
Workshop title:

Living transformations in East-Central Europe and Russia

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Convenor:

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Abstract:

‘Transformation’ in Central and Eastern Europe has been the focus of many projects, whilst its impact at the personal level has remained understudied. Equally, policy makers have made little use of case studies. This workshop attempted to discuss research designs and interdisciplinary research collaborations in order to explore such ‘lived transformations’ since the collapse of state socialism and toward the new Europe.

Keywords:

Transformation, CEE and Russia, glocal ethnographies, lived experiences, the new Europe

Background of the workshop:

‘Transition’ was a powerful tool, created as an idea largely by neo-liberal economists in north America and Europe. It was eagerly embraced by politicians in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, and was seen by many people living there (or here) as a remedy for their problems. But the reality of change was often harsh and cold. As Smith and Pickles (1998: 1-2) noted, “the conventional, neo-liberal view of transition wielded by western agencies and advisers to governments in Central and Eastern Europe was one which consisted of a relatively unproblematic implementation of a set of policies involving economic liberalisation and marketisation alongside democratisation, enabling the creation of a market economy and liberal polity”. But, as they and others (Lynn, 1999; Bradshaw and Stenning, 2001) have illustrated, such a conceptualisation was, and still is, deeply problematic.

Buroway and Verdery (1999), for example, caution against the simplification of 'transition' as starting from a burdensome past to a known and one-dimensional future, that of 'textbook capitalism'. This view disregards both personal histories and interactions, and accidental consequences caused by 'grand politics' at different times in different places. It needs to be recognised that the breakdown of macro structures resulting from the disintegration of socialist states and planned economies created numerous micro worlds. The knowledge of such social spaces is needed to enhance and advance more generalised transition processes and statistics but also the work of policy makers.

A key difficulty with 'transition' is that it was an external concept, owing very little to the ideas and experiences of the people who actually live in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia and largely disregarding the human cost of transition. Indeed, the voices of those who have lived through transition are only rarely heard in the extensive literature that has been written on transition. Only recently have academic papers and books begun to devote to the day-to-day lives of the people who have actually lived through the last decade in East-Central Europe and Russia (Berdahl et al., 2000; Hann, 2002; Humphrey, 2002; Mandel and Humphrey, 2002; Pilkington et al., 2002).

Following sociology, geographers have increasingly adopted qualitative methods. The publication of texts on participant observation and the use of visual data, for example, in various student textbooks is an indication that this interest is becoming solidified as part of geographic research tools (Cook and Crang, 1995; Clifford and Valentine, 2003; Flowerdew and Martin, 1997; Shurmer-Smith 2002). Nevertheless, 'active collaboration' and networking between geographers, sociologists, anthropologists and ethnographers has remained underdeveloped (except for the discourse in journals such as *Eucumene*, *Cultural Geographies* and *Society and Space*). Few physical meeting places have been created to discuss and explore, in depth, the benefits that could be gained from sharing methodologies and epistemologies between disciplines practising ethnographies (Markus, 1998) and thus advancing culturally sensitive research in East-Central Europe and Russia.

The ongoing interest in 'small transitions' in CEE and Russia since the collapse of socialist states and toward a new Europe by the aforementioned disciplines provides an excellent opportunity to combine interests and push forward long overdue methodological and theoretical discussions across Western and Eastern Europe and Russia. The distinct contributions that geographers, anthropologists, sociologists and cultural studies can make may lead to the development of new research tools and agendas for exploring 'glocal' or multi-sited ethnographies.

A key motivation for this workshop was the need for identifying and developing partnerships, and new research agendas and methodologies for investigating lived experiences of transformation in light of

- (1) the need for greater opportunities for collaboration and ongoing (academic) discussion;
- (2) a lack of knowledge of ‘small transitions’, i.e. the more hidden, personal ones, in the context of available ‘grand theories’; and
- (3) the advance of yet another transition induced by the accession of a number of Eastern and Central European countries to the EU.

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Summary:

The focus of the **first day of this workshop** was a general introduction to (1) the participants' research interests and methods and (2) grand theories that have commonly been adopted in research on East-Central Europe and Russia.

The keynote address by Tim Unwin (Royal Holloway, UK) on 'grand theories' discussed the role of theoretical writing in the (interpretation of) 'transition' processes. In so doing, the dominant hegemonic position of economic theory was examined and criticised since, as was argued, economics is powerless to address changes that have taken place in the region over the last decade. The economic, cultural and political reshaping of Europe as a result of accession to the European Union pose a whole new set of challenges as to how theories can capture and explain these forthcoming changes.

The discussion following this paper remained on-going. Whilst there was a certain consensus on the fact that the role of theories is to help understand, the question was raised whether or not they explain enough.

The inventory of the participants' research interests and, more specifically, the cases presented during the session on 'small transitions' showed a new, complex world of post-socialism in which old ideas and behaviour have been transformed to new identities in new spatial settings. The following discussion also focussed on the issue of post-socialist identities.

The third and final session of this day dealt with issues related to the researcher him-/herself as well as collaboration between researchers from the 'East' and the 'West'. This session, undoubtedly, included the most vivid discussions addressing different forms of Western hegemony in research such as through skewed power relations as a result of Western funding in which Eastern researchers often remain 'add-ons', or through Western 'bias' in the refereeing process for what are considered to be 'top journals' through the lack of consultation of East-Central European and Russian expertise. This discussion led to the issue of 'outsiderism' and the question of 'Who should write about EC Europe and Russia?'

