itzigsohn and Saucedo 2002; Fibbi and D'Amato 2008].

The analyses include such economic indicators as size of contract, professional qualifications for their current occupation, and satisfaction with their employment. One of the explanations for why men were more economically integrated than women was that men usually have better access to suitable employment than women [e.g. Erdal 2013]. In Czechia, the length of stay in the destination country also played a significant role. From previous studies on Ukrainian labour migrants [e.g. Drbohlav 2015], it was determined that the length of stay in Czechia correlated with having more information about labour market opportunities. We expected a similar situation for Moldovans, who also occupy the post-Soviet space and face similar restrictions to entry into EU labour markets.

Interestingly, both analyses indicated that the degree of transnational practices could have different impacts on particular aspects of integration, with a negative impact being exerted on the socio-economic dimension of integration and a slightly positive impact on the economic dimension. This result led us to question the potential for a zero-sum relationship between transnationalism and integration [e.g. King and Collyer 2016 vs Portes, Haller and Guarnizo 2002].

Conclusion and discussion: integration patterns from a transnational perspective

The aim of this study was to discover whether transnational migrants have been able to integrate well into their receiving societies and to explore the potential differences in the migratory behaviours of Moldovans in two EU countries with very different migration histories and contexts. We assumed that there would be differences between the two countries reflecting the degree of language distance and involvement in the labour market. We also tried to determine whether there were differences in the migratory patterns between an established and a relatively new EU country.

Many studies on transnationalism have either been theoretical or based on qualitative empirical data, with quantitative work being limited [e.g. Snel et al. 2006; Engbersen et al. 2013]. Here, we offered a unique quantitative examination of the transnational and integration activities of Moldovans in two countries at the same time. To test our premises, we conducted an empirical survey among Moldovan labour migrants in Czechia and Italy. With respect to our hypothesis H1, we did find important differences between Moldovans living in Italy and Czechia. We constructed a typology of the transnational activities of Moldovan migrants based on variables connected to transnational behaviours. The results showed that five clusters/types (C1–C5) were distinguishable, with strong transnational networks (connected to weak socio-cultural integration) being typical mostly for Moldovans in Czechia, while weak integration was also observed. On the other hand, Moldovans in Italy reported weak transnational ties and, at the same, time greater socio-cultural integration. One reason for these outcomes may be the existence of the Integration Plan in Italy, which promotes pre-departure training courses to prompt people in selected countries of origin to favour Italy as a destination [Caneva 2014]. This means that Moldovans who have attended training programmes and language courses at home are allowed privileged entry into Italy, within preferential quotas, which is not the case for Czechia.

A more interesting result is cluster C5, where transnationalism is linked to integration via relationships (visits) in Moldova. This type was not defined in terms of a particular country of destination, meaning that those migrants could be elsewhere. At the same time, it was found that transnational activities were evident among migrants with a good social position (e.g. education level, labour market participation) in the host society and those who were more marginalised [Snel, Engbersen and Leerkes 2006; Engbersen et al. 2013].

Hypothesis H2 concerned the integration of transnational migrants, and we tested how these networks varied by duration of residence, age upon arrival, relations with family, etc. Those who had frequent contact with their home country (e.g. travelled home) and a shorter period of residence were more likely to exhibit less integration than those who had almost no contact and had lived longer in the receiving country.

The analyses yielded results that, on the one hand, confirmed this hypoth-

esis and, on the other hand, did not. We analysed the degree of integration of the respondents via the transnational variables. It is clear that transnationalism had a negative impact on socio-cultural integration, while age at time of arrival and subsequent length of stay in the destination country also had a significant impact. However, the difference was not significant between Italy and Czechia. At the same time, transnationalism had a very slight positive impact on economic integration, which supports a close relationship between economic integration and economic transnational ties [e.g. Vertovec 2010] in Italy, but not in Czechia, where length of stay and family status played more important roles. Moreover, the much better economic integration of men compared to women was confirmed in both countries.

This work has explored this balancing act. It went beyond simply acknowledging the co-existence of transnationalism and processes of integration to propose a typology for understanding the nature of the interaction between the two. We argue that the nature of interactions/networks between integration and transnationalism are formed by the fact that the two are both constituents of a social process, and that the nature of interactions is further shaped by the human and personal considerations of the key actors – the migrants and those with whom they interact. Although, generally speaking, transnational involvement does not constitute an impediment to successful integration into majority societies, the situation for specific countries and specific groups of immigrants may actually be quite different. Moreover, our results showed that it is important to distinguish between particular dimensions of integration (socio-cultural, economic, etc.) and relevant variables such as length of stay, gender, knowledge of the language, remittances, or ties among migrants, their families, and friends. Economic integration thus does not have to be weaken with transnational behaviour of migrants, while socio-cultural integration does [see Vertovec 2010; Portes et al. 2002].

Our results contribute some new insights to the scholarly discussion on how the transnational migratory behaviour of migrants influences their integration process, and what factors play a role in this. Moreover, it broadens the literature on East European migrants in the EU labour market.

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Making the Ghetto at Luník IX in Slovakia: People, Landfill and the Myth of the Urban Green Space*

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Abstract: The prevailing public perception of Luník IX, a Roma district in the Slovak city of Košice, is that it represents the story of an originally urban green space, one of the best for healthy living given its fresh air and proximity to the forest, that was destroyed by 'naïve' decision-makers and 'irresponsible' Roma. This article, based on a combination of qualitative sociological and historical research, questions this narrative and deems it a myth. The district's proximity to a landfill and the consequent environmental effects of this played a decisive role in its ghettoisation, yet these factors have never been systematically analysed and discussed. Although Luník IX was not officially and originally designed as a ghetto, it became one as a result of structural, social, and environmental factors. Utilising the conceptual and theoretical framework of environmental justice, the article focuses on the spatial distribution of the adverse environmental effects in relation to social and ethnic factors. The case of Luník IX, with its roots in the period of a centrally planned economy, provides a unique opportunity to make a comparative study of the social processes from a historical perspective. It allows us to analyse the mechanism of decision-making in an avowedly non-capitalist society, where in reality we see many similarities in how income inequality between richer and poorer neighbourhoods, together with ethnic/racial factors, has shaped the city.

Keywords: environmental justice, Roma ethnic minority, Luník IX, urban ghetto

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Introduction

Luník IX in Košice has over the years become a symbol of the 'impossibility' of Roma integration in Slovakia. For the outside world it is an example of failed inclusion policies, yet for the people who live there it is a severe social stigma. It strongly influences public discussion surrounding public housing for marginalised communities, but it has also very tangible impacts on its inhabitants and it effectively excludes them from the labour market.[1]

Since 1990, Luník IX has been a self-governed district within the municipality of Košice with its own mayor, deputy assembly, kindergarten, and elementary school. In 2013, approximately 6200 people lived there in segregation from the rest of the city's population. More than 50% of the local housing stock was demolished in 2008–2017, but 3100 people are still living there in blocks of flats [Mesto Košice 2017: 12]. Almost all of them belong to the Roma ethnic minority.[2]

In this article, we challenge the public discourse that describes the Luník IX district as originally a 'beautiful forest area' that has been destroyed by 'naïve' decision-makers and 'irresponsible' Roma. The article analyses the central role played by the municipal landfill in the ghettoisation of this place, whereby the myth of the urban green space has functioned as a pretence to justify and legitimise the failed practices of non-Roma decision-makers and to concurrently reinforce antigypsyism sentiment among the majority populace.

We focus on three interconnected research questions: (1) What is the historical/recorded story of the landfill and what role have the landfill construction and environmental factors played in turning the place into a ghetto? (2) How can we analyse the process from an environmental justice perspective, i.e. how do economic, social, and ethnic factors lead to the inequitable distribution of environmental risks and benefits? (3) How much are the historical facts reflected in the present explanatory narratives?

Our methodological approach is based on a case study design combined with an analysis of historical records. In addressing our key research questions, we combine qualitative research methodology based on semi-structured interviews, participatory and non-participatory observations, and text analysis with a desk study of historical records in the Košice municipal archives. We built a 'purposive sample', where we began with specific perspectives identified through text analysis (i.e. newspapers, media, municipal documents, and statements) and then identified research participants who represent the full range of perspectives.

[1] Being from Luník IX effectively prevents people from getting jobs. In several interviews, we obtained similar descriptions of cases where just revealing a permanent address here leads to cancelled job interviews. There are estimates that 95% of people of productive age and living in Luník IX are unemployed [Mesto Košice 2013: 29].

[2] A minor portion of inhabitants (around 250), who were evicted from their flats, built scattered shacks in the adjacent forest area called Mašlíčkovo.

In the course of the qualitative survey in 2018–2019, we analysed the perspectives of city administrators, politicians, journalists, researchers, and NGOs. The research was not specifically focused on the ghetto's Roma inhabitants, but we did conduct a series of visits and interviews with the people, NGOs, and representatives of the district council at Luník IX.[3] Documents from 1965 to 1989 preserved in the State Archive in Košice and the City Archive of Košice provided key data on decision-making processes in the period of state-socialist Czechoslovakia at the local level.

In the first part of the article we provide a theoretical and conceptual framework for the analyses of the social, economic, and environmental policy factors that shaped urban decision-making in the state-socialist period and in the post-1989 neoliberal era. In the second part, we systematically follow step by step the timeline of Luník IX's origin in relation to the city's waste management practice and its consequent socio-spatial development. Here we confront the prevailing popular narrative with historical facts from our archive research.

The article concludes with a discussion of how Luník IX, although not officially and originally designed as a ghetto, became one, and what was the role of environmental factors in this process. Mass housing at Luník IX, with its roots in the period of a centrally planned economy and witnessing rapid adverse development in the transformation period, provides a unique opportunity for a comparative study of environmental justice from a historical perspective. It allows for an analysis of the mechanism of decision-making in a society that declares it is cut off from capitalism, while in reality we see in it many similarities to the market economy, and how income inequality among richer and poorer neighbourhoods, together with ethnic factors, has shaped the city of Košice.

The space we live in: the conceptual framework of environmental justice

Contrary to the general perception of socialist regimes as 'monolithic dictatorships', recent scholarship argues that many policies executed by state-socialist authorities were the outcome of negotiations between several actors positioned at different levels, from the level of the central government through to the local level, including, for example, common complaints from ordinary citizens [Pullmann 2011; Spurný 2012; Blaive 2018].[4] We can make a similar argument about the general perception of socialist regimes as 'command economies'.[5] The system

[3] How the landfill is reflected in the perception of the people it affected would deserve further research using anthropological methodology.

[4] Moreover, it must be stressed that the situation varied in different Eastern Bloc countries and even in different decades.

[5] The term 'command economy' is used to describe a system in which the government, rather than the free market, determines the quality, quantity, and price of goods.

possesses various market elements. Drawing on the ideas of Karl Polanyi [1944], just as we see elements of control and planning in 'market economies', we may also see elements of a market in so-called centrally planned economies.

The principal difference between a market and a centrally planned economy can be seen in the type of capital possessed, deployed, and controlled by social actors. While in the former it is predominantly financial combined with social, in the latter it is primarily social combined with financial – in the form, for example, of various types of favours, bribes, or barter trades. The system described by Janos Kornai [1980, 1988] as one of frequent, intensive, and chronic shortages developed its own mechanisms of distribution and access to goods and services. An item in demand, such as an apartment, is there, but the buyer has to queue up for it, and the waiting list may be many years in length. When you get a chance or access to certain goods in shortage, in this case an apartment, you have to accept the quality and location, since your bargaining power is limited [Kornai 1988; Lipton and Sachs 1990]. However, as we analyse in our case study, the limits of individual and collective bargaining power may differ significantly and depend to a great extent on a person's class and/or ethnic affiliation. Luník IX, the biggest ghettoised urban space in Slovakia, illustrates the differences as they evolved during the transition from a centrally planned system to a market economy.

Luník IX, where the vast majority of inhabitants today belong to the Roma ethnic minority, falls into a category for which, by deploying the Wacquantian qualification criteria of stigma, spatial confinement, constraint, and institutional encasement, we can use the term 'urban ghetto' [Wacquant 2004, 2011]. As we will argue, it is no accident that the ghetto evolved in proximity to a municipal landfill. Deploying an environmental justice perspective helps us to understand how the presence of the environmental burden initiates, reinforces, and/or leads to such segregation. Mary Douglas [1966] puts exclusion in the broader context of the social order. In other words, impure bodies and impure things are pushed to the margins and isolated to protect the social order. Luic Wacquant sees this as an inherent feature in the formation of a ghetto, the purpose of which is 'to minimize intimate contact with its members so as to avert the threat of symbolic corrosion and contagion they are believed to carry' [Wacquant 2012: 7].

Environmental justice, rooted in the study of inequality and exclusion, encompasses the dimension of distributive and procedural justice. Building on David Schlosberg's [2002, 2007] approaches, we define it here as the equitable distribution of environmental risks and benefits reached through fair and meaningful participation in environmental decision-making. In other words, it is about not only who gets what, but also what procedures are involved. Although, as we will argue, race is of key importance in our case, as Razmig Keucheyan [2016] notes, the racial variable is not an isolated one and it is mixed in with other variables – especially class. Or, as Laura Pulido [2010: 13] puts it: 'Race is liable to produce differentiation within a class position and, in turn, class is liable to produce differentiation within a given ethno-racial belonging.'

There are many types of settlements in which the poor, migrants, or ethnic minorities seek places to settle, or where they end up through a combination of economic, social, and sometimes political pressures. Such places are usually an amalgam of overcrowding, poor or informal housing, tenure insecurity, unclear property rights, problematic residence permits, and inadequate access to safe water and sanitation. Another common feature is that these places tend to be located on the outskirts of big cities or on the peripheries of villages. As Mike Davis [2004: 1] observes: 'The urban poor … are everywhere forced to settle on hazardous and otherwise unbuildable terrains – over steep hillslopes, riverbanks and floodplains. Likewise, they squat in the deadly shadows of refineries, chemical factories, toxic dumps, or in the margins of railroads and highways.'

The breakthrough study conducted by the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, a church-based civil rights organisation, came to the conclusion that '60% of African Americans live in communities with at least one abandoned toxic waste site' [CfRJ 1989: xiii]. Extending this research and additional surveys, in 1990 Robert Bullard published *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality* as the first textbook on environmental justice [Bullard 1990]. This was followed by extensive research in the United States to map and analyse the relationship between race, class, and the distribution of environmental benefits and harms [Bullard 1993; Schlosberg 1999; McGurty 2000; Pellow 2002; Rhodes 2003]. A study of the locations of Integrated Pollution Control Sites (i.e. registered most polluting enterprises) in the United Kingdom concluded that 'out of the 3.6 million estimated people living within 1 km of a site, there are 6 times more people from the most deprived decile compared to the least deprived' [Walker et al. 2003: 23].

These disparities were studied in the context of very different countries. Kathleen Millar [2018] in Jardim Gramacho, Rio de Janeiro's main garbage dump, and Adrian-Octavian Dohotaru [2013], in the case of Pata-Rat in Romania, illustrate how waste lies at the heart of relations of inequality. It is not only about exposure to environmental risks. People living at or next to the problematic sites are subject to exclusion and stigmatisation.

The ethnic prejudices and racisms that are usually found at the root of segregation play a key role in the location of certain settlements. Environmental factors may influence the location of segregated spaces and/or serve as the accelerators of ghettoisation processes. There is a growing number of studies of the Roma ethnic minority in Central and Eastern Europe that have identified direct or indirect environmental factors in the process [Ladanyi and Szelenyi 1998; Steger et al. 2007; Filčák 2012; Vincze and Rat 2013; Filčák and Steger 2014; Velicua and Kaikab 2015; Holifield et al. 2017; Picker 2017].

For a better understanding of Luník IX and its origin as an urban ghetto, we need to place the settlement in the context of the dichotomy between official national policies of social inclusion and the local urban context. The officially declared goals of the former (here we refer to the period prior to 1989) and present

governance (post-1989 liberal democracy) in reality faced and face strong local interests.

The theory of the town as a growth machine or urban growth machine suggests that the objective of growth unites otherwise pluralistic interests in relation to a city. Set within the framework of the commodification of place theory, it explains the often contradictory interests behind decisions concerning a particular place and its social and economic value and environmental and social externalities. According to this approach, developed by Harvey Molotch [1976] in collaboration with John Logan [Logan and Molotch 1987], a city or human settlement is not driven by simple market logic, that is, as though vacant parcels of land that have commercial or social value are just waiting to be exploited by developers or citizens. In fact, and perhaps even more important, the parcels of land will increase in value if there is an interest in them. Cities and settlements must therefore be analysed from the perspective of their organisation, management structure, and lobbies, and from the point of view of decision-makers and developers.

When it comes to urban development, local elites are often in various firmer or looser associations with politicians, businesses, local media, and other stakeholders and form coalitions that claim proposed plans or activities will benefit everyone. The very principle of the 'growth engine' is, however, different. Urban development transforms the city and its value in the use of all, yet the exchange value of a few [Logan and Molotch 1987]. What a settlement looks like is not just determined by impersonal market or geographical constraints/factors, or in the case of centrally planned economies, simply by the decisions of the Communist Party. It is also the result of social processes and inequality of opportunities. Environmental aspects play an important and sometimes even decisive role in shaping the space.

Investors are restricted by the economic and social interests and power of owners and at the same time seek to locate controversial activities (e.g. landfill, heavy industry factories, or any operation with some negative impact on the environment) in places where they can expect the best price of land and the least resistance from the population.

While during the communist period the official party line was not questioned by the public, how the state's policies were implemented at the urban level in the end depended somewhat on the local context and public and private interests. Decisions on practical matters, such as urban planning and decisions about Roma settlements, were, to a great degree, influenced by the local decision-makers, reflecting shared prejudices against the Roma minority, addressing the economic interests of various stakeholders in obtaining a better quality of life for their families or simply by not going against the prevailing public opinion and take popular decisions.

The urban strategies that reflect and reproduce antigypsyism sentiments and, simultaneously, function as a means of establishing the political legitimacy of ruling elites at the local level were analysed in the case of the segregated Roma

district Chánov in the northern region of the Czech Republic by Matěj Spurný [2016], and Matoušek and Sýkora [2011] conducted similar research on Vsetín in the Czech Republic. Similar patterns were already described in the 1990s in Hungary [Ladanyi and Szelenyi 1998] and are also the subject of intensive research in Romania [Dohotaru 2013; Vincze and Raț 2013]. What is similar here to these and other cases is their rooting in the former regime of a centrally planned economy and their continuation and sometimes expansion in the newly established liberal market democracies.

Unlike other major Roma ghettos in Central and Southeast Europe, and despite extensive social media coverage dedicated to Luník IX in Slovakia and abroad since 1989, the genesis of the ghettoisation process of Luník IX has so far attracted only limited attention from domestic and foreign scholars. A pioneering study on the history of the district was recently produced by Slovak historian Anna Jurová [2015], who interprets the creation of the district as the outcome of the deliberate antigypsyist policies of the local authorities. Similarly, Luník IX serves as a case study of Aidan McGarry's work *Romaphopia* [2017], analysing racial behavioural patterns on the part of the non-Roma Slovak populace, which he audaciously describes as 'a modern day apartheid' [ibid.: 136]. None of the authors, however, analysed the ghetto's evolution in relation to the localisation of the landfill in the area.

Urban myth, people, and the landfill

The popular image of Luník IX is one of a Communist Party plan for a superior green housing area that went wrong. The two prevailing explanatory frameworks can be described as a 'naïve experiment that failed' and 'good intentions but the wrong implementation'.

The first framework was the one typically adopted by experts in Košice's city administration, the city's social welfare experts, and it is basically identical to the prevailing perception of the public and media coverage. The following quotation from an interview with an employee at Košice City Hall is typical: 'They got the best apartments in the city, under the forest, green, nice… A stupid policy of the city in the past… [they] moved the Roma there … it was impossible [for non-Roma] to live there with those people. They have destroyed the area completely…'[6] One motive often presented was that it was an experiment that was doomed to fail from the very beginning because the 'inability of the Roma to adapt to normal life'.

In the words of another respondent: 'The communists gave these apartments to the Roma for free, but … These people don't appreciate what they got – they destroy everything.'[7] Respondents typically referred to the former (before

[6] Personal interview with a representative of Košice administrative authority, June 2018.
[7] Personal interview with an elected official in Košice City Hall, June 2018.

1989) state and municipal authorities and the Communist Party as naïve decision-makers, driven by ideology instead of building on practical knowledge of the Roma ethnic minority. The central themes of the narrative are representations of Luník IX as a green space, designed as one of the best places for healthy living, with fresh air and proximity to the forest.

The second, minor explanatory framework builds on the narrative of 'good intentions but the wrong implementation'. The central theme of this framework is a story about an attempt to create an ethnically mixed neighbourhood, but the party and municipal officials failed. In the words of one respondent: 'They mixed different clans, families; they did not use any form of social work, community work. The [Communist] Party made the decision, but in the former regime they simply did not have the knowledge, the tools, to manage the situation.'[8] The idea of a mixed neighbourhood was in this perspective and in principle a good one, but it should not have involved a mass-scale eviction from the city, and should not have been applied to an unprepared community and with a lack of fieldwork conducted among members of the minority and the majority – the process was basically lacking in all knowhow and good practices, which were not available prior to the political changes. This explanatory framework was the one typically espoused by NGO representatives, the Roma and Roma activists, and respondents from the academic sector.

We argue that both narratives are false and that Luník IX is neither the outcome of good intentions nor a failed experiment. Its history cannot be analysed without understanding the central role played by the local landfill. The district is spatially segregated from the city by a stream and by Myslavská Street, a four-lane road with heavy traffic.[9] When we examine the map (Figure 1), we see that the mass socialist-era blocks of flats are close to the municipal landfill. The first apartments are only a hundred metres from this source of population and the whole housing estate, including the elementary school, is no more than 500 metres from it. The only connecting road to the housing estate also has heavy traffic that is due to waste transport.

Therefore, in the second part of the in-depth interviews we focused on the landfill. We purposely did not introduce the topic and almost none of the non-Roma mentioned the landfill as an issue on its own. The Roma inhabitants of the area were aware of the landfill, but if was not considered a decisive factor in shaping the space. To some extent, this may be explained by the fact that the landfill

[8] Personal interview with an employee of an NGO, June 2018.

[9] The district is served by one bus line with a 'special regime', which means that unlike other local public transport routes serving the city proper, which operate on an honour system, in the case of this line all passengers have to show a valid ticket to the driver on embarking. *Korzár* 2006. 'Autobusová linka č. 11 už na Lunik IX premávať nebude' (Bus route no. 11 will no longer serve Luník IX). *Košice: Korzár: Sme*. Retrieved 8 March 2019 (https://kosice.korzar.sme.sk/c/4475500/autobusova-linka-c-11-uz-na-lunik-ix-premavat-nebude.html#ixzz5i4IlwIca).

Figure 1. Location of the landfill in Košice – Myslava and the position of Luník IX

Source: Department of the Chief Architect of the City of Košice. The Town Planning Scheme of the Economic-Residential Agglomeration of Košice, 2018.

was closed in 1997. Alternatively, we may also consider Daniel Sosna [2016], who sees landfills as places pushed to the margins of human perception.

Contrary to the present narrative analysed in the qualitative survey, historical records indicate that the landfill was in fact a very important part of the formation of Luník IX. Housing and waste management would be of major importance for any city that developed as rapidly as post-war Košice. Rapid industrialisation meant there was a need to house more than 100 000 workers, including families and construction staff. The construction of Nové Mesto (New City), a major satellite housing project for 60 000 inhabitants, commenced in 1960. By 1963, the authorities had designated two other localities for satellite housing in the form of blocks of flats, which are now the Košice city districts Dargovských hrdinov (30 000 inhabitants) and Košického vládneho programu (28 000 inhabitants). An unoccupied field site on the western periphery of the city, later named Luník IX, did not figure in any of the plans for the construction of mass housing.

The modernist urbanisation of the outer city contrasted with the rather semi-rural built-up area of the inner city. The deprived pre-war housing stock of the city centre and its former suburbs appealed as a pull factor for the immigration of rural Roma inhabitants, who by 1965 – together with Roma who had long lived in a centrally located but slum-style quarter in the city called 'Tábor' – al-

ready accounted for 9000 inhabitants or 10% of Košice's population. Such a high concentration of Roma in the city's urban space put the municipal officials in a tight corner for two reasons: (1) constant complaints from the majority population regarding the 'asocial' behaviour of some Roma, such as filthiness, noisiness, bad hygiene, thievery, and truancy; this gave rise to an unwillingness to 'live next door to a Roma',[10] and (2) the need to comply with the 1965 Government Decree on the elimination of all separate Roma settlements, including Roma rural camps and urban neighbourhoods, and the subsequent dispersion of Roma families among the majority populace [Jurová 1993: 77].

As a consequence of the contradictory interests of the local majority population on the one side and governmental policies on the other, Košice municipal officials declared the directive policies from the central government to be impracticable in the local environment and instead attempted to push forward a plan for creating a brand-new Roma district on the very periphery of the city, where the majority of the most 'asocial' families, approximately 720 from the total of 996 Roma families, would then be accommodated.[11] This proposal was partly backed by representatives of the East-Slovakia County, who recommended that the government's dispersion policy not be applied to the 'most backward families'.[12]

However, the crucial problem with the proposed 'solution' transpired to be that of finding a suitable location for a segregated district within the city's borders. During the 1960s and 1970s, the population of Košice grew rapidly, from a population of 80 000 (1961) to 200 000 (1980), making it the fifth-largest city in Czechoslovakia. The city's planners and engineers had to address cumulative environmental and logistical issues connected with the city's unprecedented growth, such as providing a sufficient supply of heat and water and solving waste management by replacing an older municipal landfill (Červený Rak) with a more capacious one (1969).[13] Concurrently, a 1960 government decree anticipated

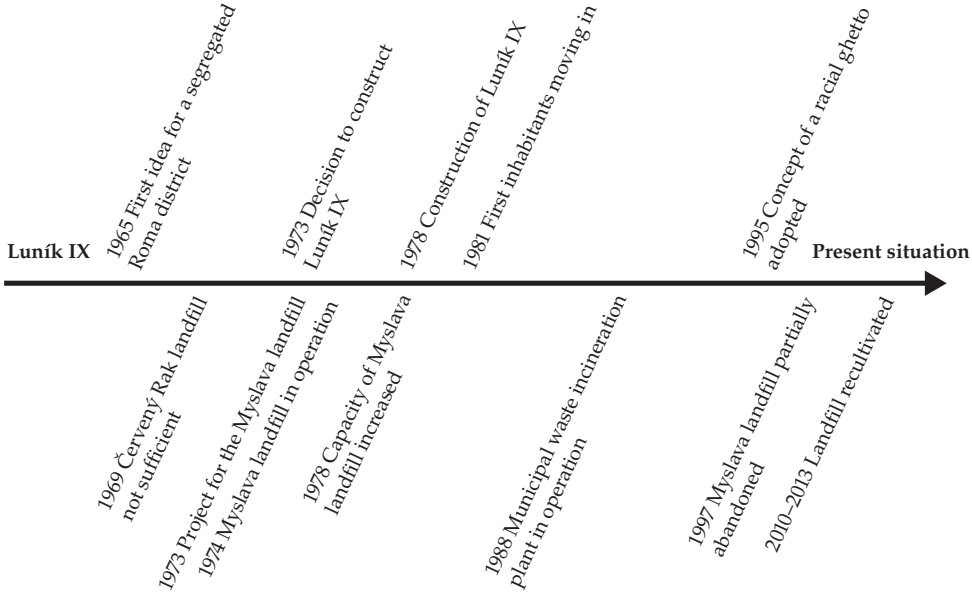
[10] Koordinačná komisia rady MsNV pre riešenie otázok spoluobčanov cigánskeho pôvodu v Košiciach, plán práce na II. polrok 1965 (Coordination Council of the Municipal National Committee for Solving the Problems of Co-citizens of Gypsy Origin in Košice, working plan II/1965), Box 70/4, fond Mestský národný výbor Košice 1959–1970 (Municipal National Committee in Košice, hereinafter MNKK), Archív mesta Košíc (Municipal Archive Košice, hereinafter MAK), Košice, Slovakia.