The **second day of this workshop** evolved around methodological issues and different ways of presenting research results. Several methods were illustrated by means of experiences and examples from participants' own research projects. The cases presented centred on qualitative

approaches including: participant observation, visual data (films, monuments, photos), in-depth interviews, group discussions and the use of diaries. The discussion picked up this focus and participants wondered whether or not Eastern and Western researchers used the same tools. It was revealed that Western researchers were biased toward the Eastern research community in thinking quantitative methods prevailed ignoring the rich qualitative tradition in Polish sociology, for example. It was concluded that there is a need for pluralism and flexibility of methods, the latter in light of changing circumstances at different spatial levels. Revisiting the keynote address of the previous day, the need for theories to understand ‘the field’ was emphasised again.

The second session of this day brought together different ideas for and experiences with publishing research for different audiences (students, policy makers, the public and research communities). Several interesting (and challenging) issues were raised and subsequently discussed such as: ‘Should we continue writing for students at all?’ (considering the risk of stereotyping and generalising in textbooks and considering the fact that students increasingly turn to media other than books); ‘Should we focus on policies at the local level?’ (considering the ignorance and misuse of academic texts in ‘big politics’), and ‘Should we write under pseudonyms more/ at all?’ (considering the opportunities for more critical writing).

The final programme point of this day was a slide and film presentation by students about an international student bike project through Moldova. This presentation illustrated several problems discussed throughout the workshop, but from the viewpoint of the students. Interestingly, students appeared to have fewer problems with issues such as international cooperation and Western hegemony. It also transpired that the students had been very creative in employing several methods including the production of a short film. The following discussion demonstrated appreciation for the student approach and led to thinking about possible research collaborations at student level, and the possibility of establishing a European Master course.

On the **third and final day of the workshop**, a brief assessment was made regarding the initial aims of the workshop. It was concluded that several issues had, perhaps, been conceived in rather simple terms as discussions had produced a very differentiated picture of research topics, methods and plans. Most of the time was, however, devoted to looking forward and bringing together the ideas for future collaboration that had been raised. In the plenary session on the final workshop day, these ideas and associated problems were discussed in greater depth.

Scientific content of the workshop:

In light of the above considerations, the workshop aimed to address five key discussion points:

1. to explore the populations and locations studied by the workshop participants in order to assess the basis for active collaborative work and identify opportunities for future research (networks);
2. to bring together and evaluate methods and methodologies for researching ‘lived transitions’ through culturally sensitive research designs, combined with epistemological issues concerning, for example, multi-sited ethnographies, trans-local processes and ethics;
3. to assess the role of researchers and their agendas, including research collaborations between researchers from Eastern and Western Europe and Russia;
4. to explore ways of current publishing and future opportunities, including for alternative ways of making our research available to the Public, and our research communities.
5. to think of ways to encourage policy makers to be more responsive to ‘realities’ as depicted by our ‘glocal’ ethnographies.

Friday, October 8th:

‘Grand theories’?: transition before and after accession to the EU

Tim Unwin:

This keynote address was designed to promote discussion around the themes of the role of theoretical writing in the ‘transition’ process, as well as changes in the way in which theory has been used to interpret ‘transition’. It began by challenging generally accepted notions of ‘theory’, and used Habermas’s model of three different kinds of ‘science’ to emphasise the differing explanatory, interpretative, and critical dimensions of theoretical practice. The paper then explored the dominant hegemonic position of economic theory in the processes associated with the implementation of ‘transition’ in Central and Eastern Europe, and pointed to a range of critiques thereof. It suggested that we need to ask key moral questions about changes that have taken place in the region over the last decade, and it argued that economics is powerless to address these. The second half of the paper explored more contemporary issues, seeing the project of accession to the European Union not merely as the end of

‘transition’ but also as an economic, cultural and political reshaping of Europe. Finally, it suggested that in seeking to support marginalised European peoples in changing their lives, our theories need to focus on communities rather than individuals, on inequalities rather than profits, on change agents not forces of replication, and on meanings rather than objects.

Introduction to ‘small transitions’:

Svetlana Hristova:

Svetlana Hristova’s presentation of identity crises in CEE critically discussed perceptions of identity as relational (i.e. either diachronic identity in time, or synchronic identity in space) and as validated largely through the others’ recognition/opposition. Now, she claimed, these aspects of post-socialist identity are contested: the idea of the self should crystallize in a basic opposition between the socialist past and post-socialist presence, and in a completely different referential framework of new political partners and important Others (instead of the Warsaw pact – the North-Atlantic Treaty, and instead of the Soviet Union – the European Union). The identity crises could be conceptualized also in the terms of the cultural shock where the ‘New-Europeans’ are in the role of ‘strangers’, who must learn and adopt the rules and regulations of their hosts, but who live in a high (personal and collective) uncertainty. This too often led to the appearance of a false, imitative identity, looking for a quick compensation for the former loses and underdevelopments. On the other hand, the European identity itself needs to be reconstructed now along with the enlargement of the EU. But the recognition of ‘Europeanness’, which was created before 1989 along the iron curtain now needs new arguments and new symbolic resources (including the imaginative lines of new divisions and even new enemies).