[11] Kontrolná správa o plnení komplexného plánu riešenia otázok občanov cigánskeho pôvodu v Košiciach na rok 1966 (An audit report on delivering outcomes of the complex plan for solving the problems of citizens of Gypsy origin in Košice), 1966, 3440/66, Box 70/4, fond MNKK, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[12] Súčasný stav a hlavné smery v zameraní tvorby životného prostredia vo Východoslovenskom kraji (The current state and main tendencies in environmental management in the Eastern Slovakia County), March 1968, 55, 8/1968, Box 158, fond ESNK, SAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[13] Rozvoj Technických služieb mesta Košíc do roku 1980 (Development of the technical services of the city of Košice to 1980), 4 December 1969, 935-15, Box 105, fond MNKK, Technické služby mesta Košíc, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

Figure 2. Timeline of the decision-making process leading to the construction of Luník IX contrasted with the development of the waste management system in Košice



the creation of extensive municipal forest parks 'in order to offset the negative impacts of the industrial city on the quality of life of its inhabitants'.[14] Considering that one-third of Košice's administrative area was already under a building ban because of excessive exhalates from the iron works, and another third because of the high noise levels from Košice's international airport, it was clear that some of the city's planned projects (the landfill, the Roma district, the forest parks) would spatially collide with each other. Figure 2 illustrates the timeline.

Under these circumstances, it was the local Roma who got the short end of the stick, as the Roma were not represented as an ethnic group by any Roma citizens in any municipal bodies. Because of the lack of suitable land, in 1973 Košice's municipal authority decided to place the proposed segregated Roma district in the very proximity of the newly created municipal landfill in Myslava. The main argument for locating the landfill in Myslava was its spatial 'invisibility', as it was supposed to be embedded in a chasm surrounded by a forest. The second argu-

[14] Návrh na prehlásenie ďalších hospodárskych lesov v okolí Košíc na účelové lesy II (A draft for the reclassification of further commercial forests for special purpose forests II), 30 October 1972, 355/76/72, Box 172, fond MNKK, Organizačný odbor 1975, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

ment concerned the prevailingly northern wind, which was supposed to prevent the odour from spreading in the direction of the city proper.[15] The archival documents reveal that the city's decision-makers were not willing to make any concessions on moving the landfill beyond the city borders, for two pragmatic reasons: (1) negotiations with reluctant country/county officials that take years would significantly postpone the urgently needed solution to waste management, and (2) placing the landfill too far from the city proper would result in higher transportation costs. No consideration whatsoever was given to how close the landfill would be to proposed dwellings for people – the future district Luník IX – or to the fact that on the site of the projected access road to the landfill there was already a small Roma camp, which, naturally, immediately had to be demolished.[16]

The main justification for placing the two urban projects next to each other was that the Myslava landfill was only expected to exist until the central municipal waste incineration plant was built, i.e. until 1978, when the construction of Luník IX was supposed to commence. After that the landfill was supposed to be recultivated; thus, inhabitants of Luník IX would not have been environmentally disadvantaged. However, the centrally planned calculations fell short of expectations. Not only was the construction of the waste incineration plant postponed until 1986, but because of an excessive increase in waste disposal, the lifespan of the landfill was already about to expire in 1979/1980.[17] Thus, the Košice municipal officials were placed in a tight spot again, as they had to make a decision about whether to relocate the landfill beyond the city's borders and to make a fair distribution of environmental burdens, or to prolong the lifespan of the Myslava landfill until the completion of the waste incineration plant, which meant that the inhabitants of Luník IX would inevitably be impacted by the negative environmental effects of living so close to the landfill. Contrary to the objections of urban planners and engineers and waste management experts, who called for the landfill to be closed, Košice municipal officials gave priority to increasing the landfill's size by an additional 90 000 m^2 to a total area of 12.5 ha, at the expense of the nearby forest and increasing the overall waste storage height to 15 metres.[18]

[15] Projektová úloha na areál novej skládky mestského odpadu Košíc (Project for the site of a new municipal landfill), January 1973, 236/72/d, Box 104, fond MNKK, Technické služby mesta Košíc, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[16] Projektová úloha na cestné mosty na obslužnej ceste k areálu novej skládky mestského odpadu Košíc (Project for a road bridge on a service road to the area of the new central municipal landfill for Košice), January 1973, 236/72/d, Box 104, fond MNKK, Technické služby mesta Košíc, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[17] Záznam z jednania vo veci riešenia skládky mestského odpadu (A report from proceedings on the issue of resolving the municipal landfill), 12 July 1977, 2352/77, Box 105, fond MNKK, Technické služby mesta Košíc, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[18] Informatívna správa o potrebe zabezpečenia ďalších skladovacích priestorov mestského odpadu pre mesto Košice (An informative report on the need to securing further municipal waste storing areas for the city of Košice), 24 October 1977, Box 105, fond MNKK, Technické služby mesta Košíc, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

At the same time, the municipal officials regarded the removal of 'asocial' Roma families from the inner city as being the most challenging environmental issue of the decade, one that had to then hindered reconstruction of the historical heritage in the city centre. The site of a concentrated Roma slum-style quarter within the city called 'Tábor', which in the process of the city's rapid urbanisation had come to be centrally located, was also to be bulldozed and turned into a park. The original intention to remove as many Roma from the inner city as possible was in the municipal agenda actually legitimated by two objectives: (1) social policy – to provide standard-class housing for the Roma like for any other citizen of Czechoslovakia, and (2) disciplinary policy – to re-educate the Roma in a specialised, concentrated, and segregated district:

'[Asocial Roma families] adjust to the living standards of socialist man with severe difficulty. They neglect hygiene, do not properly raise their children, are addicted to alcohol, tend to be parasites, dodge work obligations, and engage in anti-social activities. It is necessary to remove them from the valuable historical quarter and relocate them to other parts of the city, where it will be possible to influence in the concentration of them by means of re-education.'[19]

However, the original plan of the municipal officials could not be implemented as planned because the central government in Bratislava rejected the idea of creating an experimental district to be inhabited by Roma only, and insisted on the dispersion policy implemented in 1965. Consequently, a part of the municipal housing stock was offered to 'socialist elites', policemen and soldiers; they, however, refused the offer and preferred to live in other housing estates.[20] Thus, the claim featured in the popular narrative about Luník IX as being constructed as an originally elitist neighbourhood is yet another myth surrounding this housing estate.

After the city planning experts had calculated that adhering to the government dispersion policy would not solve the 'Roma issue' at the local level even by 1990, the municipal officials allocated all 204 of the municipal flats in Luník IX from the 502 flats constructed in total in Luník IX to Roma families. The remaining 298 cooperative flats were allocated to non-Roma families. A total of 1197 Roma inhabitants moved into the 204 municipal flats in Luník IX; they accounted for only 14% of all the Roma in Košice. The remainder continued to live dispersedly in the city proper.[21]

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[19] Kontrolná správa o realizácii opatrení na úseku riešenia otázok cigánskych obyvateľov v okrese Košice-mesto (An audit report on implementing measures in the area of solving issues connected to Gypsy inhabitants in the municipal district of Košice), 4 April 1982, 6279/82, Box 305, fond MNKK, Predsedove spisy, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[20] Výkazy o prideľovaní bytov (Housing stock assignment accounts), 29 January 1982, C149/81, Box 8, fond ESCNC – Zvláštne oddelenie 1971 – 1990, SAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[21] Súčasný stav plnenia úloh súvisiacich so spoločenskou a kultúrnou integráciou cigánskych obyvateľov v okrese Košice-mesto a úlohy i opatrenia na ich realizáciu pre roky 1981 – 1985 (Current state of the fulfilment of tasks connected to the societal and cultural

Although Roma occupied only a minority of the flats in Luník IX, because of their preference for living as extended and joint families and their higher fertility rates, they accounted for more than 50% of local inhabitants. Moreover, the forced displacement of the relocated Roma, which in many ways disrupted their natural socialisation, traditionally organised on the principle of related clannish kin, generated conflicts not only in terms of 'majority versus minority' but also among Roma clans differently positioned in the clan hierarchy [Jurová 2015: 46]. By 1982, following mass protests from both non-Roma families and acculturated (the expression used in documents) Roma families, it was agreed that the 15 most 'asocial' families would be moved out of the district. However, if an acculturated Roma family already living in the district requested a replacement flat in the city proper, the authorities rejected such requests.[22]

A 1982 report on the living standards in Luník IX acknowledged the failure to fairly distribute environmental risks: 'The location of the housing estate [Luník IX] is very unfortunate because located in its immediate proximity is the municipal landfill (dump), from which they [Roma designated as 'asocial'] are picking mixed garbage and taking it home. The hygiene here is extremely poor, hence the conditions are ripe for the spread of an epidemic.'[23]

The district's built-up area extended as far as just 500 metres to the south of the landfill and there was a smell of waste all over the district. The municipal officials 'calmed' the inhabitants of Luník IX by assuring them that the only solution to the problem would be to build a waste incineration plant.[24] However, the incineration plant did not open until 1988, a decade behind schedule. Despite constantly repeated promises on the part of city officials, the landfill was not abandoned and continued to operate until 1997.[25]

The issue of the gradual departure of non-Roma from the district in the 1980s and the early 1990s remains a sensitive one in local urban memory; there are therefore no official data. The records from the Municipal Housing Company

integration of Gypsy inhabitants in the municipal district of Košice, relevant arrangements and measures to be realised in 1981 – 1985), 27 March 1981, 57, fond MNKK, Rada MsNV 125, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[22] Záznam z mimoriadnej porady predsedov ObNV Košice I-V (A report from an emergency briefing of district deputies Košice I-V), 10 May 1982, Box 105, fond MNKK, Predsedove spisy, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[23] Stanovisko k riešeniu otázok cigánskych obyvateľov v okrese Košice-mesto (A report on the solution to issues connected to Gypsy inhabitants in the municipal district of Košice), 6 May 1982, Box 305, fond MNKK, Predsedove spisy, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

[24] 1981. 'Zápach zamoril ovzdušie, plač nad rozpočtovou dokumentáciou, netreba sa obávať, jediné východisko – výstavba spaľovne' (There's a stink in the air and tears over the budget, but no need to worry, the only solution is to build the incineration plant). *Večer*, 9 September 1981, vol. 13, no. 177, p. 2.

[25] The landfill was a significant environmental burden on its neighbourhood until its recultivation in 2010–2013, which was co-financed by EU Cohesion Funds [Uhrínová 2013].

were not made accessible to us because of the legislation in effect on personal data protection. According to the respondents, some non-Roma families managed to sell their flats before 1995 to other non-Roma families with lower income. By 1995, there were still 250 non-Roma families living in cooperative flats in the district.[26] However, in 1995, after the cooperative flats were transferred by the state to municipal ownership, the municipal officials adopted a policy that essentially copied the original intention from the 1960s to create a segregated Roma district – a ghetto. According to this policy, all nonpayers of rent and bills in the city proper – mostly Roma families – were moved to Luník IX in exchange for non-Roma families, who received the chance to move out and into vacated flats in the city proper (around 150 families) or to a newly built housing estate called Ťahanovce (100 families).[27] The gentrification of the inner city that occurred during the neoliberal economic transformation pushed the remaining Roma families out of the city and into to the periphery as well [Mesto Košice 2013: 10].

Luník IX and the environmental justice perspective

In the public discourse, burdened by communist ideology, the district was initially depicted as ideal housing 'in a picturesque environment offering the possibility to pick forest fruits in the summer and to go sledding in the winter'.[28] However, the reality was very different. The proximity to the Myslava landfill resulted in some of the Roma inhabitants 'picking' rubbish, contaminating the housing area with waste and annoying other cohabitants with the smell and noise. The place was exposed to the heavy traffic of trucks transporting waste. In 1995, the local press described Luník IX as 'Košice's dump', while explicitly and exclusively referring to the unpleasant situation of the 'whites' still left at the dump.[29]

The urban space at Luník IX had ghettoisation tendencies from the very beginning and the development after 1995 was the final stage of this process. The position of the Roma in Košice has historically been similar to the position of the Roma in many other places in Central and Eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia, and, later, Slovakia. A stigmatised minority, with weak social and economic capital,

[26] Personal interviews with inhabitants and former inhabitants of the Luník IX district, September 2019.

[27] Koncepcia bývania pre neplatičov, bezdomovcov a neprispôsobivých občanov (Housing plan for non-payers of tax, the homeless, and nonconforming citizens). Decree of Municipal Assembly no. 55, 5 April 1995. Mesto Košice (1995). https://www.kosice.sk/clanok.php?file=gov_koncepcia_sb.htm.

[28] 1981. 'Tisíce schodov radosť neskalili. Medzi prvými obyvateľmi Luníka IX' (A thousand steps did not cloud their joy: among the first inhabitants of Luník IX). *Večer*, 12 August 1981, vol. 13, no. 157, p. 3.

[29] 1995. 'Bieli zostanú zatiaľ na smetisku' (Whites will remain at the dump for the time being), *Večer*, 23 November 1995, vol. 27, no. 225, p. 1.

they were more the object than the subject of public policies. While representatives of the former state-socialist regime verbally declared the goal of full social integration of the Roma minority, in reality they faced resistance from local municipal officials and ordinary inhabitants. The paradox is that the liberal democracy after 1989 faced the very same challenge of the disconnect between official policies and local practice.

Contrary to the widespread myth about Luník IX being a 'forest suburb' destroyed by Roma, historical records further reveal that contemporary decision-makers before 1989 had no intention of investing in the environmental improvement of the district whatsoever. Unlike any of the other mass housing projects in the city (Nad Jazerom, Dargovských Hrdinov, KVP, Ťahanovce), where nearby forest areas were turned into forest parks with recreational facilities as soon as the estate was completed, this was not even planned in the case of Luník IX.[30] The serious environmental problems present at this location were at the roots of the ghettoisation process and once the space was created, they contributed to the 'beyond the pale' syndrome, wherein environmental injustice leads to further environmental degradation, not only by putting the people 'outside', but also by violating sound environmental practices, as the 'normal' or 'usual' rules of operation do not apply [Filčák 2012].

The landfill and its environmental impacts were strong factors with respect to why the Roma from Košice were gradually concentrated in this space. Evidence from historical records suggests that the explanatory narrative in the prevailing public perception and media presentation of Luník IX as the story of an urban green space destroyed by 'naïve' decision-makers and 'irresponsible' Roma is basically false. The process of ghettoisation here followed a logic centred on the landfill.

An analysis of the process reveals that the decision-makers were aware of the environmental burden connected with the locality from the very beginning. The idea of creating a mixed neighbourhood 'pushed' by the central government soon became illusory. The non-Roma inhabitants 'placed' there through the allocation of flats were from the very beginning not happy with the neighbourhood. Luník IX became a stigmatised place because of the presence of the landfill and the increasingly high concentration of Roma in the population. The district's spatial segregation from the city and its gradual ghettoisation impacted the market value of their flats.

Non-Roma were, in the terms of Janos Kornai's economy of shortages [1980, 1988], pulled there by the availability of apartments, but were trying from the very

[30] Súborné stanovisko a pokyny pre ukončenie územného projektu obytnej zóny Ťahanovce v Košiciach (A comprehensive standpoint and instructions for completion of the planning project for the Ťahanovce urban housing zone), 18 January 1983, Box 308, f. Národný výbor mesta Košice (National Committee of the city of Košice), Organizačný odbor, Primátorove spisy, MAK, Košice, Slovakia.

beginning to exchange the flats and move out. That, however, was not easy. As one of the respondents described it: 'Exchanging flats was a popular practice among the people in the 1980s, but when it came to negotiations it soon became popular to say I will exchange my flat for any other one except one in Luník IX.'[31] The Roma were forced to live there, as they were forcibly evicted from the dwellings they had occupied in the central parts of the city.[32] Unlike the non-Roma, for Roma there was never any attempt by the city to help them resettle elsewhere.

Although we do not possess relevant socioeconomic data on the last remaining non-Roma families who left the district in 1995, we may assume that these were people who were unable to exchange their flat before that or did not have suitable accommodation elsewhere. Eventually, the municipality invested in the construction of new communal flats in the district Ťahanovce, where the remaining Luník IX non-Roma families moved. The others received municipal flats in other parts of the city. As one former city hall employee recalled: 'The flats at Luník IX were practically impossible to exchange or sell and these people were looking at us like saviours when we moved them out.'[33] There was very little construction of new flats in this period.[34] The preferential treatment given to non-Roma in Luník IX can be seen as as result of a combination of public (non-Roma) pressure[35] and the social capital of those involved, and in this connection we can cite what Alena Ledeneva [1998] calls 'economies of favour' or the ubiquitous use of personal relations to obtain scarce goods and services. Košice ultimately accomplished segregation. Two years after those non-Roma families left, in 1997, the city closed the landfill and commenced reclamation work. This helped to improve environmental conditions, but structural barriers to the Roma's social integration remain.

Conclusion

The process that turned Luník IX into a ghetto includes a cross-section of factors relating to housing policy, the decision-making process, and, lastly, geography. Why this happened there and not somewhere else is no accident. The nature

[31] Personal interview, June 2018.
[32] These evictions were propelled by ethnic discrimination and especially after 1989 by commercial interests.
[33] Personal interview, July 2018.
[34] While in the 1980s average the number of new apartments constructed amounted to 20 690 units per year, in 1995 the figure was just 6230 [Slovak Statistical Bureau, 2019]. The construction of social and rental housing almost ceased entirely in the 1990s [Gajdoš and Moravanská 2016].
[35] 1995. 'Dosť bolo sľubov: mesto kontra smutne preslávený Luník IX' (Enough with the promises: city hall contra the sadly famous Luník IX), *Večer*, 16 August 1995, vol. 27, no. 158, p. 1.

of the space, with clear geographical boundaries and the presence of a landfill, played a significant role. The environmental issues connected with the proximity of the landfill was at the root of the ghetto's development. Once the space became inhabited predominantly by Roma, it became a place (in the eyes of the majority, and/or decision-makers) unsuitable for the kind of investments seen in other parts of the city. As the results of the qualitative survey indicate, the area inhabited by the Roma in Luník IX started to be viewed by the majority as 'lost ground' or territory beyond the pale.

The city archives provide evidence that from the beginning of its construction the district was stigmatised by the close presence of the landfill and the heavy traffic to and from the landfill, and that the public authorities were clearly aware of the problem. Luník IX is today a phenomenon that could provide important data, information, and inputs for environmental justice research. The empirical evidence from this case contributes to current theoretical and empirical knowledge in the field of environmental justice, while it provides additional arguments for the study of the economic and policy landscape of decision-making at the local level. Qualitative research combined with an analysis of historical records helps to reveal how public discourse differs from historical facts and how ethnic and/or social prejudices may shape explanatory frameworks.

The location of the ethnic Roma minority and the evolution of the space that the Roma minority live in this district and the way the space has evolved are not simply the result of an individual decision or the individual economic options that make it (or do not make it) possible to choose a place in which to live. They are also the result of the opposite movement. There is a great deal of vested interest in putting environmentally problematic projects in poor neighbourhoods or, conversely, as indicated in the case of Luník IX, in moving poor and/or ethnically stigmatised people into an area where such a project is already located.

Research on the roots and processes of ghettoisation combined with an environmental justice perspective may provide important arguments for public policy and practice. The Roma community in Luník IX is quite disparate and very heterogeneous, consisting of people who were originally offered accommodation here and people who were evicted later on from different parts of the city. A qualitative survey indicates that there is an increasing trend towards collective action and that people living in the area are starting to organise. There are Roma political parties active here and Roma mayors elected in direct elections. Although the self-organisation and self-governance is to a great extent the outcome of the segregation, it indicates the population's increasing awareness. Using the environmental justice perspective, with its focus on distributive and procedural justice, may provide important arguments for shifting the public discourse away from comfortable myths about green urban space to evidence-based discussion and decisions.

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Transitions in Old Age: The Meanings of Body from the Perspective of Older Adults with Acquired Impairment*

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Abstract: This paper summarises the knowledge about transition from the third age to what is called the fourth age. The study understands ageing as an embodied process and explores the meanings that are attached to the body in the narratives of older persons who have acquired impairment in later life and are receiving care. Because the onset of impairment and infirmity marks a point of transition, the study considers the bodily aspects of the ageing process as key elements, despite this being highly problematic in current social gerontology. The authors call for a complex approach to understanding the meanings of the body in the transitions into old age and drawing on their own study based on three repeated interviews with ten older adults conducted over the course of one year (8 women, mean age = 83.8 years), they explore the meanings that are attached to the body in the context of receiving care. Their analysis of the personal accounts and narratives of everyday activities from the participants in their study revealed that embodiment in action is the main topic through which participants experienced their everydayness. The meanings of embodiment in action are shaped and reconstructed on three dimensions that capture important processes of embodiment in action: the sensing of the body (the Body as an Organiser of Activities), anticipation of the body (the Body as an Uncertain Companion), and the managing of the body (the Body as Work to Be Done). The findings offer insights into the processes of transitions in old age, in which the emotional, social, and behavioural aspects of embodiment in action, rather than age, play the key role. The study further highlights that the meanings of the body are complex, highly relevant, and should not be overlooked within the organisational practice of social and health care.

Keywords: fourth age, body, transitions, acquired impairment, repeated interviews, meaning of the body

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Introduction

A focus on longevity has become an integral part of professional and public debates, especially in Western societies. These debates have resulted in a polarised understanding of old age, dividing it into an independent active phase and a dependent passive phase. While the former is characterised by ideas of agelessness and increasingly new possibilities, the latter calls to mind biological decline, solitude, and ultimately death [Featherstone and Hepworth 1989; Neugarten 1974; Stuart-Hamilton 2006]. All these divisions, including the developmental concepts of 'later adulthood' and 'elderhood' [Newman and Newman 2015], use age as their defining criterion. However, the meaning of age has changed in the contemporary context and, as a result, the current models with which we make sense of the life course are shifting away from age- and stage-based concepts. Contemporary readings suggest that transitions in old age may be organised along completely different lines of experience than age [Gubrium and Holstein 2003; Grenier 2015]. Impaired bodily functions and chronic illness, for example, are good examples of a transition that destabilises age- and stage-based notions at the foundation of social gerontology. According to Grenier [2015], it is the uncertainty, timing, and severity of chronic illness that challenges fixed notions of age and chronometric time. The illness and resulting impairment may be more cyclical and temporary in nature, may occur earlier than expected (e.g. due to lifelong hard manual labour), may involve moments of recovery and re-occurrence, and may create a disconnect between older people's experiences and social and cultural constructs of health and illness in later life [e.g. Laslett 1991]. Consequently, the transitions in old age are more dynamic and fluid than the fixed stages of development situated across a linear life course. The body seems to be the central entity through which people experience these transitions.

The most extensive theoretical work on forms of old age has been done by developmental psychologists Baltes and Smith [2003] and cultural gerontologists Higgs and Gilleard [2015, 2016]. Both pairs of scholars have continued to build on the concepts of the third and fourth ages that were first developed by Laslett [1991]. According to Baltes and Smith [2003], the fourth age is a stage of the life cycle that combines at least two characteristics: a chronological age of 75+ and the disintegration of self-management skills due to age-related physical limitations. This state is accompanied by reduced potential for improving functions and sometimes even by psychological mortality, i.e. various degrees of loss of identity, autonomy, and self-control. The former characteristic is emphasised and therefore the concept of the fourth age is reduced almost entirely to its age-based definition. Gilleard and Higgs [2011, 2013] understand the fourth age as a social imaginary or a social representation of a specific but not inevitable form of old age that is defined in terms of a loss of independence resulting from impairment, which is then replaced by institutional care. As reported by these authors, there are four elements that underpin much of the social imaginary of the fourth age: frailty, abjection, the loss of agency, and conditions of care [Higgs and Gilleard 2016]. They also understand it as a cultural location stripped of the social and

cultural capital that used to allow for the articulation of choice, autonomy, self-expression, and pleasure in later life [Gilleard and Higgs 2010]. To sum up, the constructs of the fourth age are defined around the ideas of advanced age, the impairment of bodily functions, and the conditions of care. The concept of the fourth age is defined on different levels and takes place at the intersections of the body and ageing.

The distinction between the third age and the fourth age can be presumed to be qualitative in nature. The ideas that inform the transitions between these two forms of old age are moreover accompanied by deeply ingrained ideas of success and failure [Grenier 2012, 2015]. Bodily impairment in later life is one of the factors (others include, e.g., poverty, a different approach to activities) that often prevent people from fulfilling the socially desirable 'ideal' of an active third age. Consequently, representations of the fourth age often remain unrecognised and invisible. This study relies on the accounts of older adults with acquired impairment in later life and seeks to understand the meanings of the body during transition processes in later life. The context of the body is not understood a priori through a perspective of limitations on the side of the older adults, but rather relationally as the constellation of different possibilities on the side of researcher and research participant [Sedláková and Souralová 2017].

The objective of the study is to explore how individuals whose lives are affected by an acquired impairment and by the need for care see and understand their own body. Drawing on personal accounts and narratives of the everyday activities and routines of such individuals, the article has two main aims: First, to describe the meanings that the participants with acquired impairment in later life ascribe to their bodies. Second, to analyse the ways in which they emotionally, socially, and behaviourally relate to these meanings of the body. As the construction of the fourth age cannot be fully understood without considering the care context [Higgs and Gilleard 2016; Petrová Kafková and Sedláková 2017], we put the emphasis on the narration of activities in which the participants receive care from others.

To fulfil these aims, the article is divided into theoretical sections, where we introduce the philosophical and conceptual backgrounds and present the findings from current studies that have sensitised the process of our exploration [Charmaz 2014; Strauss and Corbin 1990]. In the later methodological part, we introduce the approach we used to create and analyse data. Later, we present the main findings that are presented through the narrative of the working model. Finally, in the discussion part, we present the most important findings, emphasise their reconnections with previous knowledge, and pose some questions that could direct future research in this field. The findings of this study represent an empirical contribution to the discussion among scholars in social gerontology and ageing studies about the role of embodiment in old age, specifically during the transitions in old age. They also provide insight into the development of useful interventions that could promote more respectful and mindful approaches within the context of long-term care.

The complexity of the body as the central entity of experience in advanced age

There is no doubt that ageing is an embodied process. However, the importance of recognising the centrality of the body in the ageing process was not understood in its complexity until recently [Shilling 2007]. As feminist scholars [e.g. Twigg 2004] have pointed out, bodies have until recently been studied mostly from the perspective of the natural sciences and comprehended through biomedical discourse, solely as passive victims of decline and a burden to others. The main reason for such a one-sided biological understanding of the body was the ontological dualism between the body and the mind that has formed the epistemological basis of knowledge in western societies [Shilling 2007; Twigg 2004; Twigg and Martin 2015]. The predominance of Cartesian distinctions is still deeply rooted in both gerontological conceptual thinking and empirical practice. One such example is the research topic of aged identities, which focuses on the discrepancies and tensions between the external appearance of the body and an internal (youthful) identity. According to the Mask of Ageing Thesis [Biggs 1997; Featherstone and Hepworth 1991], even older people who are experiencing age-related illnesses say that they *don't feel old* and they perceive their visibly old bodies as a mask concealing an ageless and thus more valuable self [e.g. Heikkinen 2004; Jolanki 2009]. The status of bodily ageing in these approaches is pivotal, but it refers mostly to the negotiations of third-age identities, dealing with the perception of the appearance of the aged body and contrasting it with the youthful self of the ageing subject. Indeed, the body must eventually show its age, a harbinger of what Gilleard and Higgs [2010] call the fourth age, the age of extreme age and disability.

In social gerontological research, the ageing body has recently been addressed more complexly [Gubrium Holstein 2003; Öberg 1996, 2003; Twigg 2004, 2006]. A large body of literature has focused on body image in a consumer-based culture [Clarke and Korotchenko 2011] and sometimes on the bodies of people with dementia [Phinney and Chesla 2003]. Twigg [2006] emphasises that various other aspects of the body and embodiment are still neglected. Despite increased longevity, marginalised and 'problematic' bodies remain in a peripheral position. One of the reasons may be that the attempt to emphasise the body in this context can (to many) seem like a retrogressive step – one that takes us back onto the territory of biological determinism and the narrative of decline, depicting older people's bodies as simply frail and dependent. However, the aim of this study is to overcome this determinism and to deal with the meanings of the body in its complexity. As stated in our previous work, we seek to avoid the objectifying attitudes towards aged bodies, which approach old age from the perspective of an outsider or solely from proxy accounts of formal or informal caregivers [Sedláková and Souralová 2017]. Like Grenier, Lloyd and Phillipson [2017], the authors of this study understand the fourth age as a state that is based on relational autonomy and that requires the recognition of shared vulnerability and responsibility for care.

The study further uses the concept of 'embodiment', which is understood

to mean the experience, the gathering thoughts and feelings, and behaviours grounded in the bodily interaction with the environment. Embodiment further captures the complex and dynamic nature of the body, acknowledging its material specificities, but also its social, emotional, and behavioural aspects. In contrast to Cartesian dualism, the embodiment approach understands the body and mind as fused so that they form a single entity [Meier et al. 2012]. Sandberg writes in an article [2013] that the material body should be regarded as possessing the force and agency to shape subjectivity and sociality, and not just as a malleable raw material that is shaped by sociocultural discursive regimes. She follows Grosz's non-binary approach to embodiment and argues for an 'affirmative old age' that is based on an integrated body and mind relationship and underlines the facticity of the ageing body. Grosz [1994] conceptualises the body as an 'open materiality' that is neither a culturally inscribed product of the social world nor simply a part of biology or nature. Instead, the body as an open materiality exists as a borderline between the binary poles of the natural and cultural dichotomy.