Peter Lindner:

The paper took as a vantage point contradictory characterisations of post-reform agricultural enterprises in Russia as “feudal entities” on the one hand and “egalitarian collectives” on the other. What both hold in common is the assumption of a decentralisation of power which makes the village communities the primary forum of political struggle. In fact, a local public sphere existed already in the Soviet *kolkhozes* but it was divided into a “representative public sphere” totally controlled by the authorities and an “informal public sphere” where interests resulting from personal auxiliary farming were negotiated. Taking this specific constellation into account three questions seem to be crucial for the understanding of transformation in rural areas and were briefly addressed in the paper:

1. Is the informal “civil” public sphere of Soviet times now “lifted” to a formal, institutionalised forum for dispute, negotiation and consensus or does it remain informal, if not illegal in its contents?
2. Are the territorially bounded and local public spheres of the villages now integrating to a national civil public sphere or do they remain strongly localised microcosms?
3. How does the breakdown of the Soviet Union and of its normative system of legitimacy affect the distribution of power and the chances of different actors to make one’s voice heard within the “old-new” public sphere?

Alison Stenning:

Alison Stenning discussed the place of the urban working class in post-socialism, exploring the impact of the decline of industrial work and old industrial regions and of new forms of identity politics. Several other issues, related to the end of socialism were also examined such as the ideological, institutional and material displacement of working class communities; particular discourses of enterprise, consumption and individualism; and recourse/return to other spaces: the family, the Church, pre-socialist discourses of class. Alison considered how the so-called 'new working class studies' and other post-structural accounts of class might shape an alternative view of working class communities focused on the everyday practices of work, care and social networks and exemplified through ethnographic work.

Hana Cervinková:

In the presentation Cervinková, who is an anthropologist, summarized her 16-month fieldwork research in the Czech Air Force. In the first part of the talk, she focused on the methodological dilemmas connected with conducting ethnographic fieldwork in the transforming and highly gendered institution of the military. The main focus of her talk was the analysis of how the post-1989 political changes on the national and trans-national level (epitomized by the end of the Cold War) affected both the professional and personal identity of the members of the Czech Armed Forces and the large sphere of social-military relations.

Moya Flynn:

Moya Flynn discussed her research concerning the migration and resettlement of ethnic Russian and Russian speaking communities who have moved from the other former Soviet Republics to the Russian Federation since 1991. Moya was interested in exploring ways of understanding these processes and suggested that everyday narratives [in this case narratives of 'home' and 'homeland'], which emerge from the migrants themselves, should be prioritised, and used to break down and further comprehend the stationary and physical displacement that is being experienced. The home/land narrative in this case provides a means of uncovering the

workings and strategies of post-socialist micro-worlds and reveals one way of accessing 'lived' stories of 'transition'.

Researching transition, introduction to researchers and their missions:

Elizabeth Edginton:

Elizabeth Edginton's paper used the Royal Castle in Warsaw as a metaphor for ethnography. Whilst the 'Writing Culture' debates of the 1980s had prompted ethnographers to analyse ethnographies as text, the paper argued that it was also necessary to analyse the ethnographer as text. Drawing a parallel between the use during the reconstruction of the Royal Castle of a painting by Bernardo Bellotto, which now hangs within the Castle itself, the paper went on to argue for the development of psychoanalytic ethnography - that is, the use of psychoanalysis not in application to those being researched, but in application to the ethnographer him or herself. Psychoanalysis, then, becomes an ethnography of the ethnographer, producing not a more 'accurate' vision of the research subject, but a more rigorous understanding of the researcher's positionality.

Judit Timár and Krisztina Keresztely:

Timár and Keresztely raised issues regarding the bias in publishing in Western journals. In addition to language problems, editorial and refereeing issues were mentioned. The researchers challenged the pressure to publish and be reviewers or referees in English journals as a means of gaining prestige for East-Central European social sciences in the Anglo-American Academic world.

Taking into consideration of Hungarian experiences they thought that it is a fortunate development that East-West joint projects, which carry the promise of potential co-operation on an equal footing, are gaining currency. For the time being, however, such co-operation is mainly based on the inequality present in "Western (Anglo-American) theories-Eastern empirical studies" scenario. One of the greatest dangers of such imbalanced co-operation is that it may also contribute to the preservation of the already dominant empiricism, and delay the launch of the process of working out theories that are valid for circumstances in East-Central Europe and able to interpret post-socialism. This is why East-West meetings such as our workshop can help a lot in making equal partnerships, organising research from which both parties can benefit in equal measure.

Nigel Swain:

Nigel Swain's comments were based on his experiences organising collaborative research, which included both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, in rural communities in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria, and they were structured around the theme of effective communication and the avoidance of misunderstandings.

A key problem arose from the lack of English language proficiency within the team which led to problems of communication throughout the research process but also with regards to publishing results for a wider audience. Beyond linguistic comprehension, different interpretations of the research agenda emerged. Different countries had different intellectual traditions regarding, for example, traditions of qualitative research, and different understandings of key categories and concepts within the overall research agenda.

Saturday, October 9th:

Researching transition, introduction to methods:

Thomas Borén:

Fieldwork is a well-established notion in geographic research, and the presentation focused on the relationship between 'field' and 'work' in geographical fieldwork, and then particularly with regards to participant observation. It was suggested that more attention should be paid to what geographers actually do in the field – the work so to say – rather than only on the site of fieldwork itself. The presentation explored Insider-Outsider relations and underlined the processes of *becoming* an insider, i.e. the learning to understand, which ultimately would found the interpretative capacity needed to understand the differences of the field from the researcher's own social and academic position, and place. To exemplify the role of this locally charged interpretative capacity, a case from Borén's fieldwork in Ligovo, a high-rise suburb to St. Petersburg, was used to show how the cultural transition from communist times till today could be understood, and in doing this, the role of theory and logical inferences was also regarded. The case discussed was related to the changing identity, understandings and cultural codes of Ligovo as a place, and St Petersburg at large, that the residents of the study area themselves struggled with as a result of post-socialist transitions.

Craig Young:

This paper explored the importance of analysing visual culture for understanding post-socialist transformation. The visual culture produced in state-socialist societies was highly ideological and through the production of visual and material culture in 'preferred' forms, such as socialist realist art or sculpture or propaganda posters, the state used such cultural

forms to try and penetrate society. An early focus on the design, form and representation of the everyday spaces of the home represented an attempt to remodel. In reality, the citizens of state-socialist societies had a complex relationship with such cultural forms which also involved trying to avoid or ignore them. The visual continues to be significant in understanding post-socialism. Capitalism relies heavily on the visual to promote ideology and consumption. However, how people in post-socialist societies relate to those visual images is often different from the 'West' as they have decades of experience of decoding or resisting the visual symbols of Communism. And, importantly, the visual culture of state-socialism continues to haunt the post-socialist societies of today. Some elements of built environment such as housing blocks or factories are difficult to erase from the landscape, symbols from the past come back as kitsch tourist or media products or as part of serious attempts to commemorate the Communist past, there is an apparent nostalgia surrounding (elements of) that past. These surviving materialities of the Communist period refuse to be buried or dismissed, in turn haunting and unsettling present day attempts to reimage post-socialist nations through official narratives which stress their Europeanness and modernness through discourses which seek to deny or erase the past.

Ivane Verulashvili:

Ivane Verulashvili's presentation dealt with the practical aspects of his work at the Women's Centre in Tbilisi, Georgia. He focused on the impact of ethnic conflicts on (forced) migration streams and the increase of psychological symptoms. The Women's Centre has begun to provide support through therapeutic projects but is currently calling for help from experts outside the country as well.

Kathrin Hörschelmann:

Kathrin Hörschelmann examined different factors of influence on the formation of regional identities and discussed examples from her own work on globalization and young people's identities in eastern Germany. She suggested a range of methods that could be used to research identities, including focus groups, diaries, mental maps and photography. Her paper argued that identities are performed through different scales and thus require methodological diversity to capture different aspects of identity.

Aurora Trif:

This presentation focused on the main practical issues encountered during the process of carrying out in-depth interviewing and potential solutions used to overcome them. The main issues identified were getting access to key informants, the bias of the researcher, and the lack of trust of the respondents in the researcher. In addition, western specialists had concerns

about not knowing the language and culture, while eastern researchers pointed out the lack of qualified specialists in some countries, such as Romania and Georgia. Potential solutions suggested were to use formal and informal ways to get access to key informants, to utilise feedback loops to reduce researchers' bias and to state clearly the aim of the research to gain the trust of the respondents. Overall, findings indicated that in-depth interviewing was a very suitable method to explore the perception of individuals about transition phenomena, but there seemed to be no substantial differences between carrying out in-depth interviewing in Eastern Europe and elsewhere.

Introduction to presenting research:

Leo Paul:

Paul began his presentation by illustrating everyday problems students (and lecturers) encounter with currently available textbooks. Key issues raised were: too little focus on the everyday, too much text, too much stereotyping, and too little concern for new media. Although he explored alternative opportunities such as using more original sources and more visual material, he questioned whether or not academics should write for students at all considering students' focus on exam-material only, their lack of reading and their interest in other media.

Elzbieta Tarkowska:

Tarkowska described, how policy makers relate to the "glocal ethnographies" and how they treat results of sociological and/or ethnographical research studies in general, and especially those concerning the social costs of transformation. The presentation was based on first hand experience of the author and is limited to attitudes of policy makers in Poland. Discussing attitudes of policy makers and their concern with social costs of transformation as presented in qualitative sociological research studies, the researcher identified different levels of policy making: the top level of politicians, members of parliament; middle level of government agendas and the low level of specific, local policy makers, local authorities, NGO activists, people of practice. She identified policy makers of middle and low levels as fully open to such knowledge in opposition to, for example, members of parliament presenting a sometimes high level of ignorance. The researcher's experience shows, that the presentation of real life of real people, described with all their particulars, are attractive for both policy makers and policy practitioners. Policy makers very often don't have a first hand knowledge of reality and qualitative sociology is a very good way of bringing them to this reality.

Ágnes Gulyás:

Gulyás discussed differences in targeting different audiences, i.e. the Public and Academia. Often, institutional constraints demand a focus on Academia and neglect the need for communicating with the Public and using other media than, for example, academic journals.