The meanings of the body during the transition into old age

Although social gerontology has been criticised in the past for failing to acknowledge bodily ageing and for neglecting the body experience of ageing subjects, there are some studies that deal on the whole [e.g. Grenier 2008; Nicholson et al. 2012, 2013; Phinney and Chesla 2003; Sandberg 2013; Witaker 2010] or in part [e.g. José 2016; Heikkinen 2000, 2004; Lloyd et al. 2016; Pirhonen et al. 2015] with the meanings of the body and the embodiment of older adults with impairment. Most of these studies have gone beyond examining how bodies are perceived and managed in everyday life and focus on how the ageing process is embodied and how age is accomplished. These works further examine how older adults experience bodily changes related to impairment, chronic illness, or frailty, pointing out the meanings and experiences and some strategies for older adults to incorporate bodily changes into their everyday lives.

Some of these studies examine the day-to-day experiences of participants whose lives are affected by receiving care. They focus on the topics of dignity [José 2016; Lloyd et al. 2016] and autonomy in later life [Pirhonen et al. 2015]. An ethnographic study by José [2016] detected five modes of maintaining dignity that older adults use in the context of social care – such as sheltering in personal space, disconnecting from life, or keeping going. The behavioural pattern of 'keeping going' refers to continuous activities relating to the care of one's body and continuing to engage in previous activities with assistance from others or from assistive devices. The keeping going pattern also includes undertaking new activities with the aim of optimising the performance of the body in other activities (e.g. regular exercise in the morning). This pattern is therefore a reactive response to losses, but in some cases it is a proactive method of preventing additional losses and impairments.

The study by Lloyd et al. [2014] examined the experience of 34 participants, aged 75 and over, whose health problems meant they required varying degrees of support and care. All participants typically described their loss of physical strength and energy as a 'slowing down process'. In addition, there was a preference for activities associated with deeply ingrained habits, which differed from cognitive thought that may have been lost due to illness, incapacity, or exhaustion. This preference was referred to by Lloyd et al. as the experience of the 'habitual body'. According to an analysis of interviews with 45 people aged 90–91 in a communal residence for senior citizens in Finland [Pirhonen et al. 2015], autonomy was a negotiable characteristic. The negotiation of personal autonomy was mentioned by older people struggling somewhere between the third and fourth ages [e.g. Lloyd et al. 2014]. According to Pirhonen et al. [2015], the autonomy of the participants in their study was subtly connected with adaptation, since participants recognised the possible future loss of agency and frequently used phrases such as 'as long as' and 'so far'.

There are a number of studies that focus on the body as the subject of their analyses [Rudman 2015; Sandberg 2013; Townsend, Godfrey and Denby 2006]. Rudman's findings [2015] on how people talk about ageing bodies as part of preparing for and moving into retirement demonstrated the centrality of the body to participants' understanding of 'oldness'. Thirty Canadians between the ages of 45 and 83 regarded, within their narratives, persons with 'old bodies' as irresponsible and further emphasised the ways in which they themselves had proactively taken up physical activities both to avoid 'oldness' and to ensure health and other youthful qualities. 'Old bodies' were also discussed in the context of neoliberal rationality as being immobile, in need of assistive devices, and as suffering, unattractive, and out of control. The reference to the 'oldness' of the body partially corresponds to the behavioural pattern of 'keeping going' found in the accounts of participants in the above-mentioned study by José [2016]. The results of both these studies indicate that those elderly people whose lives are affected by acquired impairment are often viewed by others as people who have not made a sufficient effort or have not carried out activities to maintain healthy and functioning bodies. This is true even of some people who claim that they themselves experience at least some limitations connected to an impairment. Similarly, in a study by Townsend, Godfrey and Denby [2006], older adults classified their age-peers as 'heroes' if they managed to keep going regardless of ageing, 'villains' if they had given up, and 'victims' if they had lost control of their lives due to health problems.

There are a few studies that deal with body-related topics in old age that have some characteristics of the fourth age – such as cognitive loss, frailty, and reflections on one's own mortality [Nicholson et al. 2012, 2013; Grenier 2008; Phinney and Chesla 2003; Whitaker 2010]. As noted above, the concept of frailty is usually used by health-care and social-care professionals to encompass both mental and physical infirmity and it implies both material and moral vulnerabil-

ity [Higgs and Gilleard 2016]. Grenier [2008] explored the distinctions between the professional construct of frailty and the lived experiences of older women as described within older women's narratives. She emphasised the clash between the imposition of a medical and functional classification (being frail) and the emotions related to impairment, traumatic events and maintaining a continuous identity (feeling frail). Grenier also highlighted the emotional aspects of what professionals know as frailty and described the emotions involved in adjusting to uncertainty and loss and some people's thoughts of injury and death (e.g. fear, sadness, anger, rejection and many others). For participants of this study, 'feeling frail' was a negotiated state that served as a protective mechanism for 'becoming frail'.

Similarly, two studies by Nicholson et al. [2012, 2013] present findings on the experience of frail people aged 85+ living at home in the UK. These experiences were gathered through repeated in-depth interviews and informed observation over the course of 17 months. The findings suggest that frailty is understood in terms of 'potential capacity'. The participants perceive their state as a combination of loss and creativity, as a state of imbalance in which they experience accumulated losses, whilst working to sustain and perhaps create new connections. One way they do this is to recognise the value of 'daily rituals' that facilitate creative connections to capacities whilst feeling frail [Nicholson et al. 2013]. In an earlier study, Nicholson et al. [2012] focus on the dying trajectories of frail older people and argue that this experience can be conceptualised as persistent liminality: a state of imbalance 'betwixt and between' active living and clinically recognised dying. To manage these ambiguities of persistent liminal space, the participants in the study constructed their own 'personal habitual routines' or 'personal scripts'. Like Lloyd et al. [2014] and Pirhonen et al. [2015], Nicholson et al. [2012] agree that the large and diverse group of older people who have an acquired impairment live in constant uncertainty, where there is often no resolution or completed transition from one state to another [cf. Grenier 2015: 2]. The researchers further conclude that the participants may find themselves living in a marginal and persistently fluid state between the third and fourth ages, with little recognition or support [Lloyd et al. 2014; Nicholson et al. 2012; Pirhonen et al. 2015].

The ethnographic fieldwork that Whitaker [2010] carried out in the ward of a nursing home explored the ways in which residents talk about and regard their own ageing and their bodies. That study emphasised the body as the central entity through which residents experience daily living and reveals five distinctive themes regarding the way in which they discuss their bodies: 'the incapable body', which is connected to emotions such as sorrow, grief, distress, shame, embarrassment, humiliation, indignity, or frustration; 'the body as an arena of care work', which deals with bodily needs and bodily dependence; 'bodily change and alienation',which describes constantly changing bodies; 'the inevitable death of the body and body stories/body wanderings', which is where the body becomes a tool for communication and medium of social and personal connections.

In our study, we would like to develop some of Whitaker's themes and provide a better understanding of the meanings of the body for older people receiving care.

According to Grenier [2012], in an environment where success is often measured by the skills and achievements of a 'trouble-free' body, the impaired body may become an important marker of failure in later life and a marker whose role must be understood in relation to transitions. However, to understand the complexity of the body in the transitional processes of old age, it is essential to break free from the simplified dichotomy of success and failure, nature and culture, or the dichotomy of the third and fourth ages. Presumably, the body in the process of ageing is not necessarily going into a 'rapid slump of decay', which would necessarily, irreversibly, irrevocably, and quickly lead to a black darkness of conditions without any sign of agency [Gilleard and Higgs 2010]. The body is rather a constantly changing system that is reconnected with the emotional, social, and behavioural aspects of the embodiment experience of an older adult with an acquired impairment. It is precisely this instability, ambiguity, and transformation that is typical of the transition process in old age, which some social gerontologists call a 'grey in-between area' [Nicholson et al. 2012; Lloyd et al. 2014; Pirhonen et al. 2015].

The literature on the body within the context of receiving care has largely pointed to ways in which participants preserve their autonomy and dignity [José 2016; Lloyd et al. 2016; Pirhonen et al. 2015] or the ways in which participants experience their bodies in relation to the context of care that is provided mostly by health and social workers [Nicholson et al. 2012, 2013; Grenier 2008; Phinney and Chesla 2003; Whitaker 2010]. Most of these studies remain on the descriptive level and many of them neglect the possible analytical connections of the complex meanings of the body within the subjective experience of everydayness during transitions in old age. This study follows the complex approach to understanding the meanings of the body during transitions in old age and aims to further explore the embodied ageing process. Drawing on research that consisted of three repeated interviews conducted over the course of one year with ten older adults with acquired impairment, the findings are presented in the narration of a working model that depicts embodiment in the action of experiencing change.

Materials and methods

Research project and data collection

This article draws on the qualitative part of a research project titled the 'Fourth Age: The Identity of Disability during the Period of Active Ageing'. The overall aim of this was to describe and explore what is called the fourth age. Study data were collected between June 2015 and August 2016. Our research process consisted of four steps that included conducting individual interviews with both participants and their caregivers and the collection of data using supplementary

Table 1. Description of the research process

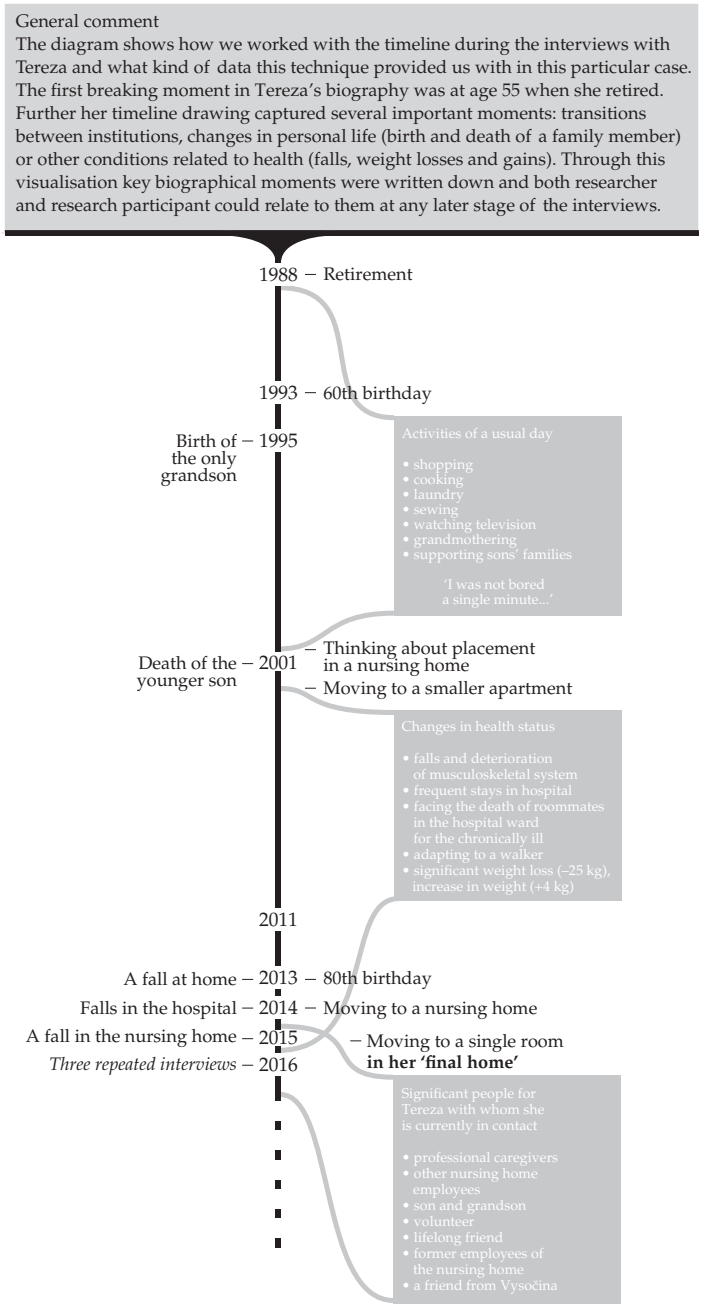
	Timing	Number of participants
Informed consent, 1st interview with participants	June 2015–Aug. 2016	10
Shared research diary	1–3 chosen days	6
2nd interview	after 1–3 months	9
Shared research diary	1–3 chosen days	6
3rd interview	after 1–3 months	8
Interview with caregivers	after 3rd interview	9
Data analysis	Aug. 2016–Dec.2017	10

methods that helped us to build the research relationship and elicit the participants' narrations.

The first interview collected information on the narrative history of each participant's life to date and served to establish a research relationship. Where possible, we used the 'timeline technique', which served as a temporal structure in graphical form against which participants could summon and plot their recollections of everyday events and experiences [Adriansen 2012; Guenette and Marshall 2009; Sheridan, Chamberlain and Dupuis 2011]. When employing this technique, we started with the opening question: 'Having reached the age that you are, please would you tell me the story of your life, including all the recent events and experiences that are important to you personally?' This initial invitation was aimed at giving both the researcher and the participant the opportunity to look at the respondent's life from a life-course perspective and thus focus on the transitions in old age. Afterwards, we introduced the timeline, drawn according to participants at various times of the first interview, depending on the narrative flow of the participant's story and on the possibilities given by his/her impairment. The invitation was accompanied by these words: 'Using these blank pages, you, or we together, can draw a timeline of your life that expresses your life from the age of 60 to the present day and into the future.' Participants were asked to indicate a point on the timeline that represents the present time. Then we asked them to try to remember life events that they considered important and to place them somewhere on the timeline (Figure 1).

The following two interviews had a semi-structured form [Rubin and Rubin 2005] and focused on: daily activities; the care received during these activities and the participants' negotiation of their own involvement; the meanings attached to important material artefacts and assistive devices; the experience of bodily and health problems, etc. The interviews were supplemented with information provided by a shared research diary. The diary contained the 'Yester-

Figure 1. An example of the timeline technique – a diagram of Tereza's timeline



day Interview' that was used in the Berlin Ageing Study by Horgas, Wilms and Baltes [1998] and the above-mentioned timeline technique. The diary was shared between the research participant and the researcher and remained in the household of the participant for the duration of the research project, and the participant was able to add notes and ideas to it and prepare for future interviews. During the research process, the bodies of our participants were a constantly present part of the interview, not only as its topic but also as a part of a lived experience through body language [Sedláková and Souralová 2017]. The primary objective of the repeated interviews was not depiction in time, the time gap between the interviews was too short for this (and a three-year research project does not allow for a sufficiently longitudinal framework). The reason for the repeated meetings was to gain a deeper insight into and understanding of the fourth age experience and to establish a more intimate relationship with the participants and also to accommodate the fact that they could grow tired somewhat quickly and this meant the interview could not last for hours.

Only some participants took advantage of the timeline technique and the shared research diary, while others decided to focus solely on the spoken dialogue during the research interviews. We also conducted interviews with the primary caregivers of each participant. After consent was obtained at the beginning of our cooperation, all three interviews were audio-recorded for later transcription and coding. We used examples of the interview transcripts and field notes to illustrate the results of the analysis. A total of three researchers cooperated closely on the data collection. All the names and personal details of participants were changed to ensure the participants' anonymity.

Participants

The study is based on three repeated interviews with ten older adults, male and female, that were conducted over the course of one year and on their shared research diaries. All the participants came from the Czech Republic and, except for one 67-year-old, were over the age of 70 (see Table 2). The average age of the final sample was 84 years. Although we deliberately refrained from assessing research participants with any tests or scales measuring cognitive impairment, frailty, self-maintenance abilities, or the instrumental activities of daily living, we can conclude that they all suffered from an acquired impairment that was permanent, irreversible, and dynamic and that significantly affected mostly their mobility functions. Most of the participants were immobile as a result of arthritis, osteoporosis, a previous fall or fracture, or general frailty. These chronic and persistent conditions were in some cases combined with other illnesses. In discussion with their formal or informal caregivers, the participants were identified as cognitively healthy people of advancing age who are – owing to involutional changes and impairment – unable to perform everyday activities independently (e.g. bathing, showering, transportation, managing their medication). Because of their impair-

Table 2. Characteristics of participants and description of the context of care (N = 10)

	N
Women	8
Men	2
Average age	84
Aged 65–70	2
Aged 71–85	3
Aged 86 +	5
Married	2
Widowed	8
Living in a nursing home	7
At home with a care professional	2
At home with an informal care-provider	1
Total number of participants	10
Total number of interviews with caregivers	9
Number of completed interviews with participants	27

ment, all the participants receive personal disability payments to support their daily living and mobility needs. One potential participant passed away before we could conduct the first interview and one participant died before we were able to complete the third interview. In these cases, we also did not conduct planned interviews with the participants' caregivers. The state of one participant was so unstable that we were not able to complete either the second or third interview.

Data analysis

In analysing the research questions, we focused mainly on the transcripts of the individual interviews with research participants that served as a primary data source (see Table 2). However, we also took into consideration the materials from the shared research diary and field notes [Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995]. All the materials were analysed using Atlas.ti software. The data analysis was performed in several steps and was influenced by the constructivist approach to grounded theory [Charmaz 2014] and some ethnographical principles [Charmaz 2014: 35; Esterberg 2002]. This approach allowed us to seek detailed knowledge of the multiple dimensions of life in transition from the third to the fourth age and to pay attention to the specific setting in which care is received.

The process of data analysis involved a three-step coding procedure [Charmaz 2014]. We began with line-by-line open coding, as it helped us to identify the main categories that seemed to capture the most salient meanings of the body in the participants' narrations. In this step, we followed the initial coding and investigated the links and connections that could be built between the categories. The resulting codes were provisional, comparative, and grounded in the data. Some of them were reworked later in the process of focused coding. In general, we used the codes that were the most significant and frequently recurring. Many of them already indicated possible answers to our research questions. The last step was axial coding, which helped us to relate categories and subcategories, rework the dimensions of the categories, and make the working model coherent. In this phase, an analytical framework started to emerge from the data [Charmaz 2014].

Later, during the process of theoretical coding, we specified the relations between the categories developed in the step of focused coding and existing theoretical concepts. Some theoretical concepts served as sensitising concepts for our analysis and inspired the resulting working model. The sensitising concepts were understood as general concepts, ideas, or perspectives that directed our attention to certain phenomena or aspects of the phenomena and allowed us to differentiate more sensitively between different categories and subcategories [Strauss and Corbin 1990]. They represented effective tools with which to stimulate the whole analytical process [Bowen 2006; Charmaz 2014]. During these processes, we used memo-writing, which assisted us in capturing the thoughts, comparisons, and connections we made during the analysis. The memo notes also further crystallised the research questions. The findings of the analysis are structured according to the main analytical category and are related to the research questions dealing with the understanding of the body in transition from the third to the fourth age. No ethical approval was required to carry out the study in the Czech Republic.

Findings

The meanings that the participants ascribed to the body are captured and further described in the central category 'Embodiment in Action', which reconnects all the findings. Constantly changing embodiment is one of the key topics through which participants narrated their everydayness.

Embodiment in Action

The constantly changing meanings of the body are understood by the participants not solely as a predictable biological decline or a sharp decrease of functions pointing to the complete disappearance of agency both in relation to self and the surrounding world [Gilleard and Higgs 2010]. In the participants' narra-

Table 3. An overview of the findings

Dimensions of Embodiment in Action	Emotional aspects	Social aspects	Behavioural aspects
The Body as the Organiser of Activities	Tension, Uneasiness, pride	The importance of relational autonomy	Approaching the body with sensitivity Distancing from the disciplined body Identifying with the body of older 'role models'
The Body as an Uncertain Companion	Fear, aggravation, helplessness	The importance of temporal social fatigue	Active disengagement Separating the parts of the body that bear uncertainties Management of fatigue Organising habits into a routine
The Body as Work to be Done	Sadness, frustration, calm, ease	The importance of care received from others	Adapting to assistive devices Overcoming limits through activity Embodied imagination and Remembering

tives, the body meanings are rather described as dynamic and constantly changing in many possible ways, while emphasising both the ups and downs that are understood in the short-term context.

The analysis revealed that the participants reconsidered the possibilities and limitations of the body during most of the everyday actions they described. For them bodily movements were represented by both physical and mental activities that require both physical and mental energy. In the case of walking, for example, they continuously evaluated optimal and safe motor performance. In the following example, 99-year-old Jaroslava describes her daily morning experience of walking to the kitchen, taking and counting the steps to get there as a time-consuming activity:

> Can you imagine how much time it takes me to get up at 7 am and get to the kitchen? In my situation, it takes me at least an hour. First, I need to get to the bathroom, then I need to come back to the bedroom and get dressed. This is a demanding job for me. Moreover, this whole task includes steps! And I need to think about how to take them safely. (Jaroslava)

Constant negotiations have to be made in advanced between mental actions and physical actions in order to develop and sustain connections to the physical en-

vironment, personal routines, and social networks. These negotiations are one of those processes that keep embodiment in constant action.

The central category, 'Embodiment in Action', therefore also captures the changes to embodiment that are described in participants' narratives as an experienced presence that is often compared with the past embodied experience, the anticipated future, or an optimal current state. The meanings of this category are shaped and reconstructed on at least three dimensions that capture processes such as: (1) the sensing of the body (the Body as the Organiser of Activities); (2) anticipation of the body (the Body as an Uncertain Companion); and (3) the managing of the body (the Body as Work to Be Done) (Table 3). The dimensions of the central category affirm that the body and mind in the narratives of participants do not represent detached components but instead form an interconnected, linked, and inseparable entity. Within these dimensions, participants have a varying degree of agency which, due to the circumstances of the physical and social environment and the conditions of social and health care, affects the resulting meanings of the body for the actual participant in a specific moment of his or her life.

The Body as the Organiser of Activities

The meanings of embodiment in action that were recorded in reference to the dimension of sensing are established on the basis of comparisons between past embodied experience and the current perception of embodiment in action. In the narratives, participants describe how they relate to their body in a sensitive and responsive way, which often contrasts with how they describe their previous attitudes. They claim previously to have paid less or no extra attention to the body, while today they are almost constantly aware that their everydayness is organised by their body together with their mind. This shift could be understood as a shift towards the framework of 'harmonious ageing', which is based on an integrated body and mind relationship [Liang and Luo 2012; Sandberg 2013]. Viewed in this way, the meanings of the 'Body as an Organiser of Activities' is accompanied by a description of a whole range of emotional experiences, such as tension, uneasiness, and pain, as well as pride [e.g. Grenier 2008].

In the narratives, the body is not understood merely as a constraint on wishes. As noted by 83-year-old Beata, whose body is rather fragile and whose ability to move around at home is limited, the body somehow calls for or determines every activity and inactivity during her day. Before the second interview, she wrote in the shared research diary that her body, mind, and memory are in constant interplay: 'Life at an advanced age is fine. My mind and memory have adapted to the possibilities of my body. I am lucky – I have a wonderful family.'

Despite the descriptions of the body as the organiser of everyday activities, social relationships also seem to strongly inform the sensation of the body's

meanings. One reason why these social bonds are emphasised may be that the participants' lives are saliently affected by the context of care received from others, so they recognise and appreciate the importance of relational autonomy [Petrová Kafková and Sedláková 2017]. Some of these relationships are formed in everyday interactions with family and caregivers, while other ties are carried over from important experiences and memories. The perception of the 'Body as the Organiser of Activities' happens to a large extent within the power of significant others and within the possibilities of the relational autonomy.

Other important behavioural aspects attached to the meanings of the body that we recorded on the dimension of sensing included the process of participants distancing themselves from the bodies of their nursing home's clients, which are described as disciplined, and identifying with the representations of the bodies of older 'role models'. In this sense, Sofia, for whom the body represents the organiser of her daily activities, emphasises in her narrative that she maintains a distance from those older adults who allow their various activities to be totally ruled by the nursing home's employees [e.g. Townsend, Godfrey and Denby 2006]. On the contrary, she talks about the importance of reconnections with the body.

> Each one of us just has to adapt to herself and her own possibilities. But in those 'Altersheim' places, where they organise activities for all the clients at the same time, it's fine, but… it's not the real thing. It's not what my and their bodies call for. I exercise for ten minutes every day and I would know it immediately if I forgot about those ten minutes one day. I'm that sensitive to my back and legs. (Sofia)

Jaroslava, on the other hand, questions the representations of centenarians whose bodies do not show any signs of weakness:

> Well, that's how I live now. I don't believe it when they show those 100-year-old people on television just going out walking, so fresh and fit. No, that can't be true. Every one of us has something to be concerned about. Sometimes it just hurts here or there all the time. (Jaroslava)

Unlike these cases, participants identify with some of the representations of older role models' bodies, such as Queen Elizabeth II or the Pope. They seem to class them as their age peers and idols because they have managed to keep going regardless of their perceived physical limitations [José 2016; Townsend, Godfrey and Denby 2006]. By emphasising the similarities, they are partially normalising the meanings of the body as the organiser of everyday activities, as part of Beata's narrative reveals: 'I always think about the difference between what the British Queen does during the day and what I do. Well, I say to myself, she is three years older, so it's probably not as good as she might have wished. But, like myself, she probably needs to listen to her body all the time.'

The Body as an Uncertain Companion

The meanings of embodiment in action recorded on the dimension of anticipation, illustrate the participants' understanding of the Body as an Uncertain Companion. In their narratives, participants describe the body as unreliable and temporarily unstable. These meanings are established on the basis of comparisons between the present embodied experience and the anticipated future. In the parts of the narratives that relate to the meanings of the Body as an Uncertain Companion, the participants often mention experiencing feelings of fear [e.g. Grenier 2008]. In this context, they also emphasise feelings of aggravation towards their body, which is not functioning the way that they would expect it to. The participants mention this feeling, for example, when narrating their experiences of dizziness and fainting spells, which sometimes result in a loss of control over the body, as 99-year-old Jaroslava's narrative reveals: 'I often feel that I'm losing control. There is just this dizziness, when I feel like fainting ... I faint and it's impossible to describe or somehow avoid it. I fall without any control. Well, that's what I fear, how I live now.' Feelings of uncertainty and fear about not being able to control her own body are even deeper in Jaroslava´s consciousness: 'I just can´t lift my body. I literally can't lift it, because of old age, I have become so weak that I simply can't.' Awareness of this uncertainty leads Jaroslava to adopt some routine measures (e.g. not turning off the lights while watching TV …) in order to minimise risks.

Temporary states of fatigue and weakness are other important aspects of the meanings of the 'Body as an Uncertain Companion'. Participants talk about experiencing an overall slowing down process [Lloyd et al. 2014]. The presence of tiredness is often connected to feelings of helplessness, which were repeatedly mentioned by, for example, by 86-year-old Beata in her shared research diary: 'I feel tired almost all the time, but I can't do anything about it.' In their narratives, the participants further describe the requirements for both physical and mental rest and emphasise the experiences of social fatigue that represent the main social aspect of the meanings of the 'Body as an Uncertain Companion'. For many participants, the active disengagement from physically or socially demanding situations is an actively followed choice and therefore also the expression of their agency, which can be overlooked as a sign of resistance [José 2016; Lloyd et al. 2014; Nicholson et al. 2012]. Such a situation is described by 95-year-old Hana: 'I'm terribly tired after every visit of my granddaughter because of her little son and daughter. It just takes me too much energy to be in their company, even when it's just for a while. I certainly know what amount of time spent with them is suitable for me.'

Another important behavioural aspect of the 'Body as an Uncertain Companion' is the management of tiredness. This kind of management takes the form of constant negotiations that result in the development of a useful schedule that respects the unique possibilities and limitations of each person. The efforts to create such a schedule are strongly present in some of the notes that participants

wrote in the shared research diaries. In their narratives, participants talk about protecting themselves from feelings of uncertainty by planning and designing an organised routine. They describe how these routines consist of deeply ingrained habits – for example, as described in one excerpt from Hugo's narrative: '… almost everything has become a habit for me, so I do everything systematically and according to these habits' [e.g. Lloyd et al. 2014]. Jaroslava also describes the fundamental importance of habits in her life: '… I have a piece of Christmas cake for breakfast every morning. Every day. Because first I got used to it, and I have to do everything systematically. If I don't, so to speak, I'll break the wheels and can't live that day, as I always do when I don't do the same'. For both Hugo and Jaroslava, a regular daily routine is an effective strategy with which to compensate for the uncertainty associated with their own corporeality. Designing an organised routine therefore 'anchors' the participants in their everydayness, marked with numerous moments of uncertainty.