Nick Megoran:

Nick Megoran discussed some of the practical and ethical considerations that arise in writing the findings of scholarly research up for non-academic audiences, using pseudonyms or writing anonymously. This was preceded by a discussion of different reasons that have led writers of literature to use pen-names.

Case:

Bike project Moldova

The case study ‘Moldova’ described a project initiated by students in Krakow and Utrecht. The aims were for the students to collect data for a guidebook (Polish), to collect data for scientific articles about Moldova (English) and to improve the knowledge about Moldova among the wider public. The students’ key method was to form small groups of international students and conduct short bike tours in order to visit all potentially interesting spots for tourists, to examine existing tourist facilities, to establish contacts with tourist companies willing to support the guidebook and, most importantly, to initiate contacts with people in Moldova willing to help with writing the guidebook. The student’s presentation was supported by slides from their field work as well as a short movie.

Sunday, October 10th:

Where do we go from here?

The final part of this workshop briefly reviewed initial aims of the workshop and identified the extent to which they were realistic, had been achieved, or offered possibilities for further discussion during later meetings. The bulk of this morning was used for the development of future plans for the groups or a number of people from the group. These results are summarised below. Overall, it was felt that the meeting had been both unusual in its organisation (due to the informal nature of the workshop) and useful for exploring ideas and new connections (see also evaluation of the workshop below). In how far all plans can be realised largely depends on the availability of further funding and time commitments (i.e. institutional constraints of the participants).

Results:

Looking back

Looking back at the five key discussion points which were at the heart of this workshop a few key conclusions were reached. In the following the five points are stated, followed by these conclusions printed in italics.

1. to explore the populations and locations studied by the workshop participants in order to assess the basis for active collaborative work and identify opportunities for future research (networks);

It was felt that learning about each other's research in an open and informal environment had been of considerable value. Specific new research initiatives using the new contacts made are likely to be forthcoming once the outcomes of the workshop have been digested. Several ideas for future collaboration circulated (see section below).

2. to bring together and evaluate methods and methodologies for researching 'lived transitions' through culturally sensitive research designs, combined with epistemological issues concerning, for example, multi-sited ethnographies, trans-local processes and ethics;

It was felt that the discussion during the workshop had demonstrated that there were considerable similarities of approaches to researching lived transformations. Rather than there being one 'most suitable' research design, there were examples of a multitude of approaches which were both cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary. Although this was valued greatly, problems in differences between understanding concepts and terminology were also noted which increases the need for future discussion. A final issue emphasised was increasing attention to and need for ethical issues involved in research.

3. to assess the role of researchers and their agendas, including research collaborations between researchers from Eastern and Western Europe and Russia;

In spite of several problems regarding past experiences in collaboration identified during the workshop, it was felt that, overall, collaboration between 'east' and 'west' was good. As participants gained a greater understanding of each other's positions, the importance of working effectively together throughout the research process was

emphasised once more. In terms of a better integration of CEE/Russian researchers in the 'Western' European academic community, the importance of integrating different intellectual communities across Europe was stressed.

4. to explore ways of current publishing and future opportunities, including for alternative ways of making our research available to the Public, and our research communities.

Several ways of publishing results in conventional and unconventional ways were discussed. The list in the section below illustrates these in greater detail.

5. to think of ways to encourage policy makers to be more responsive to 'realities' as depicted by our 'glocal' ethnographies.

It was felt that future involvement of policy makers in workshops such as these should be encouraged and actively sought. In addition, it was noted that greater attention should be paid to developing liaisons with institutional public relations departments in order to encourage and make known a greater diversity of expertise for the media to draw upon.

Looking forward

Throughout the workshop, several opportunities and ideas for future collaboration were identified. In the plenary session on the final workshop day, these ideas were discussed in greater depth. Seven key issues were: (1) Financial problems/funds/sources of funding; (2) Student exchange projects and European Master's degree; (3) Specific joint research: cultural heritage/tourism [Culture 2000/ Bulgaria]; (4) Access to research/website; (5) Role of future networks; (6) Publishing issues; (7) Workshop ideas/future meetings of this group

1. Financial problems/funds/sources of funding:

It was noted that participants experienced problems in expanding their research topics and contacts due to funding restrictions. Aside from institutional constraints placed on collaboration (linked with pressure to publish in particular journals within a limited time frame), it was felt that there was a lack of opportunities to conduct exploratory meetings, to find suitable institutions for collaboration and to identify suitable sources of funding for both teaching and research projects. A few possible solutions were offered throughout the discussion:

- i. Meeting someone briefly to develop ideas/research
 1. British Academy funding (for UK)/Hungarian Academy [other National Academies] – often useful for small scale initial funding
 2. Socrates links (where these exist) – often underutilised.
 3. Embassies/British Council/Goethe Institute/DAAD/DFG/Swedish Institute/French [Often these programmes are underutilised; some institutions are more business than academic interested]
 4. Wenner Gren
- ii. Knowing what are the ‘right’ institutions to collaborate with
 1. Look at Framework 6 web-site to find people/institutes interested in collaborating, but: Some programmes require large numbers of participants.
 2. Value in using experienced colleagues who are used to developing such joint programmes, and sharing ‘model’ applications

2. Student exchanges projects and Master’s degree

Opportunities for student exchanges between the institutions present at the workshop were discussed ranging from incidental projects to a European Master’s degree. Considerations regarding such a Master course, tentatively entitled *European Cultures and Identities*, were, for example, regarding the nature of the programme (most likely one that builds on already existing courses), the core language (most likely English but with complementary –or compulsory- intensive language courses) and funding issues. In addition to encouraging institutional collaboration, the programme should aim for interdisciplinarity as well (including, for example, the disciplines present at this workshop: Anthropology, Area Studies, Cultural Studies, Ethnography, Gender Studies, Geography, History, Media Studies, Neurology, Political Sciences, Sociology). Seven participants expressed to be committed to such an exchange and will discuss future opportunities in due course.