Participants also state that they *feel* frail rather than that they *are* frail. In the narratives, the participants distinguished the 'problematic' parts of the body that are the source of this uncertainty (e.g. knees, joints) from their overall perception of the body, as described in the excerpt from Sofia's narrative:

> These knees are holding me back. These knees and their problems. They've caused me a lot of changes. ... These knees are making me sick. They're making me angry. These knees are bad enough to me, well and they are all that I'm afraid of. What the hell will I do with these knees? (Sofia)

Similarly, Dana can no longer sew because 'my knees don't work' and 'I can't thread the needle with my fingers anymore'. It is not her but her body parts that are making it impossible for her to live the way she was used to. We can talk about the alienated body that cannot be properly controlled [Galčanová and Petrová Kafková 2018]. In their narratives, they further talk about having a frail body, rather than being frail, which would be a totalised identity [Grenier 2006; Nicholson et al. 2012], a label that becomes their only identity and that in the eyes of others overshadows everything else and identifies them as ageing subjects in need of care. In a way, feelings of frailty may to them represent the emotional aspects of their experiences of impairment in later life. However, participants place strong emphasis on the temporality of these states, which repeatedly alternate with states of greater strength. In their narratives, the theme of the 'Body as an Uncertain Companion' was linked back to the demands of self-management. In their descriptions of activities associated with self-management, the participants alternated between a tendency towards endurance and feelings of temporary exhaustion. Such cyclical descriptions of states are reminiscent of the systolic and diastolic rhythm.

The Body as Work to Be Done

The meanings of embodiment in action that were recorded on the dimension of managing are established on the basis of comparisons between the present time and present needs and the optimal present time in which the needs are met. In the narratives, participants describe the body as a work that requires the salient attention necessary for the course of everyday life. In this sense, they talk about the body both as work that needs to be done – 'I must always get up and take care, no matter whether I have slept well or badly' – and as a sort of 'cage' that does not allow them to express everything they intend to in relation to the surrounding world and others:

> I'd like to be dressed suitably for my age but still look pretty. However, I don't have the opportunity to buy or wear anything nice. I absolutely can't, even if I just wanted a simple tracksuit. It's impossible to get one for my body. (Jaroslava)

The participants experience the body and its limits both as restrictive and as stimulating them into action – for example, through prevention, care with assistive devices.

The meanings of the 'Body as Work to Be Done' relate to at least two types of embodied experience of limitations. In their narratives, the participants emphasise what their current limitations are and the limitations that could be understood as potential. *Current* limitations prevent them from participating in the activities they would like to be currently involved in. Such situations range from the simple activities as described by Jaroslava to the less frequent but important experiences described here by Tereza:

> I can imagine it as vividly as if I was there right now. I'm sitting there on Chopok Mountain. I'm wearing boots on my feet. There are views on the left side, views on the right side, beautiful views all around. That space. That outlook. That freedom. It's me … the same Tereza I used to be before, but my body is now 83 years old and I'm no longer able to reach the peak of Chopok. (Tereza)

For example, the first experiences are described through episodes of cramps that prevent activities such as eating with a spoon, doing a crossword puzzle, or peeling an apple, as Jaroslava's narrative reveals: 'I was peeling an apple and holding a knife, when I suddenly got cramps in my hand. It was just before lunch when the cramps caught me. During lunch, the spoon kept falling from my hand. I couldn't even eat lunch, but I simply had to. Who else was going to put it in my mouth?'

In his study, Whitaker [2010] mentions feelings of sorrow, grief, distress, shame, embarrassment, humiliation, indignity, and frustration that are connected to the perception of an incapable body. Similarly, participants describe the feelings of 'sadness' and 'frustration' in connection with the 'Body as Work to Be Done', which we can see in an extract from Dana's narrative: 'Sometimes I like

to cry about my body, I cry repeatedly. I can't even tie a knot.' Sadness, however, sometimes results in a catharsis, bringing about feelings of 'calm' and 'ease'.

The second type of limiting experiences are negotiated between the participants and 'experts' such as doctors, nurses, and caregivers. In the view of the participants, not respecting potential limitations is risky and could lead to an undesirable future, which is represented by the feared state of having a completely incapacitated body [e.g. Higgs and Gilleard 2015]. Therefore, it is necessary rather to avoid certain types of 'risky behaviour', such as walking unaccompanied by others, lifting heavy objects, or the consumption of alcohol and fatty meat. Descriptions of potential limitations are often preceded by unpleasant dizziness or flashes of sudden pain. These moments are called 'time bombs', as participants often do not know the cause of them, and this produces extra uncertainty, as Jaroslava's narrative shows: 'You can feel pain anywhere and anytime. I experience it terribly often. I wonder what it can be, I wonder if it'll go away a moment later or ... the experience will be repeated again, only God knows when.'

In situations where the participants daily face both types of limiting experience, the acceptance of the care that is received becomes an important social aspect of 'Embodiment in Action' and a crucial prerequisite for living and for being able to reconnect with the surrounding world [Higgs and Gilleard 2015]. As narrated, the acceptance of psychological, social, and material help is the result of continual negotiations between what the participants want and need and what they can achieve within a certain context on their own.

Participants relate to the 'Body as Work to Be Done' in at least three ways that can be understood as behavioural aspects of these body meanings: (1) adapting to assistive devices, (2) overcoming limitations through activity, and (3) embodiment imagination and remembering. In the participants' narratives, the body is described as fused with these devices and as empowered through technological devices and extensions, such as mobility aids (e.g. walkers, canes, crutches, wheelchairs, orthotic devices), hearing aids, visual aids, or dental prostheses. Among these devices, we could possibly include some other items necessary for a life with acquired impairment in advanced age, such as 'a miraculous medical armchair' or 'a bed-my-helper with raised handles'. Assistive devices are described by participants as 'the extended and helpful parts of the body'.

For participants, assistive devices become an adopted part of the body and one way not only of compensating for physical impairments but also of dealing with the uncertainties of daily living. Participants do not avoid talking about assistive devices; they describe them with words such as 'my' or 'my only', use diminutives, and employ language that is personal and intimate, as Hugo's narrative shows:

> I'm going to finish my life with my great sticks. I have this great one and then also an even better stick. I just don't know right now where I put it. I've probably left it in the toilet. I sometimes go there with it and then come back without it. Full of new courage. (Hugo)

Participants take care of these devices much like they take care of their bodies. In her narrative, 84-year-old Tereza describes how she, in her free time, repairs her hearing aid and checks whether the batteries need to be charged, so as to avoid periods of disruption to her communication. Similarly, Sofia, with the help of her son, has invented new ways of improving her walker to suit her current needs and enable more flexible body movements:

> R: Looking at it right now, I can see that you have a stick stuck to the walker. Why?
> My son just recently stuck the stick to the walker. When I want to go to the room to socialise, I go there with the walker, but to flexibly walk around the room I need the stick. So, we just stuck it there and now I have both. [laughs] When I have my stick there, I just take it from the walker and move about better. Although my walker is a much better help everywhere else. (Sofia)

In the narratives, the participants often mention that the devices make life more predictable, although some devices may be unreliable in a specific context – for example, on a slippery surface or in a darker environment.

In the narratives, participants often describe that they further relate to the 'Body as Work to Be Done' by overcoming limitations through a focus on activities in the area of care work [e.g. Twigg 2004; José 2015]. In their narratives, such behaviour is most obvious in the frequently use of words such as 'must', 'need to', 'have to', etc. Such an approach may be understood as a way of preventing any failure that might cause them bigger 'problems' in the near future [Rudman 2015]. For example, Sofia and Tereza describe not wanting to use a wheelchair, even though it would be easier for them. However, to them it would also mean that the body could get used to it and they might never go back to using the walker and stick again. The wheelchair is a symbol of decline into greater impotence, confirming the deterioration of their health. For this reason, both participants emphasise the need for regular exercise to delay this deterioration. It is about taking responsible control over their body, which is one of the consequences of the social pressure to be active. They use only the assistive devices that are indispensable, as Tereza describes in her narrative:

> During morning exercises, my joints are relaxed and become much easier to move. I try hard because I have to. My hands are stiff in the morning. I can straighten this one, but I have to exercise the other one when I wake up. Every morning I stretch my legs, even my fingers. Many times. I imagine that if someone entered my room and found me exercising here, they'd think I'm crazy. [laughs] (Tereza)

In the understanding of participants, a focus on activities in the area of care work seems to be one of the ways of not 'becoming a burden on others'.

The third behavioural aspect of the 'Body as Work to Be Done' relates to the body through 'embodied imagination and remembering' as this excerpt from Tereza's narrative shows:

> I'm sitting there on the bed with my pants around my knees. My body is there, but I'm listening. I'm listening to the music like never before. Goosebumps all over my body. And I totally forget that I should be getting dressed instead. I'm just being, and I say to myself: It's the same you, Tereza. (Tereza)

This process may at the same time be a way of affirming the continuity of one's identity. It could be a way for them to confirm that their identity is not based solely on disability and age, and a way for them to confirm that they are not just clients of the care home, but, despite the occasional use of a wheelchair, are still the same women they used to be.

Discussion

This paper summarises the knowledge about transitions in old age that are currently organised along different lines of experience than age. One such experience is that of acquired impairment that may be dynamic in nature, may occur earlier than expected, and may involve moments of recovery and re-occurrence [Grenier 2015]. The paper considers the transitions in the context of current theories of the fourth age that take place at the intersection of the body and ageing [Baltes and Smith 2003; Grenier, Lloyd and Phillipson 2017; Higgs and Gilleard 2016].

Until recently, issues concerning the marginalised or 'problematic' ageing body were avoided in social gerontology [Öberg 2003; Shilling 2007; Twigg 2006]. The authors of this study are aware of the danger of stereotypical images of older people's bodies as simply dependent, frail, and declining [Twigg 2004; Gullette 2004]. However, we consider ageing to be a deeply embodied process and therefore stress that the bodily aspects of ageing cannot be ignored but must be understood and interpreted as part of the complex social, cultural, emotional, and material reality of ageing [Grosz 1994; Meier et al. 2012; Sandberg 2013].

The aim of this study is to examine the meanings of the body during the transitions in old age. This has remained a relatively under-researched field. Drawing on an analysis of personal accounts collected through individual interviews and shared diaries conducted with a sample of respondents over the course of one year (8 women, mean age –83.8 years), our research also sought to investigate the ways in which people relate to meanings of the body within a context where they are recipients of care. The findings are relevant not only from a gerontological viewpoint, as they extend our knowledge of life at an advanced age, but also from the viewpoint of public policy and practical care. These findings may help in the development of useful interventions to promote more dignified and mindful approaches in the sphere of social and health care.

We gathered the answers to our main research question in a central category called 'Embodiment in Action'. The findings suggest that changes to the body in the direction of decline are understood as inevitable. However, beyond these

accounts of decline, the participants in our research described an extensive and highly dynamic network of complex meanings of the body. In the participants' narratives, the social, emotional, and behavioural aspects of the body's meanings are considered to be just as relevant the body's biological aspects. Moreover, according to participants, embodiment changes do not occur in just one direction, in the direction of long-term loss and decay but are instead understood in shorter time segments and described as occurring in different directions. The meanings of 'Embodiment in Action' were found to be shaped and reconstructed on dimensions that capture three important processes: the sensing of the body (the 'Body as the Organiser of Activities'), anticipation of the body (the 'Body as an Uncertain Companion') and the managing of the body (the 'Body as Work to Be Done'). In the fourth age the body becomes a central entity in a person's life [Whitaker 2010], the entity around which one's whole life is centred. It is a means of communication, and a means of experiencing pain and care. The concept of embodiment acquires a new meaning in the fourth age. The body becomes both an enabler and a limiter of each and even the smallest everyday activity. It is both an agent and a limit.

The meanings of embodiment in action, gathered on the dimension of sensing, are established on the basis of comparisons between people's embodied experience in the past and their current perception of embodiment in action. The disabled body is a marker of failure in later life, the failure to accomplish successful ageing. The main social aspect of the 'Body as the Organiser of Activity' is the importance of relational autonomy [Petrová Kafková and Sedláková 2017], while the feelings of tension and unease about the body are emotional [Grenier 2008] and are approached with greater sensitivity than ever before. This could be understood as a shift towards 'harmonious ageing' [Liang and Luo 2012; Sandberg 2013]. In their narratives, the participants mentioned that they relate to the body by distancing themselves from the disciplined body [Katz 2000]. They further identify the body with representations of the bodies of older 'role models', who represent heroes to them [Townsend, Godfrey and Denby 2006].

The meanings of embodiment in action that are gathered on the dimension of anticipation are centred on a sense of anticipated uncertainty. The main social aspects of the 'Body as an Uncertain Companion' involve frequent experiences of social fatigue. Its emotional aspects are the feelings of fear, aggravation, and helplessness about the body [Grenier 2008]. In their descriptions of the 'Body as an Uncertain Companion', participants emphasise that they often actively choose to disengage from demanding situations [José 2016; Lloyd et al. 2014; Nicholson et al. 2012]. They also describe other approaches they apply to these meanings of the body, such as differentiating those body parts that are a source of uncertainty, managing their tiredness, and organising a routine of habits [e.g. Lloyd et al. 2014].

The meanings of the body that are gathered on the dimension of managing relate to descriptions of the actual and potential limitations of the body. The

emotional aspects of these body meanings are feelings of sadness and frustration, as well as feelings of calm and ease [e.g. Whitaker 2010]. The main social aspect of the 'Body as Work to Be Done' is the acceptance of received care that becomes the basic condition of connection to the surrounding world [Higgs and Gilleard 2015].

These meanings of the body are approached in at least three important ways: adapting to assistive devices; overcoming limits through activity [José 2015; Rudman 2015], and embodied imagination and remembering. Findings suggest that the meanings of the body play a key role in the transitional processes in old age. The complex nature of the meanings associated with the body meanings should be recognised in practices of care.

The study's limitations and future research directions

We are aware that more attention could be paid to a multimethod approach and the use of techniques focusing on non-verbal behaviour. In our study, we used field notes from our observations as supplementary data [Esterberg 2002]. Given the wealth of data, it would be useful to extend this ethnographic observation. Another limitation is the impossibility of using care documents that could provide researchers with a long-term framework. Our study also suffers from the fact that it takes only partial account of the perspectives of caregivers, which could enrich the picture provided by the testimony of participants, shed more complex light on them, and serve as one form of validation of the constructionist method of analysis [Charmaz 2014]. Further limitations are related to the social constructionist approaches to embodiment. According to some authors [e.g. Williams and Bendelow 2002], some aspects of the ageing body captured through the social constructionist perspective leave the materiality of impairments and bodies undocumented. To capture the lived experience of the body, one should adopt a more phenomenological stance. For further studies, it would also be appropriate to have a stronger interdisciplinary link with disability studies.

Further research in this field could focus on the ethnographic understanding of communication between older adults and their caregivers, and how the body is negotiated in these types of conversations. Studies could also focus on those micro-areas of care that are key to the lives of persons with acquired impairment in later life (e.g. rehabilitation through walking, adaptation to assistive devices). Within the context of care, ageing persons need to be treated with respect by others and need to be able to exercise control over their autonomy, even when they are partially dependent on others. A future study could pay more attention to exploring embodiment and the methods of preserving dignity.

Conclusion

In this paper, we sought to show that research on people transitioning from the third to what is called the fourth age is both possible and important and results in valuable knowledge that leads to a better understanding of the neglected and feared parts of the human life cycle. In contemporary societies, later life may have lost much of the coherence and predictability that characterised it in the past. Instead, diversity, difference, and inequality have become its more salient features. As social gerontologists and researchers in the field of ageing studies, in our approach to this study we tried to avoid the quicksand of binary reflections on polarised images of old age. In a binary perspective on the third and fourth age, or on a healthy or fragile old age, the latter of the two categories is defined in terms of being unsuccessful, as failing. The fourth age, or fragile old age, is portrayed as something we all want to avoid – a black hole that once descended into people cannot return from, a place where the actor is no longer allowed any action [Gilleard and Higgs 2010]. Our text shows that the boundaries within the experience of old age are much more complex, unclear, and fluid, and much more heterogeneous.

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Measurement Invariance of the SQWLi Instrument Over Time*

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Abstract: The SQWLi questionnaire was developed for the long-term measurement of subjectively perceived quality of working life. The aim of this study is to test the instrument's measurement invariance between 2009 and 2019 and determine whether – despite the modifications made to the instrument over the years – the results remain comparable. Data from eight representative surveys of the economically active population in the Czech Republic were analysed (total N = 6909) using the MG CFA method (configural, metric, and scalar invariance) and the alignment method (approximate measurement invariance). The findings from the MG CFA tests for measurement invariance indicate that the SQWLi instrument achieves configural and metric invariance over time but not full scalar invariance. Achieving a partial scalar invariance would be challenging because of the many high modification indices; therefore, an approximate measurement invariance approach, namely the Alignment Method, was applied. The results suggest that comparisons of latent means across all years can be made. Consequently, it is possible to make meaningful comparisons of overall indices of dimensions (batteries) and of more general domains. However, not all the individual items can be compared. The results confirm that the biggest risk of invariance is caused by conceptual changes to items and by substantial or frequent modifications to item wording. Conversely, the results also show that a conceptual change to an entire dimension may not necessarily cause any problem on the general level, and that a disruption of invariance caused by changes to the range of scales used can be rectified by means of their harmonisation ex post.

Keywords: SQWLi, subjective quality of working life, exact and approximate measurement invariance, alignment method

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The SQWLi questionnaire was developed for the long-term measurement of subjectively perceived quality of working life. It is to be used (primarily) to produce time series of various indices of working-life quality and its partial dimensions or domains.

A critical part of the observation of any social phenomenon over time is equivalent method. This study seeks to examine whether measurement invariance and consequently also the comparability of data in a time series are adversely affected when changes are made to the instrument of measurement; and if so, how large an effect the various modifications have on measurement invariance. The analyses presented in this paper (1) provide information on the quality of the SQWLi instrument itself and how suitable its data are for creating time series and (2) on a more general level provide an idea of what effect any modifications to the research instrument may have on the quality of the time series. They will also show that invariance can be increased ex post by harmonising the measurement scales.

Measuring the (subjective) quality of working life

For decades now there have been efforts to observe working-life quality in various contexts and on different levels. At the country level, the quality of working life is one dimension that figures in political debates about the direction of the economy, the labour market and labour regulations, etc. In this area it is one of the macro indicators cited by various parties to policy negotiations, and in this function it must necessarily assume the fullest, most aggregate form possible. At the opposite end of the spectrum, working-life quality is addressed as an element in the employee policies of individual employers, where it figures as one aspect of employee care – for example, in efforts to minimise fluctuation, improve work performance, or maintain social harmony. In such cases it is not about describing or analysing large populations, but rather about closely analysing individual workers for targeted, practical effects. In between these macro and micro levels, there are various motives and methods behind efforts to survey the quality of working life or its alternative or related conceptualisations such as job satisfaction, job stress, working conditions, decent work, etc. [Hoppock 1935; Cranny et al. 1992; Danna and Griffin 1999; Sirgy et al. 2001; Ghai 2008; Judge et al. 2012].

From this perspective, the SQWLi is an instrument of the macro level, where measuring working-life quality has its own long tradition [e.g. Sirgy et al. 2001; Tangian 2005; Lowe 2007; Leschke et al. 2008; Fuchs 2009; Swamy et al. 2015] and is currently also being pursued through many different avenues. The biggest projects that deal directly with working-life quality or that serve as the most common source of data on the subject are the European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS), European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), and the European Labour Force Survey (ELFS); but there is also, for example,

Eurobarometer and the Gallup Poll. Special attention should be paid to the Arbeitsklima index in Austria and the DGB-Index Gute Arbeit in Germany, which are projects that have a purpose, method, and underlying principles similar to SQWLi. The most systematic conceptualisation and overview of the instruments used to measure working-life quality is by de Bustillo et al. [2011]. In their analysis they show that many indices suffer from poorly conceptualised combinations of objective and subjective characteristics or (relatedly to some extent) from the mixing of macro-, mezzo-, and micro-level data. The authors also demonstrate that different indices capture different areas of working life, that they combine in varying proportions the characteristics of employment and the characteristics of the work itself, the procedures and results, and are aimed at producing either a summary index or a system of indicators. The SQWLi questionnaire is not intended to bridge all the varieties of instruments and possibilities presented here; our aim is to offer a good conceptualisation of working-life quality as a subjective concept and to tweak and fine tune an instrument that can be meaningfully used to monitor large populations over the long term.

A description of the SQWLi instrument

The SQWLi questionnaire was created in a gradual process of development and testing that has been under way since 2005. First, after analysing 66 aspects of working life that were examined in extensive research in 2005, 18 of these aspects of working life were selected and organised into 6 domains.[1] In subsequent years the instrument underwent methodological improvements to address specific problems and enhance overall quality.

The questionnaire has three sections in which respondents: (1) rate the *importance* of 18 aspects of working life for them; (2) *evaluate* the same 18 aspects of their own working life; and (3) answer background socio-demographic questions.[2] The SQWLi's basic indices (converted to a scale of 0 to 100) are computed for the two dimensions (*importance* and *evaluation*), and separately in each dimension also for six domains and 18 aspects. All these indices are to be monitored in time series.[3]

Our analysis of invariance includes only surveys conducted since 2009, by which time the content and structure of the instrument were already relatively firmly determined. Nevertheless, even after 2009 numerous changes were made with supposedly diverse effects on measurement invariance. Table 2 provides an

[1] For more on the development and the properties of the instrument, see Vinopal [2011].
[2] This conceptualisation has already been discussed and explained in greater depth in Vinopal [2011, 2012] and Vinopal and Čadová [2019].
[3] Publicly accessible through a web application: http://kvalitapracovnihozivota.vubp.cz/ (retrieved 14 January 2020).

Table 1. The structure of the SQWLi instrument (identical in the two dimensions: importance and evaluation)

Domains	Aspects	Domains	Aspects
Reward	Level of earnings, pay		How time-demanding the work is overall
	Fair reward	Time	Distribution of working hours
	Earnings stability		Work doesn't interfere with personal time
Self-fulfilment	How interesting the work is		Level of occupational health and safety
	Further education, personal development opportunities	Conditions	Technical equipment used at work
	Job autonomy/ independence		Workplace cleanliness, order, and hygiene
Relationships	Relationships between co-workers		Nature of the employment relationship
	Superiors' behaviour towards subordinates	Security	Job security
	Subordinates' behaviour towards superiors		Security in terms of employability

overview of the types and extent of the modifications, which ranged from minor shifts in the wording of items or the question to changes in the range or polarity of the scales and changes in the theoretical concept of individual items or even an entire dimension. Once modifications were made to the instrument, they were retained and we only very rarely went back to any previous version. Therefore, the changes accumulated over years in total.

One of the most important conceptual changes was made between the first and second surveys, when the concept of the second battery switched from *satisfaction* (satisfied – dissatisfied) to *evaluation* (bad – good). Other fundamental changes were made in 2014: the rating scales were substantially modified (the polarity was reversed, the range was increased from 6 to 11 points, the unipolar scale for rating *importance* was made numerically distinct from the bipolar scale for the *evaluation*, and the labels were reduced to just the end points); the concept of item F (bullying/subordinates) was changed; and substantive or wording changes were made to most of the other items. In 2018 conceptual changes were made to item C (benefits/earnings stability) and in 2019 again to item F (bullying/subordinates). Not entirely minor modifications were also made in 2018

Table 2. An overview of modifications made to the instrument in individual years (changes marked in grey shading) – first part

Object of change	Type of change	2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019
IMPORTANCE	Concept	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance
Question	Wording of the question	Short	Short	Short	Long	Long	Long	Long	Short
	Substantive change in the wording	X	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
	Linguistic change in the wording	X	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Item (number of items changed)	Change in item concept	X	0	0	1[1]	0	0	1[2]	1[3]
	Substantive change in the wording	X	4	0	11	3	4	3	2
	Linguistic change in the wording	X	5	3	11	4	6	12	18
Scale	Scale range	6	6	6	11	11	11	11	11
	Scale values	1 6	1 6	1 6	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10	0 10
	Scale labels	All points	All points	All points	End points	End points	End points	End points	End points
	Scale polarity	+/–	+/–	+/–	–/+	–/+	–/+	–/+	–/+
	Labels	Definitely important – Definitely unimportant	Definitely important – Definitely unimportant	Definitely important – Definitely unimportant	Completely unimportant – funda-mentally important	Completely unimportant – funda-mentally important	Completely unimportant – funda-mentally important	Completely unimportant – funda-mentally important	Completely unimportant – funda-mentally important

Table 2. An overview of modifications made to the instrument in individual years (changes marked in grey shading) – second part

Object of change	Type of change	2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019
IMPORTANCE	Concept	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance
Administration	Order of the domains	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	18a_P4	18a_P4
	Order of the items	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	18a_P4	18a_P4
EVALUATION	Concept	Satisfaction	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation
Question	Wording of the question	Short	Short	Short	Long	Long	Long	Long	Short
	Substantive change in the wording	X	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
	Linguistic change in the wording	X	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO
Items (number of items changed)	Change in item concept	X	0	0	1[1]	0	0	1[2]	1[3]
	Substantive change in the wording	X	5	0	17	3	4	4	2
	Linguistic change in the wording	X	11	1	17	4	6	9	18

Table 2. An overview of modifications made to the instrument in individual years (changes marked in grey shading) – third part

Object of change	Type of change	2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019
IMPORTANCE	Concept	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance
Scale	Scale range	6	6	6	11	11	11	11	11
	Scale values	1 6	1 6	1 6	–5 +5	–5 +5	–5 +5	–5 +5	–5 +5
	Scale labels	All points	All points	All points	End points	End points	End points	End points	End points
	Scale polarity	+/–	+/–	+/–	–/+	–/+	–/+	–/+	–/+
	Labels	Very satisfied – very dissatisfied	Very good – very bad	Very good – very bad	Very bad – very good	Very bad – very good	Very bad – very good	Very bad – very good	Very bad – very good
Administration	Order of the domains	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	18a_P4	18a_P4
	Order of the items	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	09_P	18a_P4	18a_P4

Note: The record of changes made to the questionnaire presented in the table refers in each case to the immediately previous version of the questionnaire; if no change is indicated, this means that there was no change from the preceding version.

[1] Change in the concept of item f): violence and bullying in the workplace – the overall nature of relations between co-workers at the workplace.

[2] Change in the concept of item c): nonfinancial advantages/bonuses/benefits – earnings stability, that earnings are regular and steady.

[3] Change in the concept of item f): the nature of relations between co-workers in the workplace – subordinates' behaviour towards superiors.

when the order of the domains and items were changed, and the wording of the question and items were reduced in length.

It is not possible in this paper to explain all the reasons, empirical evidence, or actual effects of the changes that were made. Generally, changes to the concepts or wording of items were in almost every case motivated by problems of an empirical nature (higher item nonresponse, weaker discrimination, weaker performance in the EFA models, weaker regression coefficients in the CFA, etc.). Changes to the scales were made as we advanced our expertise about the relationship between types of concepts, rating scales, and measurement quality [Saris and Gallhofer 2014]. The concept of *satisfaction* was substituted for *evaluation* in 2011 following discussions at international meetings with colleagues also focusing on the measurement of working-life quality and based on the theoretical assumption (to some extent also supported by empirical evidence [Vinopal 2009]) that when people are rating their satisfaction with something, they are already intuitively considering that something's importance at the same time; and thus the concept of *importance* would be essentially measured twice. Finally, the change of the order of the domains and items in 2018 was done after the experiment in which the instrument was prepared for the possibility of rotation in electronic data collection modes. The results showed that one of the new tested orderings produced statistically better models, so it was retained for the future to be used also in PAPI.

Measurement invariance

Measurement invariance (also known as equivalence of measurement) is a prerequisite for making meaningful comparisons of differences in a construct between groups when item-based scales are used [Flake and McCoach 2017]. We most often encounter the issue of measurement invariance in the context of international comparative studies, but it is just as important in comparisons over time [Davidov 2010].

In principle, invariance should be a concern whenever the aim is to make a comparison between groups measured with the same instrument. Most often such groups are countries or socio-demographic groups. But still more often measurement invariance is applied also in the case of repeated research. In such cases, groups are represented by points of measurement in time. Here the term 'groups' refers to samples from a population whose characteristics may have changed because of natural developments; i.e. groups are usually represented by waves of data collection (years in this article). In all such cases it is crucial to ensure that the respondents in every group (year in this case) understand and interpret the measurement instrument in the same way; if they do not, it is impossible to make meaningful comparisons between groups.

There exist multiple approaches for testing measurement invariance. In this article we focus on confirmatory factor analysis (CFA and MG CFA). This ap-

proach is based on the logic of hierarchical model comparisons, where model fit statistics for every model are assessed and compared to the ones of the following, more restrictive model [Meredith 1993]. Three main levels are discussed most often when considering measurement invariance: configural, metric, and scalar invariance.

The lowest degree of comparability is represented by configural invariance (or construct invariance). In this case the data in every group refer to the same social phenomenon – the same construct – even though they were not necessarily obtained using identically formulated questions or identical measurement scales with the same range. If only this level of invariance is achieved, we know that the given set of items are indeed measuring the same phenomenon across every group, but we cannot make inter-group comparisons of the average item scores or even the relations between manifest or latent variables and other variables [Anýžová 2015].

A higher level is represented by metric invariance. The data attain this level when the scale range and the unit of measurement are identical, but the respondents in different groups perceive the scale range and unit in different ways. When metric invariance is achieved it is still impossible to make inter-group comparisons of average item scores, but it is possible to make meaningful comparisons of relations of latent variables with other manifest variables for which metric invariance was also attained [Anýžová 2015].

The highest level of measurement invariance is represented by scalar invariance. This is attained when the measurement scales used have the same range and the same unit and different groups of respondents also interpret the individual points on the scale in the same way. In this case it is possible to compare across groups the average item scores and the indices they form. Given that the criteria for achieving scalar invariance are rather strict and often are not met, concepts have been developed that do not require perfect invariance. These are: partial scalar invariance and approximate measurement invariance, the latter of which will be discussed later.

So that we have some methodological support for making comparisons of the individual items' means, factors' means, domains, or two dimensions of the SQWLi over time, that is, for following their development in time series, our data must demonstrate full scalar invariance or at the very least partial scalar invariance or approximate measurement invariance. If they do not, there is a risk that the results for individual points in time will be distorted by excessive measurement error and the comparisons will be invalid.

The research question: expected problems with measurement invariance

The primary research question we are concerned with here is whether the SQWLi instrument retains measurement invariance over time even if modifications have been made to it over the course of the years. More specifically, we want to deter-

mine what level of invariance can be achieved across all the years compared (2009 to 2019), and between which years and which items the resulting indices of the SQWLi can be compared over time. Based on the changes made to the instrument described above, we expect to encounter the following problems on each of the individual levels of measurement invariance:

Configural invariance

The conceptual change of the whole dimension (battery) from *satisfaction* to *evaluation* in 2009 could in theory interfere with the configural invariance. However, the results of the continuous analyses conducted in the course of developing the instrument did not signal any significant changes in the factor structure. Consequently, we no longer expect this to be a problem.

In 2018 the order of the domains and the order of the items were changed, and numerous wording modifications were also made along with some substantive changes. However, even these changes did not have an effect on the shape of the factor structures of the two batteries, which were verified after each survey. We therefore do not expect these changes to disrupt the configural invariance either.

Metric invariance

A change made to the rating scales in 2014 (from a 6-point to an 11-point scale) had the potential to disrupt the metric invariance. As we were to some extent able to determine in a previous study [Šeflová 2016], this did indeed occur. In order to make comparisons, we would therefore have to exclude the data from 2009, 2011, and 2013, and that would mean losing five years of the time series conducted to date. This fact prompted us to search for a solution in our current study that would allow us to keep these years in our comparisons. Based on an analysis of the response distributions and total indices of items on both versions of the scales used, we therefore decided to convert all the data to the same scale, which had already been demonstrated elsewhere to be a functional solution [Šeflová 2016]. The scale that suggested itself was 0–100, used to present the indices in our time series on-line. With this harmonisation we expect metric invariance will be achieved across all the years.

Scalar invariance

Over the years at least one change was made to the wording of every item in the questionnaire; most of the items, however, had several changes made to them, and some were even more extensively altered. In our view, the most problematic

changes were those that involved a change in theoretical concept: F (bullying/subordinates)[4], C (benefits/earnings stability);[5] or more substantive or more frequent changes in item wording: E (superiors), L (independence), M (contract), N (security), O (chances). (The wording of all the items is given in Appendix 1.) Given the many changes made to the items, we expect that they will have an adverse effect on full scalar invariance, and that this will moreover be caused by various different items in different years. Instead of testing models of partial scalar invariance, we apply the approximate invariance approach and use the alignment method (which is recommended in such a situation). We expect approximate measurement invariance to be confirmed, or that it will be disrupted only by the items that have undergone a change in theoretical concept.

Data

In our analysis we include surveys from the year 2009 to 2019, a total of eight measurements. All the surveys were conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research at the Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences, through its interviewer network. The surveys were conducted using the PAPI method on representative quota samples based on current data from the Czech Statistical Office. The specific parameters of the survey in each individual year are presented in the table below.

Because of the lack of significant deviation of the parameters of samples from the parameters of the population, there was no need to weight the data. Given the number of cases, we did not even proceed to item-nonresponse imputations. The data from all the original scales were converted to the 0–100 scale.

Testing measurement invariance for quota samples is not common because of their non-probabilistic nature. In probabilistic samples, one can expect measurement invariance across samples just because the population is 'standardised' by the random sampling procedure. One objection might be that, in the case of quota samples, the selection of individuals depends much more on the researcher than the procedure. Here the interpretation of observing measurement invariance may be quite similar: in our surveys the procedure of (quota) sampling was still the same; therefore, if nothing else changed, it should produce invariant outputs. It could be said that the (quota) samples in this study are 'standardised' by the constant design of the sampling procedure used.

[4] Violence and bullying in the workplace / the overall nature of relations between coworkers in the workplace / subordinates' behaviour towards superiors.

[5] Nonfinancial advantages/bonuses/benefits / earnings stability, that earnings are regular and steady.

Table 3. Surveys in the analysis

Year	Title	Data collection dates	Representativeness of the sample	N
2009	Stress in the Workplace…	22. 6. – 6. 7. 2009	Employees in the CR aged 18 to 65	836
2011	Czech Society 1102	7. 2. – 14. 2. 2011	Population of the CR over 15 years	563
2013	Czech Society 1306	3. 6. – 10. 6. 2013	Population of the CR over 15 years	560
2014	Working-Life Quality 2014	19. 5. – 2. 6. 2014	Econ. active pop. CR aged 18+	2 029
2016	Quality of Life	31. 10. – 14. 11. 2016	Econ. active pop. CR aged 18+	750
2017	CSDA Research	18. 9. – 12. 10. 2017	Econ. active pop. CR aged 18+	675
2018	SQWLi optimisation–1st wave	26. 5. – 13. 6. 2018	Econ. active pop. CR aged 18+	1 018
2019	SQWLi optimisation–2nd wave	13. 4. – 29. 4. 2019	Econ. active pop. CR aged 18+	478

Methods

One of the primary methods used to test measurement invariance is structural equation modelling (SEM), for which we are able to mathematically define various levels of measurement invariance [Hirschfeld and von Brachel 2014]. The most frequently used approach is to test a set of increasingly restrictive models of multiple-group confirmatory factor analysis (MG CFA) and evaluate changes in the model fit statistics. First, a configural model is tested, to which the results of a metric model are then compared, and if they hold up, the next step is to test a scalar model (or then a partial scalar model) [Anýžová 2015].

Configural invariance refers to a situation where the number of latent variables and the structure of the factor loadings does not differ across groups. In the first step we have to test that a given model with a specific number of factors presents the data from all the compared groups (years) in a proportionate way and that the factor loadings are high enough [Vandenberg and Lance 2000]. The model is tested first for each group separately and then for all the groups together. In this baseline configural invariance model the same factorial pattern was specified for all groups with no other restrictions for loadings or intercepts. This model serves as the reference model, and it is with its model fit statistics that the other, more restrictive models are then compared [Meredith 1993; Byrne 2008].

In the metric invariance model there is an additional requirement: the loadings were constrained to be equal across all groups being compared. The results of the metric model are compared with the configural model, and if according to the changes in the model fit statistics they hold, it is possible to continue with further testing. In the scalar model there is the additional requirement that the intercepts/thresholds of all the items are constrained to be equal across all the groups being compared [Meredith 1993; Vandenberg and Lance 2000]. The results are compared to the metric model, and if they hold, the data can be used to compare groups. If they do not, it is possible to test partial scalar invariance, which means searching for most of the non-invariant items using modification indices (MI) and, where warranted, gradually releasing the constraints on one or more loadings or intercepts or both for these item/s. This procedure must be repeated until a satisfactory model is achieved but at the same time the majority of items on the factor should be invariant [Vandenberg and Lance 2000; Steinmetz 2013].

Given that the likelihood of confirming full scalar invariance decreases with the increasing number of groups included in a comparison [Zercher et al. 2015], researchers are often forced to search for a partially scalar model. However, this can be a lengthy process, and as Asparouhov and Muthén [2014: 495] have pointed out, these modifications can lead to the risk of producing an inappropriate model because of 'the scalar model being far from the true model', and this procedure offers no guarantee that the simplest model and one easy to interpret will be achieved. Owing to the multicollinearity in the modification indices, the selection of the parameters to be freed is not unambiguous and thus other potentially better models can be overlooked. Another solution is to exclude the most problematic groups, but that has the effect of limiting further analytical options [Lomazzi 2018].

Seeking to resolve these limitations, Muthén and Asparouhov [2012, 2013] introduced the concept of 'approximate measurement invariance'. While the procedure described above is premised on an expectation of exact invariance of parameters, their concept rests on the assumption that some degree of non-invariance between parameters is acceptable and still allows us to make meaningful comparisons between groups. Their alignment method (AM) employs a simplicity function, which the authors liken to rotation in exploratory factor analysis. Using this method, it is possible to estimate all the model parameters in such a way that the number of non-invariant items and the size of the non-invariance are minimal. As Muthén and Asparouhov [2014: 3] state: 'As a rough rule of thumb, a limit of 25% non-invariance may be safe for trustworthy alignment results.' When the share of non-invariant parameters is below this limit it is possible to compare factor means and factor variances across all groups.

Partial scalar invariance expects exact comparability for the majority of the parameters and allows non-invariance for a small number of them. The alignment method permits a small deviation for a larger number of parameters and therefore leads to better results in most situations [Zercher et al. 2015]. In our

study the SQWLi instrument is primarily tested using the MG CFA method. Given the number of modifications made to the items, which we do not, however, regard as particularly pronounced with respect to the consistency of the construct as a whole, instead of testing partial scalar invariance we applied the alignment method to test the instrument.[6]

Testing the conditions for measurement invariance

All the datasets were first examined for the share of missing values and a normal distribution. In all the years observed the share of missing values was around 4%, and although the data exhibit a certain level of skewness and kurtosis this is not an impediment to further analysis (over the years the interval of skewness ranged between –2.444 and –0.897 and the interval of kurtosis ranged between –0.543 and 8.573).

The first information about potential problems with the comparability of data over time can usually be obtained by analysing the scale's reliability, which can be tested using Cronbach's alpha. For both of our batteries the alpha is very high in all the observed years, which indicates that the scale is reliable. The alpha is also relatively stable over time and slightly increasing, which could indicate that the modifications made to the SQWLi were to its benefit. For determining comparability over time, however, the fundamental piece of information is the variability of Cronbach's alpha if item deleted, which is for all items close to zero (max. 0.058). The values are thus very stable over time, despite the changes made to the instrument, and none of the items stands out with any extreme values or indicates any major invariance problems. [Anýžová 2015: 66]

That the preconditions for using factor analysis were met was determined using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of sphericity. The values of these indicators were also found to be good, as in every case the KMO is more than 0.83 and Bartlett's Test is always significant. All the datasets from all the observed years are thus suited to the use of factor analysis.

[6] The calculations were performed in IBM SPSS Statistics version 24 and Mplus 8.2. For the CFA and the alignment method we used the ML (maximum likelihood) estimate function.

Table 4. Cronbach's alpha analysis

	Cronbach's alpha								C alpha if ID	
	2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	min – max	Var.
Importance	.872	.898	.864	.878	.900	.889	.904	.916	.853–.914	.051–.058
Evaluation	.921	.921	.911	.930	.909	.913	.922	.938	.901–.937	.028–.031

Table 5. KMO and Bartlett's Test

		2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019
Importance	KMO	.858	.883	.833	.871	.897	.884	.908	.890
	Bartlett's Test	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Evaluation	KMO	.897	.896	.900	.916	.890	.893	.914	.900
	Bartlett's Test	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 6. EFA factor loadings: Importance

		2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	Var.
F1	A (earnings)	.775	.832	1.010	.826	.915	.858	.945	.861	.235
	B (fair reward)	.621	.672	.456	.569	.385	.672	.644	.650	.287
	C (ben./e. stab.)	.295	.202	.285	.289	.413	.284	.521	.492	.319
F2	D (co-workers)	.738	.716	.788	.722	.750	.877	.843	.810	.160
	E (superiors)	.822	.909	.850	.802	.754	.724	.811	.899	.186
	F (bull./sub.)	.519	.202	.581	.838	.832	.850	.937	.635	.735
F3	G (time demands)	.797	.736	.656	.803	.763	.771	.771	.893	.237
	H (time flex.)	.883	.947	.986	.851	.889	.862	.899	.873	.136
	I (harmonisation)	.554	.540	.666	.603	.416	.680	.704	.735	.319
F4	J (interestingness)	.629	.596	.511	.645	.721	.625	.705	.609	.210
	K (development)	.825	.920	.779	.882	.818	.780	.830	.892	.141
	L (independence)	.545	.643	.606	.679	.693	.702	.698	.630	.156
F5	M (contract)	.835	.599	.571	.638	.485	.618	.528	.660	.351
	N (security)	.614	.612	.730	.733	.689	.888	.599	.782	.289
	O (chances)	.168	.276	.492	.153	.348	.485	.528	.553	.399
F6	P (health & safety)	.676	.580	.632	.745	.791	.757	.749	.793	.213
	Q (equipment)	.568	.850	.669	.676	.664	.844	.414	.494	.436
	R (hygiene)	.647	.634	.734	.667	.673	.671	.905	.766	.271

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

We examined whether the data have in every year a similar factor structure and factor loadings that are strong enough. An exploratory factor analysis was applied to both batteries and in the first step for each year separately.[7]

In every case the analysis revealed a structure that corresponds satisfactorily with the theory; it also, however, pointed to items that we may expect to show problems with invariance. These could be items that have a factor loading below 0.3 and a variability of factor loadings that is greater than 0.3. For the *importance* battery this primarily concerns items C (benefits/earnings stability), F (bullying/subordinates), M (contract), O (chances), and Q (equipment); for the *evaluation*

[7] Principal Axis Factoring extraction method was used with Oblimin rotation method and Kaiser Normalisation. The number of factors was fixed to 6 according to the construct although the sixth factor usually has the eigenvalue below 1.0. Previously discussed in Šeflová [2016].

Table 7. EFA factor loadings: Evaluation

		2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	Var.
F1	A (earnings)	.740	.578	.876	.927	.883	.868	.833	.970	.391
	B (fair reward)	.940	.630	.703	.853	.703	.931	.794	.671	.310
	C (ben./e. stab.)	.355	.593	.406	.496	.606	.501	.210	.217	.395
F2	D (co-workers)	.626	.646	.631	.775	.701	.774	.737	.878	.253
	E (superiors)	.555	.763	.727	.648	.661	.668	.667	.694	.208
	F (bull./sub.)	.839	.533	.579	.977	1.038	.922	.882	.797	.505
F3	G (time demands)	.920	.796	.803	.745	.782	.840	1.004	.970	.258
	H (time flex.)	.863	.825	.845	.837	.914	.834	.751	.843	.163
	I (harmonisation)	.785	.851	.746	.866	.836	.834	.786	.804	.120
F4	J (interestingness)	.828	.824	.657	.658	.774	.757	.659	.457	.371
	K (development)	.691	.644	.783	.953	.788	.868	.868	.775	.309
	L (independence)	.477	.597	.515	.635	.688	.574	.581	.566	.211
F5	M (contract)	.186	.491	.602	.582	.455	.552	.578	.914	.728
	N (security)	.969	.768	.860	.928	.909	.924	.739	.509	.459
	O (chances)	.575	.315	.392	.316	.262	.449	.651	.386	.389
F6	P (h&s)	.752	.789	.522	.842	.738	.799	.730	.849	.327
	Q (equipment)	.893	.826	.709	.795	.706	.790	.599	.705	.294
	R (hygiene)	.813	.782	.853	.792	.807	.836	.915	.852	.133

battery it primarily concerns items C (benefits/earnings stability), F (bullying/subordinates), M (contract), and N (security). What is significant for us, however, is that these are the items that underwent the most changes over the course of the years, including changes to the item concepts (C and F). It is therefore to be expected that these items would exhibit greater variability of factor loadings over time.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

We then conducted confirmatory factor analysis separately for each dataset using the maximum likelihood method. The test model corresponded to the instrument's original construct.[8] After giving consideration to the parameters of the

[8] Following from the results of the EFA, in the *importance* battery only one covariance was added between items O (chances) and K (development), since we can accept that opportu-

Table 8. CFA models: Importance

Year	CMIN	df	p	CMIN /df	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI	SRMR	sample size
2009	535	119	.000	4.496	.905	.070	.064 – .076	.061	716
2011	462	119	.000	3.882	.911	.078	.070 – .085	.066	475
2013	470	119	.000	3.950	.894	.076	.069 – .083	.059	509
2014	1267	119	.000	10.647	.914	.072	.069 – .076	.059	1838
2016	590	119	.000	4.958	.919	.075	.069 – .081	.054	702
2017	483	119	.000	4.059	.936	.070	.063 – .076	.054	633
2018	629	119	.000	5.286	.949	.067	.062 – .072	.042	949
2019	472	119	.000	3.966	.929	.080	.073 – .088	.049	453

Note: Model with covariance: O (chances) with K (development).

analysis, most notably the complexity of the model, the size of the datasets, and the number of years in the comparison, and also to the properties of the individual model fit statistics, the majority of which are sensitive to at least one of these parameters, we decided to use the following model fit statistics to assess the quality of the models: chi-square divided by the degrees of freedom ($\chi 2/df$), a comparative model fit index (CFI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the Akaike information criterion (AIC), the Bayesian information criterion (BIC), and the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR).[9] Chi-square statistics divided by the degrees of freedom should roughly have a value of 3. We will consider a model to be of adequate quality if its CFI index has a value of at least 0.9 (ideally 0.95), its RMSEA is at most 0.08 (it is sensitive to the complexity of the model), and the SRMR is at most 0.08 (ideally max. 0.06) [Hu and Bentler 1999; van de Schoot et al. 2012; Byrne 2010].

In the case of the *importance* battery, the tested model always represents the real data well: the CFI is greater than 0.9 in all the years except 2013 (0.894), the RMSEA is in every year equal to or less than 0.08, and the SRMR is also less than 0.08 and in fact never even rises above a value of 0.066.

nities for personal development and further education are connected to a person's chances of finding another job in the labour market. As was then confirmed, adding it improved the results of the importance models in every year, as well as the results of the MG CFA.

[9] Here we also present the value of the Chi-square test (CMIN), which is sensitive to sample size. It tends to consider small differences on larger datasets to be significant (it is statistically significant), while on small samples it does not reject an inappropriate model [Kline 2010]. The primary reason we present CMIN is that most of the other indicators are derived from it.

Table 9. CFA models: Evaluation

Year	CMIN	df	p	CMIN /df	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI	SRMR	sample size
2009	436	120	.000	3.633	.941	.071	.064 – .079	.050	518
2011	484	120	.000	4.033	.898	.093	.084 – .101	.059	353
2013	284	120	.000	2.367	.948	.061	.052 – .071	.047	361
2014	880	120	.000	7.333	.958	.063	.059 – .067	.036	1611
2016	401	120	.000	3.342	.955	.062	.055 – .069	.037	611
2017	314	120	.000	2.617	.967	.053	.046 – .061	.038	568
2018	759	120	.000	6.325	.939	.079	.074 – .084	.051	855
2019	565	120	.000	4.708	.911	.100	.092 – .109	.054	368

The *evaluation* battery shows very similar results: the CFI is greater than 0.9 (except in 2011, when it is 0.002 lower), and the RMSEA always hovers around a value below 0.08, except in 2011 and 2019. However, the SRMR is below the threshold value of 0.08 in every year and in no year does it even rise above the value of 0.59. These results again point to possible minor problems in data comparability (e.g. for the year 2011 in the *evaluation* battery), but overall the model represents the data well in every year.[10]

Measurement invariance – MG CFA

The MG CFA models used to test measurement invariance were assessed using the same model fit statistics as the CFA models. However, in the metric and scalar models, which are increasingly restrictive, we also turn our attention to the size of the change they exhibit (the change should not be greater than 0.01 in the CFI, 0.015 in the RMSEA, and 0.03 in the SRMR [Chen 2007; Anýžová 2015; Svetina et al. 2019]). We also observe the AIC and BIC information criteria, which serve for a comparison of the models and which express the ratio between model fit and model complexity.[11]

[10] Based on the results we also tested a model with the added covariance of the items with the strongest relation. However, this did not lead to any fundamental improvement in the values of the model fit statistics; we therefore continued to work with the basic model.

[11] A lower IC value indicates a better model. If the change is greater than 10 points, this points to a significant worsening of the model [Anýžová 2015; van de Schoot et al. 2012].

Table 10. MG CFA models over time: Importance

Model	CMIN	df	P	CMIN /df	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI	AIC	BIC	SRMR
Configural	4463	824	.000	5.416	.923	.075	(.073–.077)	893952	897567	.056
Metric	4762	901	.000	5.285	.919 (.004)	.074 (.001)	(.072–.076)	894098 (143)	897193 (–374)	.066
Scalar	7163	978	.000	7.324	.870 (.049)	.090 (.016)	(.088–.092)	946999 (1010)	898921 (1728)	.099

Note: models with covariance: O (chances) with K (development).

Table 11. MG CFA models over time: Evaluation

Model	CMIN	df	P	CMIN /df	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI	AIC	BIC	SRMR
Configural	4121	960	.000	4.293	.945	.071	(.069–.073)	803468	807092	.044
Metric	4513	1044	.000	4.323	.940 (.001)	.071 (0)	(.069–.073)	803692 (224)	806765 (–327)	.057
Scalar	6612	1128	.000	5.862	.905 (.035)	.086 (.015)	(.084–.088)	805623 (–69)	808144 (1379)	.104

We will first examine the *importance* battery. The baseline configural model that tests whether the model represents the data well in all the compared years together shows good results: the CFI is more than 0.9, the RMSEA is less than 0.08, and the SRMR is less than 0.06. Thus, the model with the given factor structure adequately represents the data in every measurement, despite some small imperfections in the model in individual years. This means that the instrument is indeed measuring the same construct across the years; and configural invariance is confirmed.

In the metric model, where there is a requirement that the factor loadings be equal, the CFI is also greater than 0.9 and the change in the indicator is very low (0.004 is less than 0.01). The RMSEA is still acceptable (below 0.08) and its change is smaller than 0.015. The AIC rose significantly, but the BIC indicates an acceptable metric model, as does the SRMR, which is below 0.08 and the change is smaller than 0.03. The metric model thus still presents the data from all the compared years well and metric invariance is also confirmed.

We see a different situation in the scalar model, where the requirement is that the factor loadings be equal but also that all the item intercepts are equal as well. All the model fit indicators in unison show that the scalar model is not acceptable. The CFI is below the minimum value of 0.9 and its change is greater than 0.1, the RMSEA is greater than 0.8, as is the SRMR. Full scalar invariance is thus not achieved. What is important to emphasise here, however, is that the items that figure most often among the ones with the highest MI are C (benefits/earnings stability), F (bullying/subordinates), N (security), and O (chances). This is no surprise, as these are the items to which the biggest or the most changes were made over the years and the ones that the variability of the factor loadings had already drawn our attention to in the EFA.

After 2009 a change was made in the *evaluation* battery in which the concept was switched from *satisfaction* to *evaluation,* which could in theory have an adverse effect on even the configural invariance itself. Nevertheless, even in this battery configural invariance is achieved across all the observed years and the model fit statistics actually produce better results than in the *importance* battery. The CFI is above 0.94, the RMSEA is less than 0.08, and the SRMR is even less than 0.05. The metric model is also acceptable, as its results remain almost unchanged (the CFI shows a decrease of a mere 0.001, the RMSEA is unchanged, and the SRMR has an increase of 0.013). We can therefore declare the data in the *evaluation* battery to be metrically invariant as well.

Slightly worse results are observed again in the scalar model: although the CFI is below 0.09, the change to it is greater than 0.01 (0.03) and the RMSEA and the SRMR are more than 0.08. The model of full scalar invariance must be rejected. Here the highest MI are found for items C (benefits/earnings stability), F (bullying/subordinates), N (security), and L (independence). Again, these are the items that were already flagged as potentially problematic in previous analyses.

In order to proceed further by testing partial scalar invariance we would have to gradually release, step by step and across all the groups (years), the restrictions of parameter correspondence for the items with the highest modification indices. Given that we have a large number of items with a high MI, this would be a very lengthy process without any clear guidelines [Muthén and Asparouhov 2014]. The results do not state in detail which parameters should be relaxed first, what order to proceed in is up to the researcher to decide, which means that this is a rather subjective process that need not necessarily find support in the theory of the instrument. To arrive at an acceptable model, it would moreover be necessary to introduce numerous modifications, which could result in an excessively complicated and hard to interpret model. The final argument against taking this path is that it would be necessary to proceed differently for each of the batteries (each one has its own specific problems) and the outcome would thus be two different models; and this again might be inconsistent with the key theoretical concept of the instrument.

Instead of partial scalar invariance, which in our case offers no promise of finding the simplest and a still well presentable model, we decided to continue by testing approximate measurement invariance with the alignment method, which is recommended in cases like this by Muthén and Asparouhov [2014].

Approximate measurement invariance – the Alignment Method

As its authors note, the main objective of the Alignment Method (AM) is to enable a comparison of factor means and variances without the need to achieve exact measurement invariance. The method does not require metric or scalar invariance to be achieved – it is based on a configural model. According to the authors, it essentially automates and greatly simplifies measurement invariance analysis. Parameters are estimated so that they are comparable and the level of non-invariance is thus minimised [Muthén and Asparouhov 2014]. However, the authors recommend first testing for measurement invariance using traditional methods (configural, metric, and scalar models) and then comparing the results. The AM estimates the factor loadings and the intercepts of items for individual years. The results are presented in a table where the years in which the parameters are non-invariant are highlighted. The great advantage of AM thus lies in a detailed overview of the items that are the most invariant and that are the most non-invariant over time. In order to obtain trustworthy alignment results and present meaningful comparisons between groups (years), the non-invariant rate must not exceed 25%.

Out of the 288 parameters in total, 17 intercepts and 11 factor loadings in the *importance* battery are non-invariant, averaging to 9.7% non-invariance, which is well within the 25% cut-point. This is a very good result and it indicates that it is possible to compare the latent means derived from the alignment results between years [Muthén and Asparouhov 2014]. The most non-invariant items are F

Table 12. Alignment Method: Importance

	Intercepts/Thresholds								Loadings							
	2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019
A (earnings)	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
B (fair reward)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
C (ben./e. stab.)	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
D (co-workers)	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	.	.
E (superiors)	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	X	.	.
F (bull./sub.)	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.	.	X	.
G (time demands)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
H (time flex.)	.	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
I (harmonization)	X	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	X	.
J (interestingness)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
K (development)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
L (independence)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
M (contract)	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
N (security)	.	X	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	X	X
O (chances)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.
P (h&s)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Q (equipment)	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	.
R (hygiene)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

* Cases with non-invariant parameters are highlighted.

(bullying/subordinates), I (harmonisation), and N (security), each of which was already identified as problematic in some of the previous methods.

Out of the 288 parameters for the *evaluation* battery, 22 intercepts and 9 factor loadings are non-invariant, which means that a total of 13.5% of the parameters are non-invariant. This is a slightly worse result than that of the *importance* battery, but it is still well below 25% and is therefore perfectly acceptable. Among those with the highest number of non-invariant parameters are items C (benefits/earnings stability), F (bullying/subordinates), I (harmonisation), and L (independence).

Because both batteries had good outcomes for all the years, according to the AM it is possible to compare the results (the factor means) of both batteries, and thus also to compare the overall result of the SQWLi indicator across all the observed years.

Table 13. Alignment method: Evaluation

	Intercepts/Thresholds								Loadings							
	2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	2009	2011	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019
A (earnings)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
B (fair reward)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
C (ben./e. stab.)	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	X
D (co-workers)	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
E (superiors)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
F (bull./sub.)	X	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	X	X	.	.
G (time demands)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
H (time flex.)	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	X	.
I (harmonization)	X	X	X	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
J (interestingness)	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
K (development)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
L (independence)	X	X	X	.	.	.	.	.	X	X	X	.	.	.	.	.
M (contract)	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
N (security)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
O (chances)	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
P (h&s)	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Q (equipment)	X	.	X	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
R (hygiene)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

* Cases with non-invariant parameters are highlighted.