3. Specific joint research

Cultural heritage/tourism [Culture 2000/ Bulgaria]

The participants’ interest and involvement in a joint research and teaching programme on cultural tourism was investigated. Key problems that were identified included: issues of sustainability and the need for additional funding from other sources. It was agreed that the possibility of exploring ideas in greater depth during

the conference of European Cultural Rights in May 2005 would be considered by those participants with an interest in the topic.

4. Access to research/website

In light of future collaboration and publication, the development of a website was discussed. Such a website would include samples from the works of the workshop participants as well as links to useful sites for working papers, researchers, networks, 'grey material', material used in teaching (e.g. English language papers in European cities). The possibility of using this site (or a 'spin-off' email discussion list) for the publication and discussion of work in progress. The Dutch participants agreed to host such a site, if institutional support could be obtained and providing that suitable and sufficient material is delivered by all participants.

5. Role of future networks

The group of participants felt that a good basis for future collaboration had been established throughout the workshop. Should ESF continue its networks programme, participants would consider applying for funding to extend and intensify the theme of the workshop (Living transformations) initially and broaden this theme out in the future. However, a need to involve wider diversity of participants was expressed, too (based on contacts of the participants, these could include: French, Spanish, Germans, Italians).

Seven aims of this possible network were identified:

1. Assist collaborative research
2. Meetings to take forward small face to face discussions involving people from different parts of Europe
3. Share experiences across disciplines
4. Supporting/creating a truly Pan-European research space
5. Synergies between existing networks, e.g. RGS-IBG research groups
6. Enabling central-eastern researchers to participate in wider communities and activities
7. Involving 'young' researchers, including postgraduates

6. Publishing issues

The possibility of a special issue of a journal on papers resulting from this ESF workshop were discussed. Target journals that were identified included: *Geografiska Annaler*; *Cultural Geographies*; *TESG*; *International Journal of Heritage Studies*; *European Urban and Regional Studies*; *Ethics, Place and Environment*; *Social*

Geography (web journal). Three participants agreed to discuss and develop ideas raised further and approach participants again individually.

In addition to opportunities, the group also discussed problems such as limited opportunities of reaching a broader audience with the results of our work due to limited journal availability in central and eastern Europe. The possibility of approaching funding bodies for supporting access to journals in CEE, for example, as part as international collaborations, was discussed. More informal ways of increasing accessibility were thought of as well using, for example, personal contacts of the network established through this workshop.

7. Workshop ideas/future

- a. Practices of consumption (this topic is already being developed by one of the workshop participants)
- b. Organise another meeting of this group to another existing conference, for example:
 - i. ICCEES Berlin, D, in mid-late July 2005
 - ii. EUGEO could be a vehicle for future European collaboration (first conference is in Utrecht, NL, in 2007).

Final Programme:

Thursday, October 7th, 2004

Arrival at Amsterdam, Schiphol, and train journey to Groningen

Friday, October 8th, 2004

from 09.30 tea and coffee

Session 1: introduction to the organisation and 'grand' theme of the workshop

09.45- 10.00 Welcome by Prof. Jouke van Dijk (Urban and Regional Studies Institute, University of Groningen)

10.00- 10.15 Outlining the purpose and programme of the workshop (Bettina van Hoven)

10.15- 11.40 Inventory: background of participants and participants' expectations of this workshop (i.e. what questions do we wish to answer, what needs should be met) (Bettina van Hoven)

11.40 tea and coffee

12.00- 12.30 'grand theories'?: transition after accession to EU (Tim Unwin)

12.30- 13.00 discussion

13.00-14.00 lunch on location

Session 2: introduction to 'small transitions', includes tea and coffee
(chairperson: Leo Paul)

Cases

14.00- 14.10 Identity crisis of post-socialist societies (Svetlana Hristova)

14.10- 14.20 Rural workers in transition (Peter Lindner)

14.20- 14.30 Urban workers in transition (Alison Stenning)

14.30- 14.40 Military men in transition (Hana Cervinková)

14.40- 14.50 Migrants in transition (Moya Flynn)

15.00- 16.00 discussion

16.00-16.15 tea and coffee

Session 3a: ‘researching transition’, introduction to researchers and their missions

(chairperson: Leo Paul)

Cases

16.15- 16.25 the role of the researcher/ cultural baggage (Beth Edginton)

16.25- 16.45 collaborations between Western, Central and Eastern European and Russian researchers 1 and research networks (Judit Timár and Krisztina Keresztely)

16.45- 16.55 collaborations between Western, Central and Eastern European and Russian researchers 2 (Nigel Swain)

16.55- 18.00 discussion

19.00 Chinese dinner in Groningen town centre

Saturday, October 9th, 2004

11.00- 11.15 recap results from day 1 (Leo Paul)