Discussion

The analyses showed that SQWLi achieved configural and metric invariance over time, but not full scalar invariance, which is so essential for a meaningful comparison of single items means. A subject for further investigation could be to test for partial scalar invariance, now with more insight into problematic items whose parameters most likely need to be released.

On the other hand, the results of the approximate invariance approach used in this study show the SQWLi is at least approximately invariant over time. Our findings of non-invariance for both batteries were well within the recommended cut-point of 25%, which means factor means and variances estimated by the Alignment Method are plausible and can be compared between groups or years

Table 14. Measurement invariance testing: overview

	Problem expectation	Importance			Evaluation		
		EFA	MI	AM	EFA	MI	AM
A (earnings)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
B (fair reward)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
C (ben./e. stab.)	X	X	X	.	X	X	X
D (co-workers)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
E (superiors)	X	.	.	.	.	.	.
F (bull./sub.)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
G (time demands)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
H (time flex.)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
I (harmonization)	.			X	.	.	X
J (interestingness)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
K (development)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
L (independence)	X	.	.	.	.	X	X
M (contract)	X	X	.	.	X	.	.
N (security)	X	.	X	X	X	X	.
O (chances)	X	X	X	.	.	.	.
P (h&s)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Q (equipment)	.	X	.	.	.	.	.
R (hygiene)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

* The table does not contain a record of all the problems that were detected and shows only those problems that proved to be the biggest ones within the frame of this analysis.

in this case [Muthén and Asparouhov 2014]. These results indicate that if factor means can be compared, it is also possible to compare indicators for both batteries and the overall SQWLi indicator across all the observed years.

Evidently the most problematic in terms of invariance over time are the items that underwent a change in concept, which finding confirms our expectation. In the case of item F, in 2014 the concept was changed from *violence and bullying in the workplace* to *overall relations in the workplace*, and in 2019 it was changed again to *behaviour of subordinates towards superiors*. The concept of item C, *non-monetary benefits*, was in 2018 replaced with *earnings stability*. Also, a number of other changes were made to this item over the course of the years, when the term used to refer to benefits changed (from *benefits* to *bonuses*) and the examples and the overall wording of the item were also changed.

Although the different versions of the items always work well enough in the overall construct of the SQWLi, after a change in concept they in themselves are then measuring something different. Non-invariance was expected here; and demonstrating its occurrence specifically in the years in which these changes were made is in fact strong evidence to support the validity of the results of our analyses. Even without an analysis of invariance it is clear that it makes no sense to observe these items separately over time as a single phenomenon; consequently, when we confirm problems with the items in the invariance models, this does not call the instrument as a whole into question. On the contrary, the fact that even when substantive changes are made to two items the construct as a whole and its individual factors still function in a satisfactory manner supports the conclusion that for the observed years it is possible to treat the instrument as invariant.

The non-invariance of the other items can be explained by a change in their formulation, and again the year that our analysis identifies as a critical or problem year corresponds to the year in which a change was actually made in the questionnaire.

I (harmonisation): In 2017 the item's formulation was changed from *so that your work allows you enough time for your family, interests, and relaxation* and became *so that your work does not interfere with your personal time, i.e. time for family, interests or relaxation*.

L (independence): In 2014 the item's formulation was changed from *perform work independently* and became *to have the opportunity to decide on your own work tasks, organise your work independently*.

M (contract): In 2014 *type of economic activity* was a new aspect added to the characteristics of a person's employment relationship (*employee/self-employed*), while the aspect of whether the work is a *primary or secondary job* was removed; and in 2017 the aspect of *full- or part-time contract* was added.

N (security): In 2014 the item's formulation *job security* was changed to *employment security*, and in 2016 it was changed again and became *to be sure you don't lose your job*.

O (chances): The formulation of this item was changed frequently: *…opportunity and possibilities for employment in the labour market* (2009); *…you gained an opportunity and possibilities for further employment in the labour market* (2011); *… at work you were able to advance your chances…* (2014); *…you sense from your work that you have a chance of finding further employment in the labour market* (2016); *…so that your work gives you the chance of further possible employment in the labour market* (2017).

Q (equipment): In 2014 the item's formulation was changed from *technical equipment in the workplace* to *technical equipment for work.*

All the items that we expected to have problems were indeed revealed to have problems by at least one of the methods used, except for item E (superiors). Most of them were directly uncovered by AM, some were only uncovered when we

used EFA or MG CFA. The analysis also showed that the items that were not expected to have problems because they did not undergo very pronounced or frequent changes over the years were not revealed to have problems in the invariance analysis; an exception to this is item Q (equipment). In return, it can also be noted that those items that were not found to be problematic by any of the methods of analysis were the very ones to which the least changes had been made over the course of the years.

That the main problems uncovered in the analysis can be explained by actual changes made to the instrument, and vice versa, is in our view a good result. We acknowledge, however, that we are unable to explain some questions. An example is item E (superiors), where we expected that the change in the item formulation from *behaviour of superiors to subordinates* to *behaviour of people in a higher-ranking position (superiors, clients, etc.) to those in a lower-ranking position* in 2014 and then the return to the original formulation in 2019 would lead to greater invariance problems. By contrast, we did not expect to have a problem with item Q (equipment), which throughout the observed period had its formulation changed only once, in 2014, from *technical equipment in the workplace* to *technical equipment for work*. And with item M (contract), for example, the problems that were revealed do not match up with the years in which the changes were made to the item as well as they do in the case of other items.

One reason for these unexpected results may be that the magnitude of the changes and their potential effect on invariance are subjectively determined by us. In fact, we make attempts to gauge the cognitive processes of respondents when they are answering a question – i.e. the interpretations that they make individually within the context of the overall list of questions and the many interactions of meanings that then occur between individual questions. In some cases, we have no clear guideline on how to determine whether, for instance, a particular change in formulation is insignificant or if it will cause a more significant change in the item's meaning; or whether a significant change in meaning will then perhaps alter the actual concept the item is measuring. It is possible that in one context even with a bigger linguistic change there will be no change in what an item means to respondents (E), while in a different context to change even a single word could significantly alter the item's meaning (Q). What follows from this is that we cannot in advance estimate absolutely all of the effects on invariance that may occur solely on the basis of a subjective assessment of the number and magnitude of the changes.

Because the overall results of the AM are good for both batteries, it is possible to compare the factor means and the indices for both batteries. With respect to individual items, however, it is necessary to proceed very cautiously. Given that neither full nor partial scalar invariance was confirmed by the MG CFA, it is not possible to compare the averages of all the items across all years. At the same time, the results of the AM provide information on specific items. In the *importance* battery there is full invariance between items B, G, J, K, L, P, and R,

there is minimal non-invariance for items A, M, O, C, D, H, and Q, items I and F are borderline non-invariant, and it is definitely not possible to compare item N over time. We have the same information also for the *evaluation* dimension, where items A, B, E, K, N, and R are fully invariant, there is a minimal share of non-invariance for items D, G, J, M, O, P, H, Q, there is borderline invariance for item C, while items F, I, and L are non-invariant over time.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to test the quality of the SQWLi instrument in terms of its measurement invariance over time and through our analyses contribute to the discussion of measurement invariance as such. Our objective was to determine to what extent certain changes in a research instrument have an adverse effect on measurement invariance and thus on the comparability of time series data, and how strong an effect the different changes and modifications (that in reality for various reasons occur in the instrument over time) have on measurement invariance.

It is good to point out that an inverse reading of the results can answer the question of what kinds of changes and what instrument parameters, and under what conditions, do not lead to the incomparability of the measurement. Undoubtedly it is optimal to examine such questions under the specific conditions of a controlled experiment within the framework of an experimental and a control group schema. We have also conducted this type of examination of the SQWLi instrument in other studies, using more experimentally designed data (different versions of the instrument in single split sample surveys). This type of examination is clearly much better for assessing whether the measurement invariance is disrupted by the change in the instrument or by the change of perception of the concept(s) over time. In this study we sought to answer a broader research question and, most importantly, to do so under the more common conditions of real (non-experimental) surveys, where instruments often change in time for various reasons, and where there is need to assess the invariance of their results as well.

In the case of the SQWLi research instrument we were able to confirm that there was no negative effect on the configural invariance even when the concept of the battery as a whole was changed from *satisfaction* to *evaluation*, or when individual changes were made to the question wording or when the order of questions in the questionnaire's administration was altered. The metric invariance was not fatally affected even by the relatively pronounced changes made to the rating scales, where the range, polarity, and even the value labels were changed. An important finding here, however, is that in some cases the metric invariance can be increased ex post by means of the proper harmonisation of data. The risk to the invariance of the SQWLi data only begins to appear on the level of scalar invariance, and how serious the problems that arise are corresponds mostly to the size and number of changes that the individual items underwent

over the years. Based on the results of the AM, however, we can also say that even imperfections among individual items do not generate fatal problems for the instrument as a whole and that even in this case the overall invariance of the instrument is confirmed.

It is possible then to conclude that the SQWLi questionnaire is suitable for creating time series of an index of overall working-life quality or for creating individual indices of more general domains and of specific aspects (the ones that did not undergo concept changes and with a minimal share of non-invariance) of working life in the Czech Republic. It is possible to use data obtained by versions of the instrument since 2009 for this purpose, because the methodological and technical modifications that were made to it over the course of the years did not have a major effect on its measurement invariance and thus on the comparability of the results.

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Appendix: coding and wording of items in the SQWLi questionnaire, 2019 version

Importance: 'Imagine, please, that you are currently deciding on a new job. For every aspect I am going to read to you, tell me how important or unimportant it is for you personally. Use a range from 0 to 10, where 0 stands for FULLY UNIMPORTANT and 10 for FULLY ESSENTIAL.'

Evaluation: 'Now I will again read aspects of working life, as before. But this time, evaluate whether your current main job is bad or good in that respect. Use the range from –5 to +5, where –5 means VERY BAD and +5 VERY GOOD.'

Item code	Item wording
A (earnings)	a) The amount of earnings, i.e. the amount of your salary or wages.
B (fair reward)	b) …your work results are financially rewarded in a fair way.
C (benefits/earnings stability)	c) Earnings stability, …your salary is regular and stable.
D (co-workers)	d) Relationships between co-workers.
E (superiors)	e) Behaviour of subordinates towards superiors.
F (bullying/subordinates)	e) Behaviour of superiors towards subordinates.
G (time demands)	g) Total duration of working hours.
H (time flexibility)	h) The distribution of working hours during the day or week.
I (harmonization)	i) …your work does not interfere with your personal time, i.e. time for family, interests or relax.
J (interestingness)	j) …interesting work.
K (development)	k) …opportunities for further education and personal development at work.
L (independence)	l) …opportunity to decide on your own work tasks, organize your work independently.
M (contract)	m) The nature of the employment relationship, i.e. whether you have a permanent or fixed-term contract, a full-time or part-time contract, whether you work as an employee or a self-employed, etc.
N (security)	n) …sure you don't lose your job.
O (chances)	o) …your work gives you the chance of further possible employment in the labour market.
P (h&s)	p) The level of occupational health and safety.
Q (equipment)	q) Technical equipment for work.
R (hygiene)	r) Cleanliness, tidiness and hygiene at work.

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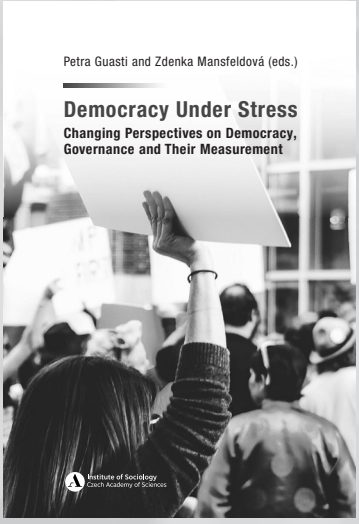
Democracy, defined as liberal pluralism, is under stress worldwide. Pluralistic democratic institutions such as: a free press, civil society, and the rule of law all seem to be under attack. Democracies are being hollowed out from within while preserving the fundamental facade of elections.



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

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

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

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Institute of Sociology
Czech Academy of Sciences

Ronald F. Inglehart

Ronald F. Inglehart was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on 5 September 1934. His childhood was marked by the last years of the Great Depression and by the Second World War, which he followed with great fascination on the radio and in the press with his older brother. In high school, in a Chicago suburb, he was a news editor and a passionate actor in plays and musicals, a passion he never lost. He began his undergraduate studies at Harvard, switched to Stanford, and finally graduated from Northwestern University. He joined the army for a couple of years, where he made his dream of visiting Europe come true. He was responsible for analysing world events for the troops, an activity that led him to study political science. He obtained his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1967 and that year he formally began his career as a professor at the University of Michigan, where decades later he would become a professor emeritus.

In 1968 he went to France to conduct a survey on the reasons for the May protests and understand voters' choices in that summer's elections. His results contradicted the dominant Marxist view of class voting; they also captured a series of new and distinctive concerns among young people. His curiosity led him to conduct a survey among students from various European countries while he was a Fulbright scholar in the Netherlands in 1969. The survey's central theme was the prospects for European integration. His findings and interpretations went against the tide again, this time against one of the great figures of Modernisation Theory, Karl W. Deutsch. The publication of his results in a renowned scientific journal caught the attention of a high-ranking official in the European Community, Jacques René Rabier, who invited Inglehart to be a consultant on the design and implementation of European comparative surveys.

The first survey was conducted in 1970 in several countries and had as a central component the questions Inglehart posed to measure his hypothesis: that an intergenerational change in values was taking place in post-industrial societies. These data allowed Inglehart to publish in 1971 one of the most cited articles in the discipline, 'The Silent Revolution in Europe', in which he lay the foundations of a theory of value change that he would continue to develop during the next fifty years, which eventually became Evolutionary Modernisation Theory. Eurobarometer surveys were crucial in accumulating empirical evidence of intergenerational value change, and, amidst debate and controversy, Inglehart's theory became an example of successful prediction in political science. It also represented a paradigm shift, posing substantial differences from the Almond and Verba model of civic culture, based on citizen allegiance to the political system.

Inglehart documented an intergenerational shift in values from materialist priorities, focused on physical and physiological security, to postmaterialist

values, guided by a sense of self-expression and quality of life. The young post-materialists were highly defiant of political elites, while they also showed new forms of democratic expression. Their findings influenced academic research on issues like political action, environmental values, the women's movement, and other areas that reflected the emergence of new issues of political and party conflict, as well as the redefinition of the classic axis of left and right into a new left and a new right divide. Inglehart's theory explained cultural evolution and the role that existential security plays, but it reflected an evolution in itself through the continuous collection of survey data. Inglehart was involved in the effort to continually study the values of Europeans, a project that gradually became, under his leadership, a study of values at a global level. The World Values Survey is today the most widely used resource in the social sciences and has served as a model for developing other international comparative surveys.

With more than 250 academic publications and multiple books, Inglehart stands out as the most cited political scientist. His various accolades include the Johan Skytte Prize, which is considered the equivalent of a Nobel Prize in political science. The Laboratory for Comparative Social Research (LCSR) that he founded in Russia in 2010 bears his name today. His work is one of the examples of scientific dedication throughout a lifetime. After battling a lung disease for the past decade, Inglehart passed away peacefully at his home in Ann Arbor on 8 May 2021. He is survived by his wife Marita, three daughters, two sons, and several grandchildren.

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An Interview with Shamus R. Khan for the *Czech Sociological Review*

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Shamus Rahman Khan is professor of sociology and American Studies at Princeton University. He writes on culture, inequality, gender, and elites. He is the author of over 100 articles, books, and essays, including *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St Paul's School* (Princeton), *The Practice of Research* (Oxford, with Dana Fisher), *Approaches to Ethnography: Modes of Representation and Analysis in Participant Observation* (Oxford, with Colin Jerolmack), and *Sexual Citizens: Sex, Power, and Assault on Campus* (W. W. Norton, with Jennifer Hirsch). He was a co-Principal Investigator of SHIFT, a multi-year study of sexual health and sexual violence at Columbia University. He directed the working group on the political influence of economic elites at the Russell Sage Foundation, is the series editor of 'The Middle Range' at Columbia University Press, and served as the editor of the journal *Public Culture*. He writes regularly for the popular press such as *The New Yorker, The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*, and has served as a columnist for *Time* magazine. In 2016 he was awarded Columbia University's highest teaching honour, the Presidential Teaching Award, and in 2018 he was awarded the Hans L. Zetterberg Prize from Uppsala University for 'the best sociologist under 40'. For more information, including links to his written work, see: http://shamuskhan.com.

This interview took place on 18 February 2020 in Prague and Portland, Oregon, using Skype. It was transcribed, edited, and completed in May 2020.

Ondřej Lánský: *You published* Privilege *(2011) ten years ago. This book is probably your most considerable sociological work. The main topic is the ethnography of St Paul's School, which is a boarding school providing high school education that was founded in 1865. You are the son of an Irish mother and a father who was born in Pakistan. Your father knew poverty before he became a physician. Your parents encouraged you to be a student at St Paul's and you later decided to conduct empirical sociological research there. This kind of school prepares students for a special type of life, a life of the elite. What were*

your most important findings? What can we say about the contemporary American elite, which you call the 'new elite'? And what has changed when we compare it with 19th-century elites – those from the so-called 'Gilded Age'?

Shamus R. Khan: St Paul's is a place where boys and girls, ages 14 to 18 years old, attend school just before going to university. It's one of the wealthiest educational institutions in the world, with an endowment of well over $500 million. With just five hundred students it has more than a million dollars per student in endowment funds, which is just an enormous amount of money. Even with all that money, it still costs a lot of money to attend. It wasn't nearly as expensive when I was there, but I think today it's probably somewhere around $50 000 per year to go to the school.

St Paul's has long been associated with American elites. The former secretary of state and presidential candidate John Kerry went to St Paul's. And when he went to St Paul's, he played on the hockey team with Robert Mueller, the head of the FBI and the person who investigated Donald Trump. Mueller and Kerry lived with Gary Trudeau, who is one of the most famous American cartoonists. His political cartoon, *Doonesbury*, is one of the most famous American political cartoons of the 20th century, and is named after his roommate, Ed Pillsbury, who is the heir to a massive American fortune. His family made baked goods and flour.

And so if you think for a moment, this is a place where an heir to a major American fortune, the future head of the FBI, a future senator, presidential nominee, and secretary of state, and one of the most influential cartoonists all lived together as teenage boys. And so I was very interested in studying at a place like this because there's so much – maybe not scholastically but culturally – about how America is different than Europe. It doesn't have this aristocratic legacy. America has a different character and relationship with capitalism. It's not that it's a utopia, but, there's this idea of exceptionalism.

I wanted to challenge that by studying at a place like St Paul's – maybe not an aristocratic institution but certainly not a democratic and open one. One of the main things I found in my ethnography was that it's still a very elite place, but that the nature of eliteness has changed. My argument about the new elite is that the former elites, even in the 1960s but certainly in the Gilded Age, often thought of themselves as a kind of class, a class for themselves. That is, they weren't just a class because they shared an economic position, but they shared a collective recognition of one another.

But today, instead of thinking of themselves as a class, as being part of a group because of their families, because of their ties to institutions, because of their position in American history, elites think of themselves as very, very talented. And yet I argue that this cultural transformation isn't really that reflected in material reality. That is, there still tends to be a class. They still tend to go to the same kinds of schools. They still tend to come from the same kinds of families,

which is to say wealthy families. But the rhetoric around the elite has changed and that rhetoric has really embraced a logic of a meritocracy. So, they suggest that they're not where they are because they're part of a class. They're there because they're very talented individuals.

That's what I end up arguing in the book: the material conditions may not have radically changed that much, but the cultural context and framing of the groups has. I think that this is very important for understanding the elite because they think in very individualistic terms, and thinking in individualistic terms has consequences for the social policies that they support. For example, in terms of why people are poor and what we should do about it, and also, why people are rich and what the responsibility of rich people is to a society in general.

Ondřej Lánský: *Can you explain your term the 'ease of privilege'? Because I think that it is linked with your remark.*

Shamus R. Khan: The ease of privilege emerges from my Bourdieusian approach. I'm very much tied to the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and initially, I've actually used the term *habitus* throughout the book. I wrote about the ways in which students had a set of dispositions that made them comfortable across a range of spaces. My editor didn't like the term, so he said, 'Look, it's too academic. You're writing a book that has a broader appeal than that. It's going to be read by, you know, first-year college students, et cetera.' And so he asked, 'Can you think of a different way of articulating this?'

I changed the term *habitus* to *ease*, and it's funny because it's become what the book is known for, I think. But the idea of the ease of privilege comes directly from Bourdieu and the idea is that privilege is an embodied disposition that emerges from spending a lot of time at elite institutions. Instead of conveying that social positions are inherited, the ease of privilege, the ease with which they move through the world, naturalises socially produced distinctions.

So in some ways, it's a very parallel argument to Bourdieu. But applying these insights to an American case, with younger students, shows something actually quite different than what Bourdieu argues in *Distinction* (1979). Because in the US, the ease has to reflect an openness rather than social closure. In the *State of Nobility* (1996) and in *Distinction*, we see this incredible attempt to make one's culture look very different than everybody else's.

And what I found in the United States was that people were trying to make their culture seem very open, capacious, you know, receptive, and that the people who were closed off, who were making distinctions, were people who were closed-minded, from the lower classes, et cetera. The elites were like Thomas Friedman's characters who thought of the world as flat and available, and functioned in that way. That is a big part of the character of ease, and points to one big distinction between my findings and those of Bourdieu.

And the book is actually structured in such a way that the first person you meet is a guy named Chase Abbott, who is from a classic elite American family and is struggling at school. He represents to me an archetypical person who Bourdieu would predict would be successful. I explain his failure by his explicit attempts to highlight his cultural difference; he doesn't have this ease across a wide range of contexts. He's constantly trying to create distinctions.

Ondřej Lánský: *Is it possible to say that one of the moments of this ease of privilege is something like ideology?*

Shamus R. Khan: I don't describe it as ideology, but I think one could easily think about it as ideology. So, the ideology that I would attribute to it would be an ideology of meritocracy. And I would note how that ideology isn't always reflected in practice. There's an ideological framework that emphasises how much the world has changed, and how now things are open and available, and if you just act in the right way, things will come to you if you are talented enough.

The argument I've made in this paper called 'Saying Meritocracy and Doing Privilege' (2012) is about the ways in which the ideology of the elite is one that presents the world as a meritocratic place where talents help you get ahead, but the practice of everyday people is a practice of privilege, which is a way in which ease really matters in helping people traverse social contexts. That practice emerges from spending time within elite institutions, and so it's incredibly costly to acquire.

Ondřej Lánský: *And is it now possible to study how this shapes everyday social policy or politics in the United States?*

Shamus R. Khan: I mean, it could be, yes, and I think that there's been a lot of really interesting work recently. Steven Brint, who is a sociologist in California, has just published a piece showing that the impact of an elite university pedigree is the most felt in cultural fields and the least in business and other kinds of areas. So if you look at different kinds of elites and ask where an elite educational pedigree really matters, it's academics and cultural producers of all kinds. This, I would say, is very important for the production of a kind of cultural ethos, where the people who are responsible for or take the most active role in the production of American culture are people who come from very, very elite educational institutions.

And so sometimes I think academics blame the business sector for the ideological dimensions that serve as the underpinning of public policy or our collective understanding. But I think this ignores the deep ways in which our own (academic) cultural logics are even more infused with being a part of elite institutions than other parts of American society.

Ondřej Lánský: *You, of course, know the work of political scientist Jeffrey A. Winters on oligarchy. What is the main difference between elites and oligarchy? Which term is better for understanding contemporary social and cultural processes, and which one works better in the political sphere of society?*

Shamus R. Khan: So you know, this may be an answer that favours my work over Jeffrey's, and I don't mean it that way, but I think not all elites construct oligarchies, but oligarchs are types of elites. So, there would be a broad category of elites, of which oligarchy is a type. In other work of mine, I've described elites as those with vastly disparate control over or access to resources and so for me, the question of elites is, 'What resources do they have control over or access to and how vastly different is that access or control?'

You could call me cynical, but I think all societies will have elites. There will almost always be some group of people who have vastly disparate proportionate access to some resources. The question is how vast that is and how powerful that allows that group or those individuals to be. And in some instances, what you get are oligarchical systems where the vastness of the control is particularly concentrated within a political and economic alliance, and under those conditions you'll see oligarchies.

But we don't see them everywhere. Which isn't to say that they're unimportant, and I actually think that right now in the United States, as well as in the Czech Republic, the analysis of elites being oligarchical is something that's very sensible. It seems to me an accurate description of what's happening.

Ondřej Lánský: *In your analyses of the elite, you are using ethnography as a research methodology and the notion of elite as a basic conceptual tool, but you also use some Marxist figures and theses. I am convinced that your overall attitude is driven by deep Marxian convictions and possibly Zeit diagnoses, or something like that, which is that social inequality is simply unjust. Therefore, this leads you to a very activist position in your work, I think. I would say that your sociology is critical, critically-theoretical in some respects. Am I right?*

Shamus R. Khan: Yes. I attended graduate school to go work with Erik Olin Wright, the analytic Marxist, and he was my advisor for the first four years. And interestingly, my brother is a PhD in political science and works in and runs nonprofit organisations in England. He worked, in part, with Gerald A. Cohen (called Gerry or Jerry by his friends) at Oxford, and so we both had this deep influence by Marxism. There was something in Erik and, to a lesser extent, Gerry – because Gerry asked moral questions – but there was something about the analytic Marxists that, I thought, lost the moral outrage about the structure of societies.

I think where I'm not a Marxist anymore is in my commitment to a large range of inequalities that aren't just about class. So questions of nationhood, eth-

nicity, gender, and sexuality are all very important to me and I don't think that they can be derived from a class analysis. But I do think that one of the great advantages of a Marxian position – not the analytic Marxists but a range of Marxists – is reclaiming a language of morality for the left and talking about morality not in conservative terms, but in terms of what is just, and what we owe one another, and what basic human flourishing is and looks like.

This is where I do think Gerry Cohen was very helpful. I love his book *If You're an Egalitarian, How Come You're So Rich?* (2000). For me, as an American academic, it's a book that has a biting personal character to it. I think this moral tradition has had a huge impact on me and it really started with an undergraduate advisor of mine who was kind of a Leninist, I would say. The question of moral outrage, I think, is one of the spaces where Marxism actually really has a powerful thing to say with its almost emotional valence and with the ideas of alienation et cetera. It's, I think, not by chance that Marxism has been picked up and has an almost richer life in humanist disciplines in comparison to other kinds of sociological analyses – in part because of this tradition of alienation and this very emotive form of understanding.

Ondřej Lánský: *You are also the co-author of a new book,* Sexual Citizens. *It was published in January 2020. Could you please share your findings with us? Why did you choose this topic? How is it possible to link your previous theme of the elite with this new subject, which is in general about sexual assault?*

Shamus R. Khan: It's a co-authored book with Jennifer S. Hirsch, who is an anthropologist, and the book is based upon a much larger research project on sexual violence on college campuses, which I've been publishing from over the last four years. That research project involved 30 researchers who did quantitative and qualitative studies, and I co-headed the qualitative studies with Jennifer.

The project asked why it is that sexual assaults are so common among young people, and what can be done to prevent them.

The real focus is on prevention, so it's a public health approach. So much of the attention to sexual assault is on adjudication – 'What do we do after an assault happens?' – and this project asks, 'What do we do to make it less likely to happen?' I would point to three main themes from my previous work that really tie in with this book.

The first is an attention to inequality. Inequality, as it turns out, is hugely important for explaining sexual assault. People within the LGBTQ community are much more likely to experience assaults. Gender inequality has a huge impact on assaults. In our work, we find that students who have difficulty paying for their basic needs are much more likely to experience assaults. So, there's a class basis to sexual assault, to being victimised. So the first theme would be a study of inequality and its relationship to sexual assault.

The second theme would be that the book is based upon an ethnography of Columbia University and so it is an ethnography of an elite educational institution of young people. In some ways, it is a follow-up to the study of St Paul's. Students from St Paul's end up at disproportionate rates at places like the Ivy League, of which Columbia is a member. In some ways, in the next phase of educational life and, in this instance, through a different lens: with a keen attention to their sexual lives.

And the third theme relates to what I said earlier, which is about the ways in which the left has sort of abandoned the language of morality. When we think about sexual morality, we often think about things like conservative sexual morality, about who you should and should not be having sex with. So we think about morality and sexuality relative to, for example, questions of gay and lesbian people, or whether or not it's ethical to have sex outside of the context of marriage, et cetera. But there's another way to think about sexual morality, which is just how you treat the person that you're in a sexual situation with. Is it a treatment that is based on a fundamental respect for human dignity? I think that there's a lot to be said about that. The idea of the book *Sexual Citizens* is the idea that we fail to raise young people who have a sense of their own right to sexual self-determination, that they have the right to say yes and the right to say no to sex. But there's a second part to it, which is that the person that they're having sex with has the same rights. They're not just an object for their pleasure, but instead, someone who is a parallel, morally equivalent person.

Ondřej Lánský: *What do you think about the general role of elites and the super-rich in politics and society? We are sometimes confronted with news concerning the efforts to lengthen human life to almost immortality. For example, Google launched the subcompany Calico to solve the problem of death. Many famous persons share this dream. Peter Thiel, a co-founder of PayPal, declared that he aims to live forever, and Elon Musk of Tesla obviously dreams about space travel, maybe even about moving to Mars, and so on. Are we witnessing 'elite escapism' from a burning Earth?*

Shamus R. Khan: I think we're witnessing a bunch of things. One is that elites believe their own fantasies. They have become believers in the fantasy that these people are just so talented and that's what explains their position. It's utter fantasy. It's utter fantasy for the founders of Google. It's utter fantasy for Zuckerberg. It's utter fantasy for Musk. But they actually seem to believe it.

They seem to really think that they are superhuman and so they have begun to ignore the structural kinds of advantage that they have, and deny the role of pure chance in outcomes. We have these 'winner-takes-all markets' and they seem to sincerely think that they are just profoundly talented and skilled. It's very interesting to see them subsume their entire lives under a delusion.

And I think, disturbingly, we profoundly enable this. We enable this with our tax policy, basically. We're doing this right now with Bloomberg, who is go-

ing to spend billions of dollars on an election. I mean, he even noted that he will continue to spend billions of dollars even if he's not the nominee. *[This interview took place in February 2020.]* I don't think he'll actually do it and this is upending political science right now because all of the work in political science suggests that money doesn't matter that much for elections, but suddenly, it seems like it really matters. It's just that people hadn't spent enough yet for it to matter.

But Bloomberg is similar to Trump in imagining that since they run a business, they know how to run a country. And because they're wealthy, they're good at everything. They just are really super-talented human beings and we've produced this world where they are supported in believing that.

I don't know that they're trying to escape from a burning planet, because I think that they'll actually be able to escape from a burning planet on this planet. I think that Peter Theil's orientation towards New Zealand is not a mistake. New Zealand has a lot of mountains and high areas that will weather the flooding. It's unlikely to experience, given its physical location, the kinds of horrible weather conditions that we'll see in other places. And so they'll just find places to live on the planet and in countries that are like small islands of isolation away from the suffering of everyone else.

Ondřej Lánský: *What are the most important topics in contemporary sociology, by which I mean both empirical and theoretical fields of research? Could you please answer this question in general and also share with us your personal view on this? What are the most important topics in sociology for you?*

Shamus R. Khan: I do think that we're facing some major and potentially catastrophic crises and that we haven't dedicated enough attention to them. So I really do think the environment requires a range of sociological accounts from a broader understanding of how it is that people respond to the climate crisis. So right now, in the United States, we function largely under the fantasy that all that matters is the science and we should just debate whether or not it's going to be two degrees Celsius or three degrees Celsius that ruins us, and that the answer to that question is going to somehow drive policy.

And then, secondly, to return to my kind of theme, inequalities are hugely related to the climate crisis. Poor countries are going to be profoundly impacted. The climate crisis – and I don't use this word lightly – is potentially genocidal for certain cultures. What is going to happen to Bangladesh? We could wipe out 200 million people from the Earth or force them into refugee contexts; that will be catastrophic. Whole areas in and around Saharan Africa are going to be completely at a loss in terms of having absolutely no water, so where one place is flooded, elsewhere another people will be starving or dying of thirst. These are borderline genocidal outcomes. We've decided to accept this. And I think it requires not a scientific intervention of what the causes are, but instead, a sociological analysis. And I think that we must do this. I'm not dedicating

myself to it in any way, but I think that as a discipline, it is going to be hugely important.

And the third thing is that sociology has been highly dominated by a pretty narrow set of ideas that have emerged from a pretty narrow set of empirical contexts. Most of our theoretical models come from empirical studies based in the United States, England, France, and Germany, and, if you look at the world, these are very non-representative cases. They're actually deeply related to one another. They're systematically biased, there's a huge level of provincialism across all of those national contexts to not even take seriously significant differences in other parts of the world. So that, I think, is a huge thing that we need to pay attention to. I would say climate, a sociology that is much more global, and across all of them, attention to inequalities.

Ondřej Lánský: *Does this mean that we have to decolonise sociology?*

Shamus R. Khan: I think that it means a lot of things. It means that the institutional orientations are to support ourselves – and by ourselves I mean Americans – to go do work in other contexts, and that strikes me as the wrong way to go about it. We should support the work of people in those local contexts who want to do the kind of work that they want to do. So in the decolonial sense, I think yes, because right now, our orientation is to understand what's happening in Bangladesh, to understand Laos, to understand Pakistan. I mean, what we do is we send people there and they come back with reports, and that's a kind of colonial orientation too.

The other way would be to say that we should actually read the work of people from those spaces instead of assuming that they just don't understand Bourdieu correctly in the ways in which they apply the concepts. We should ask ourselves whether or not our Bourdieusian understanding is based in a very, very localised empirical context and that we're getting things wrong because of that.

Ondřej Lánský: *Does this mean that sociological thinking should always be connected with praxis, and should always be political?*

Shamus R. Khan: I would say that my sociological work will always be. But I don't think everyone should be. I don't know. I like having a discipline where some people just aren't interested in that quest of praxis, and what they want to do is to develop a methodological technique or they want to study something that they have a deep commitment to, such as someone who wants to look at 10th-century Korea because they think it is just inherently valuable to know things.

And I do think that one of the great parts of being an academic is a deep commitment, an almost aesthetic commitment, to knowing things. I want to be

in a discipline where people who want to engage in praxis are not punished for doing so, but that people who don't want to, the people who are interested in something else, can also do their kind of intellectual work.

Ondřej Lánský: *Shamus, thank you very much for your responses.*

Daniel Markovits: ***The Meritocracy Trap: How America's Foundational Myth Feeds Inequality, Dismantles the Middle Class, and Devours the Elite***
New York 2019: Penguin Random House, 448 pp.

Approaching the book, I asked myself, could a professor from Yale Law School write a well-documented and theoretically innovative sociological book? The answer is a clear, yes. This book offers the reader a challenging and well-thought-out stance on some current problems affecting the United States. Moreover, it breaks up the positive connotations that are generally ascribed to individual qualities, such as merit and effort. Merit is a fundamental principle in contemporary societies; often seen as a public good that should be preserved to permit the flourishment of a community. A meritocratic society is often presented as the opposite of systems ruled by corruption, heredity, and privilege. Markovits criticises both worlds, showing their similarities and proposing a third way. However, why criticise a merit-based society? Is that the best we could imagine?

Markovits is not the first to cast doubts on a meritocratic society. The sociologist Michael Young did so before him, in 1958, in his book *The Rise of the Meritocracy*. Young described a dystopian society settled in the year 2034 and governed by a meritocratic elite. The book sought out to provide a satirical description of the distortions generated by a merit-based system. However, far from offering an adequate warning of possible dangers, this book seems to have inspired politicians to further pursue the belief in a society based on merit. Meritocracy is rampant in societies today.

The present book is innovative in depicting how merit structures American society. The current elite is defined as workaholic and compared to a jobless working class and a middle class in decline. In the past, the elite used inherited wealth to enjoy free time and comfort. It was defined as the leisure class, and most of its daily activities were dedicated to pleasure and games. Conversely, the poor worked long hours to gain material resources and ensure the necessities of life. In a meritocratic society, the roles flipped. The elite overworks in high-paying jobs, and the poor are jobless or work fewer hours with more time dedicated to entertainment. At the beginning of the 20th century, working-class people were stuck at their job for more than 60 hours per week. Today, the working class works less than 40 hours per week. The once leisure class now works between 50 and 100 hours per week.

Why did the situation change so drastically? In an aristocratic society, social class and economic resources were acquired at birth. In this setting, individuals had no obligation to show that they deserved the material wealth they inherited because of their specific skills, qualities, or hard work. Being born into the right family was enough to gain social status. In a meritocratic society, the elite must earn economic resources by working hard, demonstrating higher intellectual abilities, and showing dedication. Moreover, the payoff for the workaholic elite is enormous. The income of the top 0.1% of the wealthiest individuals in the United States has seen a stunning increase in recent decades.

Schooling is critical to understanding the injustices determined by a meritocratic society. Reform of the British education system seems to have been what inspired Michael Young's book. Similarly, Markovits focuses most of his attention on schooling in the United States. Merit is not given at birth but can be attained through intensive training that is easily acquired with economic resources. Markovits describes how the current US elites spend vast amounts of money to reserve their children a spot in the best schools. The amount of cash spent from the time of birth to the attainment of

a college degree in a top university could well have been transferred in the bank account of the newborn. The sum would have been enough to provide a good life without the coercion of paid work. However, in a meritocratic society, social status and economic resources must be earned, and to this end, intense training is necessary.

The poor lack such economic resources and do not have access to the top institutions. This impedes their social mobility. For example, the empirics expose a problematic gap in educational attainment between the bottom quintile and the top quintile of the income distribution. Moreover, this gap has been increasing in recent decades, exacerbating previous disparities.

The middle class is not exempted from the malaise determined by meritocracy. The gap in educational attainment between the top income quintile and the middle quintile is larger than the gap between the middle and the bottom quintile of income distribution. Similarly, poverty decreased in the last decades, but the income of the middle class has been stagnating. Markovits challenges the claims made by Thomas Piketty in *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Piketty explained the increase in inequality and the struggle of the working class as caused by the gap in the income generated by wealth and wages. This idea is well captured in a short formula: R > G. R stands for rent coming from capital and wealth earned by an individual. G denotes the general growth of the economy. In short, Piketty argues that over time income generated by capital outgrows income from paid work. As the rich own more wealth, they are destined to grow wealthier than the working class, which is condemned to just small increases in income. Conversely, Markovits focuses on the disparity in wage growth between social classes. From 1950 to the present day, the income gap between the poor and the middle class decreased. By contrast, the gap between the middle class and the rich increased. Surprisingly, the wage gap that grew even more is the one between the rich and the super-rich. It is always critical to stress how much the top 0.1% earns and how detached it is from the rest of American society. So, the increase in inequality is not a story of wealth against wages, but one in which the super-rich work and earn more than ever.

The increasing gaps in educational outcomes, income, and the labour market are a clear signal of the distortions generated by meritocracy. Social class continues to be transferred from one generation to the next, but the process is justified by merit instead of heredity. Now, schooling enables the stratification of society, as skills and the diplomas from top institutions are provided only to the privileged who are able to pay the high tuition high fees and then gain exclusive access to the best and highest-paying jobs. Therefore, the current meritocratic society appears to have deep flaws and resembles an aristocracy, which Young predicted well in the dystopic book he published in 1958.

In a meritocracy, the elite, the middle class, and the poor live in suboptimal conditions. The elite is locked into a miserable life, filled with work and the pressure to perform in order to justify the social status and economic resources they earn. The middle class is being eroded and losing the competition with the rich, which has widened the gap in educational attainment, earnings, and work opportunities. The poor are losing the status of being the working class and are becoming jobless, economically irrelevant, and dedicated to futile entertainment. For Markovits, these dysfunctions are the inherent cause of the current problems and divisions in the United States. Some of the most acute symptoms are visible in the disparities, life span, substance addictions, and mental illnesses that plague some social groups. Similarly, populism and the intensying po-

litical polarisation reflect the feeling of unfairness among the population that is caused by a rigged system.

It is not always easy to highlight deep societal problems, but proposing solutions to them is far more complicated. Markovits confirms this rule. He devotes little space to possible solutions in the book, and the ones he offers might not convince everyone. Stating the flaws of the meritocratic ideology is an excellent way to start. Next, the author proposes some policies targeting education and taxation. An education system that perpetuates the transmission of elite status needs to be reformed. Democratising schooling opportunities would help a great deal in that it would give a larger proportion of the community a fair start. In practice, this means increasing the number of students in top educational institutions and introducing quotas for students with fewer material resources. Broadening skill acquisition would help make work more accessible to more individuals, resulting in the employment of a larger share of the population and lightening the load on over-workers.

Similarly, proportional taxation of income could make the system more just. Making every income group pay their fair share of taxes enables the creation of resources that could help those who are more in need. The book often makes reference to the post-Second World War world as an example of a fair society. This golden age of equality in the United States offers essential lessons for the current problems. For example, the higher level of taxation and income redistribution coupled with the expansion of the education system worked well in providing to the lower and middle class with essential material resources. In this period, the spirit of the America dream permitted high levels of social mobility. The poor and the middle class could climb the social ladder and reduce the gap with the rich more easily than they can today.

One possible criticism is that the author does not broadly discuss social characteristics such as gender and race. However, the choice is justified by the comparatively smaller gap in life outcomes determined by these characteristics compared to socioeconomic status. Therefore, the author's attention falls on the social trait that causes the most considerable inequalities. However, other social characteristics are not downplayed. Moreover, some social attributes might strongly correlate with socioeconomic status, such as being black in the United States. Similarly, other features might aggravate the inequalities determined by socioeconomic status as disabilities.

Non-American readers might have concerns about the validity of the argument for other national contexts. For example, are European countries trapped by merit? Are the generous Scandinavian welfare states free from the distortions of a meritocracy? Without sound data at hand and a thorough analysis, it is not easy to provide a clear answer to these questions. Nonetheless, Markovits cites Germany as offering an excellent example of an egalitarian schooling system. Here, universities are mostly public and free. Similarly, Norway is praised for its smaller Gini coefficient (an indicator used to capture income inequality), while Sweden is listed as a country where the elite do not work very long hours. In the United States colleges are often private and have high tuition fees, the Gini coefficient there is substantial, and elites are workaholics. These few examples expose how meritocracy is a malaise that significantly affects American society. Nevertheless, Germany and the Nordic countries could also suffer as a result of their fair share of dysfunctions determined by the meritocratic structure of their societies.

The book is powerful in its key arguments and its clarity. It profoundly affects the perception of fairness and justice that make up a good society and reframes the

virtues attached to merit and effort. Merit can be bought and helps to justify and sustain a rigged system that does not work well for all social classes. The dystopic society that was already depicted by Young has proven to become a reality. This book is pushing us to disabuse ourselves of the illusions created by the ideology of meritocracy and create a fairer society that does not justify the allocation of privilege based on merit but looks for more equality.

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Adam Przeworski: *Crises of Democracy*
Cambridge 2019: Cambridge University Press, 239 pp.

The political and economic contexts of consolidated democracies have changed markedly in recent decades. We have seen an end to the high growth rates of the postwar era, low-income wages have stagnated, intergenerational mobility has declined, and income and wealth are increasingly accumulating in the hands of the few. On the political front, declining popular support for democracy is observed as the traditional party systems are challenged by the rise of radical right parties that promote populist, anti-establishment, and xenophobic attitudes and policies. Add to this the most recent development: a global pandemic that has yielded emergency powers to democratic governments and made society (it is to be hoped temporarily) resemble some Orwellian dystopia in which citizens acquiesce to severely limited freedom of movement and social interactions. In addressing such challenges to democracy, it is hard to think of a timelier book than *Crises of Democracy*.

At its core, *Crises of Democracy* is about democratic deconsolidation. The book adds to a recent surge of academic and popular writings that offer perspectives on the state of democracy that differ widely in their degree of optimism. Yet *Crises of Democracy* is not like many of the other recent contributions. Rather than trying to convince the reader of a certain perspective on the current state of democracy, Przeworski invites us on a tour of the most important academic debates and encourages us to engage critically with the evidence at hand as well as with recent events and developments. Przeworski acknowledges early on that 'some readers will be disappointed by how often' the book fails 'to arrive at firm conclusions', while stressing that 'one should not believe the flood of writings that have all the answers' (p. xii). The book, therefore, is probably best understood as a critical discussion of the state of democracy and of related academic work. It raises many important, and difficult, questions, most of which are left unanswered, but may serve as a source of contemplation and inspiration for future academic work.

The heart of the book is divided into three parts with a clear, logical structure. It starts with the premise that if we wish to understand crises of democracy, we need to clarify what we mean by 'democracy' and 'crisis'. Przeworski adopts a minimalist/electoralist view of democracy and therefore focuses on 'possible threats to elections becoming non-competitive or inconsequential for whoever remains in power' (p. 5). Through a clever discussion of the defining features of democracy, Przeworski unarms critics who advocate for a more particular definition of democracy and clarifies that 'possible threats' should be understood broadly to include attacks on the preconditions of contested elections – such as liberal rights and freedoms – erosion of judicial independence,

loss of confidence in representative institutions, high levels of inequality, and the use of repression to maintain public order. This clarifying introductory discussion also serves to exemplify the many different factors that can pose a threat to democratic rule, and which we should be on the lookout for.

The first part of the book illuminates the lessons of the past by analysing historical data as well as four historical cases in which democracy faced an existential crisis. At the risk of oversimplifying, the historical analysis informs us that democracy is at the highest risk of dying in countries that have (1) an uneasy experience with democracy and (2) democratic institutions that are not conducive to majority rule. Moreover, poor economic conditions – for instance, low levels of economic development and growth and high levels of inequality – as well as intense political and societal divisions are strong predictors of democratic backsliding (chapters 2 and 3). Yet the author stresses that while certain conditions can increase (or decrease) the risk of democratic deconsolidation, in the end it is the actions of people that are decisive. Looking to both the present and the future, we can thus only use history as a guide to identify the *signs* of democratic crises; we cannot use it to predict outcomes in real time.

Informed by the historical analysis in part 1 of the book, part 2 explores the signs and potential causes of democratic crises in present-day democracies. In chapter 5, Przeworski highlights three signs of potential democratic crisis: (1) the erosion of the traditional party systems, (2) the rise of populist radical-right parties, and (3) the decline of support for democracy in public opinion surveys. With respect to the declining voter base of traditional centre-left and centre-right parties and the rise of new – in particular right-wing populist – parties (signs 1 and 2), Przeworski notes that, considering the universality of this phenomenon, 'something strange is going on' (p. 87). Yet, he also acknowledges that it remains unclear whether these developments, in fact, are ominous signs for democracy. It may be that new parties have an easier time adapting to a rapidly changing world, and thereby respond to shifting voter sentiments, whereas the 'old' parties, bound by tradition and history, are slower at adapting their policy stances. In recent years, for instance, the popularity of green parties has boomed, as climate change and the environment have become salient issues. This exemplifies how the book often refrains from making strong claims, but instead provides insightful discussions of recent political and economic developments. Przeworski, however, is unusually clear on whether declining support for democracy, as observed in public opinion surveys, is a troubling sign for democracy, discounting this trend by arguing that 'one should not draw inferences about the survival of democracy from answers to survey questions' (p. 102).

The rest of the second part of the book discusses potential causes of these signs of democratic crisis and focuses especially on economic factors and societal divisions/political polarisation. While this part of the book presents the most relevant possible explanations, it rarely tries to adjudicate between them. I suspect that some readers would have preferred Przeworski to take a stronger stance on some of these questions, but one of the very strengths of the book is that it introduces different arguments without trying to push one of them further. It provides a lot of food for thought. For readers who are interested in learning more about how political-economic changes in recent decades may explain some of the major tendencies that we observe in democracies today (some of which are discussed above), this part of the book will be a great starting point.

In the last part of the book, Przeworski looks into the future. Can democracy back-

slide even in developed, long-time democracies? And how would this likely happen? Przeworski argues that democracy works best when there is something at stake in an election, but not too much (chapter 9). Deep societal/political divisions are therefore dangerous, as the stakes will be too high. It may make governments more willing to go to extreme lengths to win on election day and to avoid making concessions to the opposition. In such divided democratic societies, we have seen in recent years how parties have changed electoral maps and rules to increase their odds of winning and how the voices of independent media have been muted. Many of these changes may, in and of themselves, not constitute a clear and visible break with democracy. They may not even constitute a breach of the constitution or any formal law. That does not make them any less concerning, however, as many small, incremental changes that are made in the same direction can add up and have a large cumulative effect. The book convincingly demonstrates that democratic backsliding is not something that happens overnight. Rather, it is a gradual erosion of democratic norms and institutions (chapter 10).

In this regard, a key dilemma that Przeworski discusses at some length is what reaction we can expect from the voters who benefit from the policies of a government that gradually subverts democracy. These voters will receive the policies that they prefer in the short run, but this will come at the cost of (gradual) democratic backsliding. Partisan voters, even if they support democracy, may tolerate minor violations of democratic norms and institutions as long as the policies they are getting the polices they want implemented. But in the long run the cumulative effect of many minor violations will be decisive. It will become apparent that a red line has been crossed; that democracy is in peril. Przeworski teaches us that, as voters who care about democracy, we should not accept *any* violations of democratic norms, even if the result of the violations is policies that conform to our ideological convictions. There is something bigger at stake. In that sense, the discussion of the future of democracy should be considered as essential reading for any democratic citizen.

Overall, *Crises of Democracy* is an essential reading for anyone interested in the current state of affairs in consolidated democracies. The book engages with many difficult and complex questions, but it does so in a very accessible way. The book should thus strongly appeal to academics and non-academics alike who care about democracy and are worried about the current state of affairs.

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Isabela Mares and Lauren E. Young:
Conditionality & Coercion: Electoral Clientelism in Eastern Europe
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Along the sinuous course of post-communist transitions, the (re)construction of electoral democracy has meandered from 'inexorable optimism' (p. 4) to stalemate simultaneous challenges [Offe 2004], to unexpected Euro-success [Vachudova 2005) and recent 'backsliding' [Vanhuysse 2006, 2008; Greskovits 2015]. While a highly developed literature dissects most of these developments, some underlying phenomena that cut across porous conceptual boundaries, have remained under-researched. Picking up the gauntlet, Mares and Young delve into the intricacies of 'electoral practices premised on coercion or offers of contingent favors' as a gateway to raising 'broader questions about the achievements and shortcomings of democratic elections

in CEE' (p. 4). In their rich contribution, Mares and Young deploy a complex set of quantitative and qualitative methods so as to zoom in on the illicit practices that mar 'everyday electoral practices' (p. 5) in Romania and Hungary.

To begin, Mares and Young accurately sum up that when it comes to electoral practices, the otherwise vast literature on post-communist democratisation typically boils down to an over-reliance on elite tudies and on the programmatic linkages between parties and the electorate (p. 5). Although both resource-based and informational explanations offer rich accounts of the nature and use of clientelism, according to the authors the neat split between existing literatures underestimates the scope of agency (p. 33). To address this, Mares and Young propose a layered understanding wherein actors oscillate even within the same country and same party, based on resources used (public vs private) and the way in which they structure incentives (positive vs negative reinforcement) (pp. 17–21, Chapter 2). A first notable contribution to the literature is therefore that it shows how access to state resources enables clientelism, but neither necessitates nor fully explains it (p. 35). Rather, incumbency, co-partisanship with the national incumbent, the political fragmentation of local councils, and/or the magnitude of constituencies and their internal strife over social benefits increase the chances of state resources being deployed for clientelistic strategies (p. 35). This crates the analytical space for a secondary crucial contribution: it explains the co-constitutive relationship between informational explanations and resource-based accounts (pp. 39–41).

To pursue such a comprehensive agenda, typically difficult because of the illicit nature of the exchanges (p. 49), in Chapter 3 Mares and Young set out a multi-layered measurement strategy that combines traditional research methods with novel survey inquiries and experiments (p. 60). To disentangle clientelism and patronage from the network of strategies pursued by post-communist parties (p. 49), the authors start with non-obtrusive surveys that aim to measure incidence (p. 49). This is supplemented with a qualitative analysis that dissects the micro-level strategies that constitute causal channels (p. 49). List experiments are then used to bring in further data regarding the way in which voters themselves respond to clientelism (p. 49), which candidates have factored into their evolving strategies.

Chapter 4 draws on and further contributes to recent studies showing that a scarcity of policy resources does not mean the elimination of electoral clientelism (p. 74). Specifically, in Romania and Hungary, neoliberal reforms have stripped many potential brokers, most notably mayors, of a wide array of resources. But the general economic scarcity has revamped anti-poverty policies into a highly potent tool (p. 75). In this sense, mayors can use either workfare programmes, welfare benefits, or, more broadly speaking, general administrative-political services as personalised favours that demand reciprocation through electoral behaviour (p. 80). As such, state employees can generally behave as brokers through political services at all stages of the campaign and election (p. 86). Because considerations on social desirability warp respondents' answers (p. 89), Mares and Young rely on an experimental choice-based conjoint design to unearth the important finding that clientelistic strategies are received heterogeneously across socio-economic groups (pp. 93, 99, 111). In this regard, while Hungary is shown to display some evidence for the 'supply-side factors' (political and economic) that condition the costliness of positive inducements such as policy favours, in Romania the connections to the electorate seem more spurious (p. 105).

Chapter 5 explores the scope of non-programmatic, negative reinforcements,

where candidates threaten to take away goods or access to specific incomes deriving from policy programs (welfare benefits) (p. 116). The crucial conveyor belt is that social policy programmes in CEE have been typically designed so as to allow mayors important room to manoeuvre in the allocation of benefits. This in turn opens up space for politicians to structure 'incentives as threats' (p. 114), against the pre-electoral background of 'turning a blind eye to a variety of illegal actions' (p. 122). Moreover, in order to make the threat credible, mayors qua brokers strive to project an aura of unlimited discretion over allocation, doubled by a perception of 'capriciousness, arbitrariness and ruthlessness' (p. 120). At the same time, however, the multi-layered analysis show that candidates do not have fully free reign, because there is a clear potential of electoral punishment directly linked to policy coercion (p. 137). While there is some support for the idea that poor economic local conditions are associated with higher coercion (particularly in Hungary), broadly speaking, supply-side political control is not fully causally linked with state-based forms of clientelism such as policy coercion (p. 145). Rather, the more consistent link that holds across both Romania and Hungary is that electoral strategies based on welfare coercion occur in localities that display a clear-cut cleavage vis-à-vis the existing policy status quo (p. 149).

Chapter 6 broadens the scope of the analysis of negative reinforcements, extending it beyond the level of policy-based coercion. In its broadest form, economic coercion ranges from direct money-lending to employer-employee relations and various types of lease and/or rental agreements (p. 151). The political entanglement typically appears from candidates who use the clout of 'enforcers' qua brokers for electoral favours in exchange for tolerating illicit activities (pp. 156, 163). Based on data from Hungary, where this phenomenon appears to be more widespread than in neighbouring Romania (p. 168), Mares and Young find that while political control does not seem in fact to be associated with economic coercion, the latter is consistently associated with poor economic conditions (p. 169). In addition, similarly to policy coercion, economic coercion broadly defined is most often in localities fraught by high levels of conflicts with regards to the existing distribution of welfare and/or workfare programmes (p. 172).

Chapter 7 reassesses arguably the most studied component of clientelistic strategies – vote buying. The crucial issue here is that the unobtrusive techniques that yield a rich and encompassing picture of policy favours or different types of coercion can only offer an estimate of the scope of vote buying, without revealing much about effectiveness and causality (p. 183). To gain further insight, Mares and Young differentiate between targeted and non-targeted strategies. This offers a clearer picture of how vote buying differs from other clientelistic strategies that also politicise state resources (p. 173). Qualitative analysis, which disentangles the myriad of strategies, ranging from en-masse 'treating' to personalised 'bribing', reveals that while vote buying may appear common, it is not strategically deployed (p. 205) and is used rather as an amorphous supplement to other forms of clientelism (p. 174). On the surface, vote buying would therefore be expected to play an important role as a signalling tool, which is explored in depth through a survey-based experiment, embedded in a larger questionnaire fielded in rural Romania (p. 189). Interestingly, however, the data show that candidates who engage in vote buying 'are perceived as less desirable along a range of positive characteristics' (p. 194). This finding even cuts across voters' personal characteristics and ideological preferences (p. 199). As such, the comparable frequency between vote buying and more 'proven' strategies (p. 207) is likely at-

tributable to informal party organisations, which have thus far been critically underexplored (p. 214).

The crucial implication of Mares and Young's book is that the heterogeneity of clientelistic strategies can only be interpreted as a sign of shortcomings scattered through the entire scaffolding of post-communist democracies. Because none of the typical culprits from existing studies – political control, programmatic appeals, distributional conflict, etc. – can explain the full breadth of electoral clientelism, the authors advocate for nuanced policy countermeasures. Specifically, drawing on the recent Romanian approach through high prosecutorial intensity, Mares and Young suggest that the only way forward is to embed macro-level initiatives within multifaceted strategies that impose harsh penalties for multiple manifestations of clientelism (pp. 216–217).