Session 3b: ‘researching transition’, introduction to methods

(chairperson: Leo Paul)

Cases

11.15- 11.25 Participant observation (Thomas Borén)

11.25- 11.35 Visual data/ monuments (Craig Young)

11.35- 11.45 Action research (Ivane Verulashvili)

11.45- 11.55 Regional imaginations/ media (Kathrin Hoerschelmann)

11.55- 12.05 In-depth interviewing (Aurora Trif)

12.05- 13.05 discussion

13.05-14.00 lunch on location

Session 4: introduction to ‘presenting research’

(chairperson: Leo Paul)

14.00- 14.40 cases

14.00- 14.10 writing for students (Leo Paul)

14.10- 14.20 writing for policy makers (Elzbieta Tarkowska)

14.20- 14.30 writing for the public/ the research communities (Ágnes Gulyás)

14.30- 14.40 ethics of anonymous publishing (Nick Megoran)

14.40- 15.45 discussion

15.45-16.00 tea & coffee

16.00- 17.00 Case: Bike project 'Moldova' by international group of students

17.00- 18.00 questions and discussion

18.00 Ugandan dinner on location (please note: this is a fundraising dinner for a project for AIDS orphans in Karamoja, Uganda)

Sunday, October 10th, 2004

10.00- 10.15 recap from day 2 (Leo Paul)

Session 5: where do we go from here?

10.15- 11.00 brainstorming and discussion

11.00- 11.15 tea and coffee

11.15- 12.00 brainstorming and discussion

12.00- 12.15 conclusions from this workshop (Bettina van Hoven)

13.00- 15.00 lunch in Groningen town centre

from 15.00 departure

Final list of participants:

1. BULGARIA: Dr. Svetlana Hristova, Vice-dean, Faculty of Arts, South-West University 'Neofit Rilsky', 66, Ivan Mihailov str., 2700 Blagoevgrad, Email: svetlana@mail.bol.bg: *identity crisis of post-socialist societies, cultural changes, migration/ modern nomadism*
2. GEORGIA: Prof. Ivane Verulashvili, Women's Center, 75 Vaza-Phavela av, Tbilisi 0168, Email: Everulashvili@tbcbank.com.ge: *women's health, democracy, NGOs, migration, internal displacement, transition*
3. GERMANY: Dr. Peter Lindner, Institut für Geographie der Friedrich Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Kochstr. 4/4, 91054 Erlangen, Email: plindner@geographie.uni-erlangen.de: *Russia, rural areas, collective farming, economic geographies, transformation*
4. GERMANY: Dr. Aurora Trif, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, Paulstrasse 3, 50676 Koeln, Email: a.trif@lycos.com: *industrial relations, Romania, employment relationships*
5. GREAT BRITAIN: Dr. Beth Edginton, Centre for Russian and East European Studies, European Research Institute, Pritchatts Road, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT, Email: e.a.edginton@bham.ac.uk: *Polish national identity, Cultural Studies theory and methodology, Poland and the EU*
6. GREAT BRITAIN: Dr. Moya Flynn, Department of Central and East European Studies, The University of Glasgow, Hetherington Building, Bute Gardens, Glasgow, G12 8RS, Email: M.B.Flynn@socsci.gla.ac.uk: *migration, migrant identities, displacement, Russian federation*
7. GREAT BRITAIN: Dr. Ágnes Gulyás, Department of Media, Canterbury Christ Church University College, North Holmes Road, Canterbury, CT1 1QU, Tel. +44 (0)1227-782907 Email: ag24@cant.ac.uk: *print media sector, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, democracy*
8. GREAT BRITAIN: Dr. Kathrin Hörschelmann, Department of Geography, University of Durham, Science Site, South Road, Durham, DH1 3LE, Tel. +44 191 3341960, Fax +44 191 33141801, Email: Kathrin.Hörschelmann@durham.ac.uk: *GDR, regional imagination, youths*
9. GREAT BRITAIN: Dr. Nick Megoran, Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge CB2 3HU, Email: nwm20@CAM.AC.UK: *Uzbekistan, Kyrgystan, borderland, nationalism, identity*
10. GREAT BRITAIN: Dr. Alison Stenning, Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, NE1 7RU, Tel +44 191 222 8017, Fax +44

- 191 232 9259, Email: Alison.Stenning@newcastle.ac.uk: *industrial workers, Poland, families, working collectives*
11. GREAT BRITAIN: Dr. Nigel Swain, Centre for Central and Eastern European Studies, University of Liverpool, 9 Abercromby Square, P.O. Box 147, Liverpool, L69 7WZ, Tel: +44 (0)151 794 2422; Fax: +44 (0)151 794 2366, Email: swainnj@liverpool.ac.uk: *Hungary, rural development, collective farming*
 12. GREAT BRITAIN: Prof. Tim Unwin, Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX: *rural restructuring, national identities, CEE banknotes*
 13. GREAT BRITAIN: Dr Craig Young, Manchester Metropolitan University, Environmental and Geographical Sciences, John Dalton Building, Chester St., Manchester M1 5GD, Email: c.young@mmu.ac.uk *Poland, local democracy, Local Agenda 21, regional development*
 14. HUNGARY: Dr. Krisztina Keresztely, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Regional Studies, Budapest Department, Uri u.49, 1014 Budapest, Email: keresztely@rkk.mta.hu: *Citizens and governance in the European knowledge-based society; sustainable development*
 15. HUNGARY: Dr. Judit Timár, Department of Békéscsaba, Alföld Institute, Centre for Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Békéscsaba Pf. 185., H-5601, Tel: +(66) 328 577, Fax: +(66) 441 801, Email: Timár@rkk.hu: *small transitions, research methods, epistemological questions*
 16. NETHERLANDS: Dr. Leo Paul, Department of Geography, University of Utrecht, Willem C. van Unnikgebouw, Heidelberglaan 2, 3584 CS Utrecht, Email: L.Paul@geog.uu.nl: *Russia, St. Petersburg, GDR, economic culture, regional imaginations*
 17. NETHERLANDS: Dr. Bettina van Hoven, Department of Cultural Geography, University of Groningen, PO Box 800, 9700 AV Groningen (host of the event, Email: b.van.hoven@frw.rug.nl, Tel: +31 (0)50 363 6422, Fax: +31 (0)50 363 3901: *gender, GDR, rural areas*
 18. POLAND: Dr. Hana Cervinková, Director, International Institute for the Study of Culture and Education, University of Lower Silesia, Association for the Advancement of Education (DSWE TWP) ul. Wagonowa 9, 53-609 Wrocław, Email: hana.Cervinková@dswe.wroc.pl, Tel: +48 507 452 773, Fax: +48 71 359 4690: *military, masculinities, identities*

19. POLAND: Dr. Elzbieta Tarkowska, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology
Polish Academy of Sciences ul. Nowy Swiat 72 00-330 Warsaw, Email:
etarkows.ifispan.waw.pl: *Poland, rural poverty, life style of poor families,
microperspective of family and household, qualitative methods*
20. SWEDEN: Thomas Borén, Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University, 106
91 Stockholm, Sweden, Email: Thomas.Borén@humangeo.su.se: *Russia, St. Petersburg,
urban development, culture, informal economy*

Statistical information on participants:

Age groups (where known): 31- 40 years: 8 participants
41- 50 years: 3 participants
51-60 years: 3 participants

Gender: Female participants: 11
Male participants: 9

Countries of residence: Bulgaria: 1 participant
Georgia: 1 participant
Germany: 2 participants
Hungary: 2 participants
Netherlands: 2 participants
Poland: 2 participants
Sweden: 1 participant
United Kingdom: 9 participants

Evaluation ESF workshop 'Living transformation in East-Central Europe and Russia'

Groningen (NL) 7-10 October 2004

Your age: 31, 32, 32, 34, 35, 37, 40, 47, 49, 49, 52, 54, 60

General- Organisation

1. The information provided beforehand was sufficient.

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very much agree)				(very much disagree)
12	3		1	
			(participant preferred LESS information)	

2. I would have preferred to receive the presentations before the workshop.

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very much agree)				(very much disagree)
	3	7	5	1

3. How would you rate the location (Immanuel Church)?

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very good)				(very bad)
7	8	1		

4. What is your opinion about the accommodation (University Guest House)?

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very good)				(very bad)
10	2	2	1	

5. What is your opinion about the arrangements made for lunch/ dinner?

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very good)				(very bad)
13	3			

General- Workshop

6. This workshop was interesting to me.

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very much agree)				(very much disagree)
12	4			

7. The content of the workshop was what I expected.

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very much agree)				(very much disagree)
7	9			

8. I was able to develop my research direction further.

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very much agree)				(very much disagree)
4	11	1		

9. I made new research contacts/ developed collaborations.

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very much agree)				(very much disagree)
10	5		1	

10. The balance between all national groups present at the workshop was sufficient.

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very much agree)				(very much disagree)

2 8 3 2 1

Session Presentations

11. In general, what did you think of the level of the presentations?

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very good)				(very bad)
2	13	1		

12. The time allocated to the sessions was

++	+	+/-	-	--
(too long)		(good)		(too short)
2	9	4	1	

13. There was enough time for discussion

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very much agree)				(very much disagree)
6	4	3	3	

Conclusion

14. What is your overall appreciation of the workshop?

++	+	+/-	-	--
(very good)				(very bad)
9	7			

Comments

- The themes raised by the workshop were very interesting and it provided an excellent opportunity for discussion. Perhaps it would have been more useful to have even more time for discussion and less presentation. Overall a very enjoyable and informative experience.
- Please, more workshops like this!

- A very useful workshop. Definitely succeeded in its aim of bringing together the academic community especially from East and Central Europe. A rare chance to meet and network with academics from the region. Perhaps could have included some practitioners? Ideally will be followed by establishing a more permanent network.
- These kind of workshops, sharing experiences, we really need.
- I would have preferred LESS information about the workshop – all the drafts and so many emails made me quite irritated before I arrived. The quality of the presentations was very variable- people should have spoken on things they KNEW and not just to fit the headings. The accommodation was good but the hotel was in a noisy location. BUT overall I have enjoyed the workshop and really APPRECIATE all the hard work that went into it. ☺ Thank very much. ... the final session about plans for the future was REALLY useful. Thanks!
- Very well prepared workshop with good participants. I very much enjoyed it! Thank you!