On the whole, Mares and Young's book impresses through analytical clarity and the research scope. The central argument – that clientelistic strategies intertwine programmatic and non-programmatic layers – represents a significant addition to conventional studies of post-communist transitions, because it opens up a flexible research agenda that blends in agency, structure, and contingency. The comparative angle gives the argument further potency as it juxtaposes developments from a 'transition laggard' like Romania, alongside those of a former 'poster-child' of success that has now turned into a topical case of backsliding, Hungary. The book's simultaneous dialogue with the literature on CEE transitions and with the scholarship on electoral clientelism sends out the strong message that many of the previous 'gold standards' in terms of methods and prescriptions require an deep reassessment.

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Torben Iversen and David Soskice:
Democracy and Prosperity: Reinventing Capitalism through a Turbulent Century
Princeton, NJ, 2019: Princeton University Press, 277 pp.

What is the relationship between democracy and capitalism? On the one hand, they seem to be in conflict. The democratic rule is 'one person, one vote', whereas in capitalism the rule seems to be 'one dollar, one vote'. On the other hand, democracy and capitalism have in most Western countries been in a convenient, albeit turbulent, marriage since the First World War, and the relationship has proved surprisingly resilient in the face of big economic and geopolitical disruptions throughout the century. This relationship is the topic of this bold book.

The book is bold because it goes against what can be described as the dominant contemporary view, in much of academia and the intellectual media, on the relationship between democracy and capitalism. That view goes like this: In contemporary capitalism, capital is global. Firms and banks can move investments around

the world to where they get the biggest profits and highest returns. This means that the nation states, and therefore the advanced democracies, have more and more difficulty setting the rules of the economic game. Contrary to what democratic majorities would like, national governments are forced to lower taxes and deregulate in order to attract capital, which is vital to the national economies. They are forced, simply because capital is global or 'footloose' in the sense that it can easily relocate for higher profits. This has several implications for modern democracies: it becomes increasingly difficult to finance the democratically supported welfare state, and inequality increases rapidly. In that situation, the economic elite calls all the shots, and the political room for action on the part of national democratically elected governments becomes increasingly small. This view has been gaining further traction since the financial crisis, and not least since the publication of Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* in 2013. If that is the lay of the land, is that a democracy at all? In social critic Noam Chomsky's view it would be a plutocracy. Aristotle and Piketty would call it an oligarchy. German economic sociologist Wolfgang Streeck would call it 'post-democratic politainment'.

If this dominant view can be said to be both concerned about the current state of affairs and pessimistic about the future, *Democracy and Prosperity* takes a contrasting and thought-provoking view. First, the book argues that democracy and capitalism form a symbiotic relationship, and that globalisation is only making the relationship stronger. Furthermore, what has been dubbed neoliberal reforms have not come from pressure on national governments from economic elites, but, on the contrary, from democratic pressures from the electorate. Iversen and Soskice argue these bold claims on the basis of a framework of five symbiotic core elements:

(1) Contrary to common belief, the strong nation state has a central role to play in advanced democratic capitalism. Most importantly, the state has to make sure that markets are competitive. Rent seeking, shielded industries, and trade protectionism do not advance the overall economy, especially the high value-added sectors. Second, the state has to set the rules of the game with regard to industrial relations. If labour is too powerful, it may prefer to limit innovation and skill replacement, and this should be avoided. Lastly, it is the role of the strong nation state to invest in public goods, especially in the areas of education, training, and research, which are otherwise underprovided.

(2) Democratic capitalism is not, as is often claimed, a clash between the interests of labour and capital. Instead, modern democracies are characterised by the aligned interests of decisive voters with advanced capitalism. High-skilled voters are benefitting from the transition to the 'knowledge economy'. This transition is fuelled by rapidly developing information and communications technology (ICT revolution), which have led to economic development in new industries and companies. These industries are not confined to information and communications but have developed and operated in addition to biotechnology, life sciences, nanotechnology, laser and sensor technology and robotics, as well as computer security and, increasingly, artificial intelligence (p. 184). High-skilled workers are benefitting massively from this development due to what is known as skill-biased technological change. Workers in high-skill jobs are supported by technology and thereby become more productive, while semi-skilled workers are being replaced through automation, robotisation, and digitalisation. This leads to what economists call the polarisation of the job market, with many high-skill high-income jobs in the advanced sectors of the economy and low-income, low-skill jobs in the ser-

vice sector. According to Iversen and Soskice, the decisive voter, i.e. the middle class, will consist of these high-skilled workers, along with what the authors call aspirational voters, who expect to become high-skilled or expect their children to be. The decisive voter will therefore support policies and governments that advance the knowledge economy.

(3) Firms in the advanced sectors of the economy require a large and highly skilled workforce. These employees' skills are co-specific, meaning that they are working together to create the knowledge economy's high-value products and services. In addition, workers are to a large degree working physically together in what Iversen and Soskice call big-city agglomerations. These high-skilled employees have a rewarding social and professional social network in these skill clusters, where they are also likely to find partners through assortative mating, thus reinforcing the dynamic.

(4) The physical and geographical embeddedness of these workers is foundational to Iversen and Soskice's claim that capital is not footloose in advanced capitalism. Because employees cannot be uprooted just like that, the threat of exit made by companies in the advanced sectors (which would make them able to pressure national governments) becomes hollow. Furthermore, advanced capitalist companies need to operate in an international competitive environment, and this makes it difficult to overcome the collective-action problems involved in business action against governments, such as an investment strike. Advanced capitalist democracies are more than happy to cut back subsidies and remove barriers to competition from low-wage countries, while betting on new high value-added industries. Thus, many neoliberal policies have not been popular in large parts of the business sector, because they force businesses to innovate or languish.

(5) Democracy is not about redistribution or equality but the advancement of middle-class interests. The decisive voters, who are in the middle class and who are typically the winners in the knowledge economy, may or may not want to compensate the losers. Instead, their interests are aligned with advanced capitalism, in the sense that they are interested in the wealth stream and in high-income jobs in the advanced sectors. Consequently, they also support investment in education, if not for themselves, then for their children, as well as research and development. The middle class in not interested in inequality per se, only in seeing its own fortunes rise with the economy as a whole. And Iversen and Soskice show empirically (contrary to common belief) that the middle class's share of the pie, measured by the median to mean radio of disposable income, has remained surprisingly steady from 1985 to 2010 (p. 24). They call this the 'fundamental equality of democracy'.

From this broad but coherent theoretical framework, Iversen and Soskice take the reader through a thorough examination of two distinct roads to democracy in the advanced countries (chapter 2); the rise and fall of Fordism that characterised Western democracies in the post-war period (chapter 3); the knowledge economy and the political underpinnings that made it possible (chapter 4); the populist response from the losers of the knowledge economy (chapter 5); and a look into the future of increasingly advanced capitalism and democracy (chapter 6).

Democracy and Prosperity is an impressive tour de force that discusses many different but inter-connected aspects of the knowledge economy and its implications for work, education, social networks, inequality, geography, and politics. It is compelling, not least because of its rich empirical evidence. However, it is in the sections that contain the most original contributions (the skill clusters, big-city agglomerations, co-specificity, and co-location) that, unfortunately, the empirical evidence is most

scarce. Why high-skilled workers need to work physically together and develop fruitful professional relationships over time is not explained convincingly, especially considering that it is such a foundational part of their argumentation. Also, this foundational argument about physical embeddedness pertains only to the *employees* of multinational enterprises. Much of the political and academic concern and criticism of global capitalism has been about taxation of profits, and the ability of firms to move it around to where taxes are lowest. Apart from a table on implicit tax rates on capital, this issue is not discussed at length. Iversen and Soskice's general optimism is contagious, although it doesn't always follow through. For example, their description of how a local entrepreneurial businessman, Frank Panduro, reversed the fortunes of a town outside the big-city economic hubs in Denmark through investment in culture and entertainment seems rather silly compared to the scope of the structural, geographical, and technological upheavals they are examining.

Throughout their analysis of the relationship between democracy and capitalism, Iversen and Soskice seem to tilt the balance towards capitalism. A stronger focus on the question of democracy would have been beneficial. The explanations of the development of capitalism are often impressive – for example, the detailed descriptions of the financial crisis and the rise and fall of Fordism. However, little attention is given to the more fundamental questions of democracy, including deliberation, trust, representation, information, manipulation, influence, and corruption. Voter information especially, which seems to be fundamental to the authors' argument about democratic pressures for policies that advance the knowledge economy, should have been discussed in more detail. For example, the authors assume that low-skilled workers are capable of understanding supply and demand and relating this to government spending on training. Low-skilled workers would, according to the authors, be opposed to reducing training intensity and spending because it would increase the relative supply of low-skilled workers and thereby reduce their pay. The book does not rest on this peripheral argument, but it shows that the authors ascribe an enormous amount of knowledge, rationality, and analytical skill to voters, even low-skilled ones. It seems reasonable, as Iversen and Soskice argue, that voters vote for parties that exhibit proficiency in managing the economy (and being 'responsible'), but it seems unlikely that voters have specifically asked for financialisation through more advanced and complex financial products and for more product market competition, as is argued here. With this much faith in the information levels of voters, it seems odd that Iversen and Soskice would speculate that a 'lack of information' could be the reason for Martin Gilen's findings that when preferences differ, those with high income and education get their way far more often than those with middle and low income. All in all, *Democracy and Prosperity* presents a compelling and thought-provoking argument in the ongoing debate about the current state of democracy and capitalism and where we are heading.

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Kate Raworth: ***Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist***
London 2018: Random House Business Books, 384 pp.

In this book Kate Raworth takes her own discipline to court. Her ruling: economics is severely flawed. Raworth presents evidence stretching from the time of the field's

emergence as a separate scientific discipline through to its failure to handle big challenges like the Great Recession and climate change. To support this, she relies on pioneering approaches to sustainability and more recent and ground-breaking research on human behaviour. The core of Raworth's argument evolves around the images that lie at the very heart of economics, such as the crossing of the supply and demand curves, the circular flow diagram, or the Kuznets curve. If we want to change economics, we need to replace these faulty diagrams with better ones. We need them not only to describe the world we live in more accurately, but also to help us think about where we want to go from here. At the centre of all this lies her vision: a doughnut-shaped space in which humanity can thrive. Raworth posits that it is possible for all of humanity to avoid both severe human deprivation (the lower boundary) and ecological breakdown (the upper boundary). In seven chapters, she takes on seven images of economics and proposes alternatives that are supposed to help us find a better balance, avoiding both shortfall and overshoot (see the doughnut model, pp. 44 and 51).

In the prologue, Raworth argues that it will be hard to replace the typical models of economics, as their simple graphics have become engrained in our brains over the past seventy years – and some of them even longer. There is a key advantage to presenting the first model of something: the initial framing of an issue has a great influence on how we think about it. Raworth explains how economics was heavily influenced by physics in the making of its theoretical foundations and shows how this proved to be rather counterproductive: the founding fathers of modern economics – inspired by Newton – left us with models that are far too simple for a complex world.

The first chapter deals with the goal of economic endeavour. Raworth argues that we make a mistake by focusing mainly on GDP. The measure has moved from being a means to an end, that of human well-being, to becoming the actual aim in itself. How has this happened? According to Raworth, the problem lies at the very core of economics, which started out as an endeavour with important goals and later on donned the coat of objectivity, describing the laws of nature. Among these laws is the concept of utility and the simple assumption that people will have ever-expanding wants and, therefore, will aim to improve their utility eternally. This assumption drives the belief that GDP will (need to) increase continuously. Raworth offers an alternative goal and aims for a 'safe and just space for humanity' (p. 44) that lies between social foundations and an ecological ceiling. The former consists of the different measures that relate to issues, for example, of education, housing, income, and health. The latter, on the other hand, is defined by the natural limits to our survival on the planet, such as climate change, but also freshwater withdrawals, ocean acidification, air pollution, and the loss of forest lands.

In the second chapter, Raworth argues that the bigger picture of the economy – the circular flow model – overlooks the boundaries that the earth sets us. Given that we now live in a 'full world' (pp. 74–75) – a reference to Daly – she claims that we can no longer ignore these boundaries. In place of the circular flow model, Raworth proposes an embedded economy. Society and the economy are composed of households, the market, the state, and the commons. All this is embedded in the system of our earth, which provides living materials and matter and receives waste matter and heat. The whole system is powered by energy from the sun and some of the heat is re-emitted into space.

In the third chapter, Raworth draws on scientific evidence from the works of Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis and others, showing that human behaviour diverges

from the equilibrium that classic game theory would predict and that the level of cooperation and altruism in fact differs across different societies. She sets this evidence opposite to the thought experiments by early economic thinkers and argues that the simple image of homo economicus should be replaced with a multifaceted socially adapting person. That homo economicus would have problems even making all his decisions in a perfectly rational way becomes clearer when Raworth presents readers with the findings from early behavioural economics that rationality in humans is bounded. We are not able to do all the calculations but rather rely on estimates and biases.

In chapter four, Raworth criticises the common approach of economics for its focus on equilibrium. The processes described in the old model would too much resemble those of Newtonian mechanics. Promoting the image of dynamic complexity, Raworth argues that a model that includes feedback loops and incorporates dynamism by design would be a better fit. With this image in mind, economists would be better equipped to understand the world. She refers to Donella Meadows when she argues that effective systems tend be characterised by a 'healthy hierarchy, self-organisation, and resilience' (p. 159). Chapter five revolves around the Kuznets curve and the assumption that is attached to it: when economies grow, inequality will first increase and then decrease again. Inequality is therefore often seen as an inevitable temporary step on the way to higher prosperity. Raworth shows that this model is flawed and argues that it should instead be replaced by an economy that is 'redistributive by design' (p. 163). Chapter six then strikes a similar tone, while focusing on the effect of growth on pollution and climate change. Raworth argues that not only is the belief that higher levels of income per capita will eventually lead to a smaller impact on the climate and on pollution unjustified. We can also not afford to let all societies go through that supposedly natural pathway if we want to avoid catastrophic climate change. To avoid this, we would need to design an economy that is 'regenerative by design' (p. 206).

In the final chapter, Raworth argues that economists and policymakers should not simply forget about growth, and that rather 'we need an economy that makes us thrive, whether or not it grows' (p. 268). For this to happen, she states, we have to unlearn our addiction to growth on an individual, political, and systemic level. She closes with an epilogue containing encouraging words for her readers and a small summary of what the book sets out to achieve.

Raworth set out with the task to throw out the old imagery of economics and replace it with new models that can help humankind to attain well-being for all, while at the same time respecting the ecological ceiling. And in many ways she succeeds at this endeavour. Raworth approaches this by standing on the shoulders of giants and presenting the most relevant and current scientific literature from recent decades that has been adding value to the field of economics and science in general. In this way she delivers an excellent literature review. But is there more? Going further than other critics of our addiction to growth – such as Tim Jackson [2009] – she revisits the beginnings of the discipline and shows what went wrong with economics in the first place. And with her various approaches to the problem, and the focus on the popular images of economics, Raworth manages to connect the dots between the roots of the problem, scientific evidence, and our current challenges.

There are, however, some smaller inconsistencies and flaws in Raworth's work. These range from double standards to self-contradictory statements, and some arguments that leave the reader easily confused. We will start with her critique of

the word 'externalities'. Raworth remarks accurately that the wording, and therefore the framing, of a concept or effect can have a strong effect on how we perceive and what we deem the right approach. In reference to Daly, she then posits that the term 'externalities' is problematic in itself, as it understates the importance of the processes. Some might disagree with her here and argue that it is easy to take externalities into the equation and redirect their consequences back to their source, without coming up with a new term for them. But even if one does agree to stay on board this far, her alternative proposal, the substitute she finds, will probably disappoint. Without going into much detail, she proposes the word 'effect' and leaves us to wonder what the difference is. Will we magically be able to find political majorities for strict and effective environmental protection legislation that follow the polluter-pays principle simply because we changed the framing?

Furthermore, Raworth argues that humans find it hard to understand the dynamics of stock and flow. The bathtub model for the accumulation of CO_2 shows us that if we are emitting more than the earth's systems can take out of the atmosphere, the most urgent action is to reduce our emissions below that level, as only this can stop the tub from overflowing. This model is clearly very useful in explaining a complex situation. Her belief, however, that a device like this is needed to convince other economists and policymakers of the goal of reducing emissions seems unconvincing. While politicians with a career in the natural sciences – like Angela Merkel – are definitely in the minority, it does not stand to reason why other top-level decision makers would struggle with the concept. In fact, Raworth does not deliver any evidence to show that this misunderstanding stands in the way of effective climate action. While world leaders are clearly not taking enough action against climate change, the emission goals that have been set so far – from Kyoto to Paris – all speak about reducing emissions and not keeping them at a stable level. The answer therefore cannot be that we simply do not understand the problem well enough.

Lastly, the reader can get the impression that Raworth is applying double standards. In chapter four, she argues that neo-liberal policy advisers often employ the maxi-max rule that only considers the best outcome of each alternative option. This is clearly a valid concern for policymakers and -advisers and especially for the field of economics, with the big influence it has in the political realm. It also relates to the problem of partial implementation. Wolff [2019] points out that not following a policy path to the end can have worse consequences than doing nothing. Policy advisers should therefore consider what happens when their proposed policy stops half the way.

A problem arises, however, when Raworth proposes policies on her own. While she criticises, for example, cap and trade policies for being ineffective because of the strong industrial lobby, she argues for policy proposals that will most likely face even more opposition. Furthermore, most of her policy proposals are not accompanied by any caveats and remarks on how much these depend on specific circumstances or a specific policy environment. Because of this, unfortunately, some parts of the book read more as the *who is who* of cool new policy proposals than as a helpful policy guide.

To conclude, *Doughnut Economics* has great value in that it shows us where we have gone wrong so far, but it struggles somewhat to present a compelling case for how we can reach a better place. In that sense, she suffers from the same disease that greater thinkers have – think of Marx, Keynes, and Piketty – whose analysis is spot on but whose policy advice appears weak in comparison. That being said, Raw-

orth's book belongs on the reading list of all of us. We can all benefit from her insights, and then form our own opinions on how to use them.

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John Boughton: ***Municipal Dreams: The Rise and Fall of Council Housing***
London 2019: Verso, 336 pp.

In this book, John Boughton provides a deep and thoughtful account of the story of council and social housing in the UK from its foundations up to todays. The author traces the steps and phases that marked first the triumph and, later, the surrender of the political idea of council housing over the course of more than a century. The book is extremely rich in detail and Boughton uses an engaging style that keeps the reader fully captivated. However, Boughton does not just want to tell a story. He wants to act as a bridge between the past and the future of council housing and use the story he tells to acknowledge and justify the claim of the current need for a renewed *utopia* for council housing. He is convinced that the state should take up again a major role in the development of council housing, as it did in the first council development projects. More importantly, he supports the need for the kind of idealism that was initially at the core of the council housing dream. We believe that the pages of his book do not fully represent this idealistic claim. The focus seems to be more on highlighting mistakes committed in the past than on providing good and compelling strategies for the future. Nonetheless, there is much that should be learnt. If such key learnings from the past of council housing were more clearly brought to light and openly discussed, we would argue they could really play a crucial role in helping shape a better (and more ambitious) vision for the future of council housing.

The book can be divided into three separate and overarching parts: the dawn of council housing (late 1800s up to the Second World War), the reconstruction after the Second World War, and the dismantling of the council housing principle itself from Thatcher up to the recent Grenfell Tower tragedy. Each of these periods is described with its own historical context, ruling government parties, and urban policies. Accordingly, Boughton guides us through the changing vision and objective behind the development of council housing. From the late 1800s until the middle of the 20th century, council housing emerged as a concrete effort to get people out of overcrowded and unhygienic Victorian slums. Housing increasingly became a political priority, in accordance with the need to provide the British with what they increasingly believed was right, good, and better housing to all, and to limit social discontent. It was the years between 1945 and the late 1970s that marked the real and massive expansion of council housing. The end of the Second World War, naturally, sparked a significant wave of reconstruction since people of all kinds and social classes needed homes. Politicians had the duty to provide them as cost-effectively as possible, and therefore, during this period, modernism (and its nasty derivations) overtook tradition. Tower and high-rise blocks replaced the old-style English maisonette and new building technologies supplanted the mainly craftsman methods of the past. A third and different phase then arose with the nefarious advent of

Thatcherism. The arrival of the Rusty Lady at Downing Street marked the beginning of the decline of council housing. The rules of the market progressively overcame the role of state as a provider of public services, at the expense of municipal housing. At the core of this, the author points the finger towards the crucial shift in the logic behind the provision of council housing. Council housing was created in response to the claim that housing is a universal right and should be available to individuals from any social class and background. However, in the 1970s (when no less than 49% of the British population was living in council/social housing) a different logic started to predominate: 'council housing should be, at best, a social service, reserved for the most needy, and implicitly, at worst, housing of last resort' (p. 44). Council development increasingly became the place for those people who were marginalised in society; for those who, unable to survive under the harsh law of competition and the market, were forced into society's outskirts.

Among the attractive features of the book, the most valuable one is its interdisciplinary approach, which mixes information from the fields of architecture and design, politics, and economics in an effort to provide the most detailed and comprehensive historical account. The writing style is remarkable as well, thanks to Boughton's ability to shift from the normative to the intimate dimension. The characters shaping the destiny of council housing – principal ones such as Prime Minister Thatcher and also many marginal ones as well – are all included in this account. The relevant laws and juridical acts are also carefully reported. But the book is not a soulless history, it is, more importantly, also a testament that illustrates the thinking of people whose lives have been lived in, and who have often battled for, council housing.

However, as noted, Boughton's objective is more than just creating a great piece of social history. While the author is clear in his critique of the decline of council housing over time, he is less clear in how he wants to provide inspiration to change the status quo. He provides some good examples for how individuals are fighting for the needed new vision of council housing. Some successful stories of tenants' associations fighting against gentrification and expulsion are reported, especially in the last chapter, and they all provide a glimmer of hope. However, more space should have been dedicated to these initiatives in order to give greater concreteness to his claims and to strengthen the book's contribution to the definition of a more compelling utopian vision of council housing. While Boughton stresses the role that the state should take, he, conversely, seems to downplay the role of activism. However, is it not somewhat anachronistic to assign that much relevance to what politics and politicians can do for housing, but less to what residents can do? Maybe not, but we feel that the current context provides many new opportunities for 'ordinary citizens' to speak up. As a matter of fact, city residents seem to have become increasingly demanding with regard to their participatory role in not only shaping urban spaces (The Lefebvrian 'Right to the City' is now a motto that resonates with many) but also offering their views on current affairs.

Nonetheless, a greater achievement of this book is that it emphatically showcases a number of themes that lie at the heart of the housing issue. Regardless of the sharp time-based division of the chapters, Boughton keeps on recalling them multiple times, more or less subtly. For us, this exercise is extremely stimulating. Some of the principles driving the development of council housing, such as the deep relationship between its *spatial* and *social* features, the purpose of mixed developments or the promotion of the neighbourhood unit, con-

tinue to resurface over the decades. However, what is particularly intriguing is to see how these same ideals come to acquire a different and often even negative meaning over time. Regarding the relationship between *spatial* and *social* features, this is of utmost importance. Boughton gives us a glimpse of the importance of such a relationship when he shows how the development of a sound community and strong social cohesion among neighbours were the priorities in the building plans. He describes the process of urbanisation at the initial stage as a 'rebuilder of lost community sense' (p. 66), as a way to effectively respond to all those Londoners who, when dislocating from their overcrowded habitations to new and shinily built estates, claimed the loss of community and kinship networks that characterised their previous housing arrangement. Furthermore, over time new architectures and designs, on the one hand, and social dimensions, on the other, become increasingly intertwined. The history of Park Hill, built between 1957 and 1961 in Sheffield, is in this respect interesting to tell. The estate's design was based on an in-depth study of working-class life since it sought to replicate existing social dynamics – people who had previously been neighbours were housed next to each other again, and the former street names were re-used. Among the most innovative design features, there were 'streets in the sky' in the form of the decks that connected building blocks at different heights, which encouraged neighbourly chats and were free from the noise and traffic down on the street. However, as the author shows, this relationship could also develop in a negative way. When council housing became increasingly associated with social malaise, many of the architectural elements were also blamed for this. By the early 1980s, for example, Park Hill's 'streets in the sky' became a symbol of rising crime and anti-social behaviour. The 'design disadvantage' rule identified by Coleman (p. 179) represented a very naïve way to treat this complex relationship between the spatial and the social, trying to attribute all the social malaise that characterises social estates to a narrow number of architectural elements such as stairs and walkways. Looking more narrowly at mixed developments, these were initially encouraged in order to have people from different social classes living in the same area, and thus to promote social mobility. However, later on, mixed developments became one of the arguments that in the public debate were used to support the implementation of the 'right to buy', the ambiguous law approved in 1979 that allowed council tenants to buy the property they rented from the municipalities after a number of years, and that actually ended up being a disaster for the maintenance of the first and universalistic council housing aim. Finally, the neighbourhood unit, instead, involved having each neighbourhood develop as a self-contained entity with its own schools and shop. Initially, this was thought of as a way to make sure all new council housing residents had easy access to the most important services and facilities. This is indeed a very attractive design (ironically, it resembles the idea of the '15-minute city', proposed by Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo). However, if we look at the segregation and isolation patterns that characterised council estates over time and what Boughton tells us about them, we can see how building such enclosed areas could help pave the way for the negative fate that awaited council housing estates.

Overall, what emerges from the book also is that housing is not, and never will be, 'just' housing. Council housing was born with the objective to provide individuals with new opportunities to move up the social ladder by offering them access to cleaner and better housing conditions. What is important, therefore, is that housing politics be closely tied to other policy

areas, such as social security and employment. Boughton highlights how the decline in industrialisation, the rise of the service economy, and the consequent rise in unemployment were crucial factors in what became of council housing. This reminds us, therefore, that thinking about the future of council housing means rethinking also the future of the society as a whole. Doing one without the other is like betting on a three-legged horse and will not lead us to the utopian vision we so strongly need.

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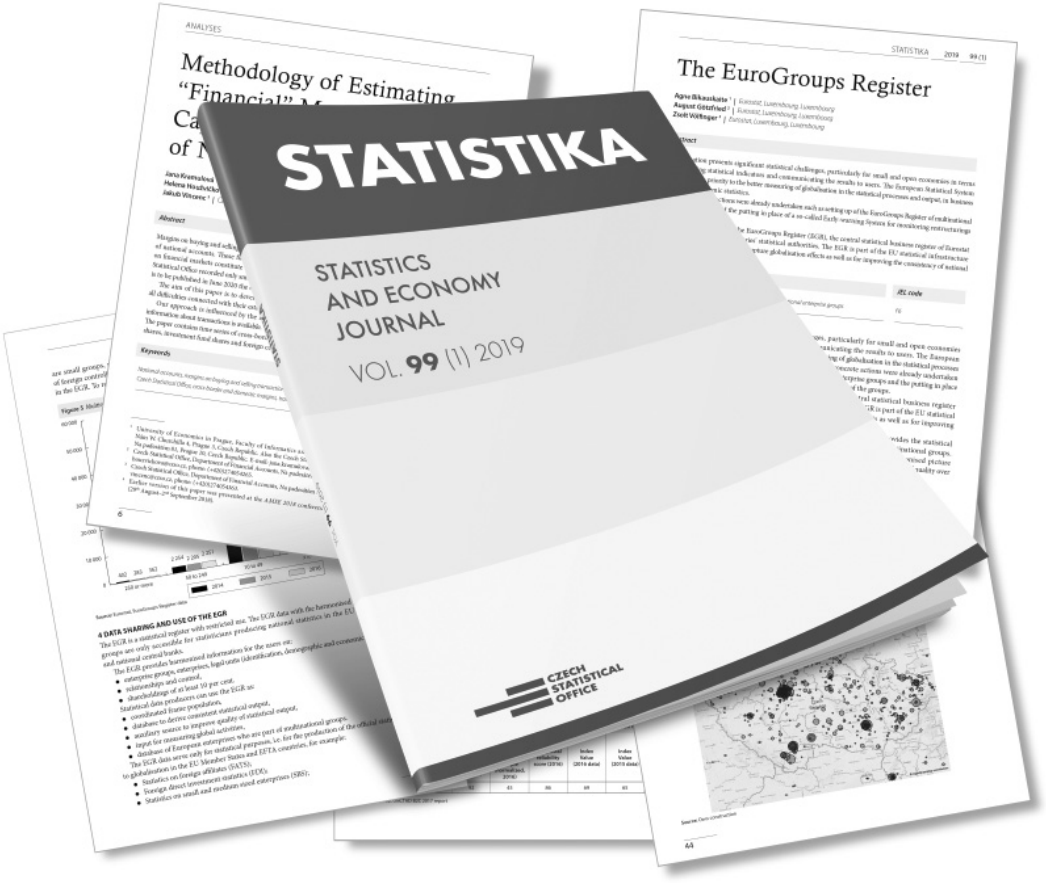

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