

## **“The collapse of the Soviet Union: 20 years on”**

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Abstracts

### **1. The collapse of the Soviet Union: impact on postal services**

In advance of territorial re-naming, division or unification there is usually enough preparation time available for implementing important changes on “Day One”.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union the almost over-night establishment of fifteen successor states would cause immediate and different consequences for the postal service in most of the “new” countries. In the absence of preparation time and experience, local postal service managers had little choice but manage somehow to “keep the ship afloat”; things would settle down in time.

The presentation provides, by way of examples of commercial and personal post, instances of *ad hoc* action and long-term development in the successor states as reflected in the postage stamps, postal stationery and stamp cancelling devices.

Michael McNamara

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### **2. The impact of the Soviet legacy on the development of human rights law in post-Soviet states**

While states have worked together to author and ratify many international and regional human rights conventions and treaties, there is often a broad scope for interpretation and implementation of such documents between states. Even within the Council of Europe system major differences between the national human rights systems of member states can be observed. This paper aims to develop a deeper understanding of the origins of some of these differences.

This paper looks at the impact of the Soviet model of human rights law in post-Soviet states. The paper examines the approach to human rights law taken in three post-Soviet states, and shows that while these states have adopted different human rights law systems, these systems all reflect the Soviet legacy in some ways. The paper examines the primary sources of law in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet states and the public discourse on human rights law issues. Interviews carried out with human rights defenders and advocates in the case study states are also discussed.

The research project on which this paper is based concentrates on Russia, Georgia and Latvia. It also focuses on three areas of human rights law – freedom of religion, workers’ rights, and the rights of sexual minorities.

Kieran O’Reilly

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### **3. Constructing USSR image in Russia: between new reality and old forms**

The study examines the changing image of the USSR in contemporary Russia during the presidency of Vladimir Putin. The image of USSR was ambiguous and multivocal even in Soviet times. At the end of the 80. with the beginning of perestroika and glasnost policy it started to gain more negative connotations – the press liberated from the bounds of censorship accomplished the “inversion” of founding Soviet myths: the myth of social equality was replaced with stories about communist nomenclature, the myth about veridical socialistic way of development with reportages describing areas of poverty, etc. Yet at the beginning of 90. opinion polls noticed the fatigue of negative information about Soviet state, increasing longing for “old good times” and popularity of Soviet cultural schemes in interpreting surrounding reality. Hence the second president of Russia faced a difficult task: to maintain liberal rhetoric justifying reforms and at the same time the necessity to appeal to widespread concepts about foregone epoch. The study based on discursive analysis of presidential addresses to the Parliament (2000-2007) shows not only ambiguous meanings ascribed to the symbol of USSR by use of allusions, purposeful brachylogies, references to widespread Soviet topoi but also the dynamics of metanarration used to interpret past and present experience.

**Aleksandra Zamarajewa**

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### **4. The collapse of the Soviet Union and Russia’s muslim challenges**

Russia is still searching for its place in international relations nearly two decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Moscow faces many security internal and external dilemmas, including Muslim minorities and their complex links with the Muslim world. In this regard, it seems that this is why Russia’s National Security Strategy 2020 aims to define Russia’s domestic and foreign threats simultaneously.

The paper examines Moscow’s security challenges in terms of its relations with Russian Muslim minorities. It argues that Moscow has failed to prevent the alienation and radicalization of some Muslims inside Russia; nevertheless, it has established excellent relations with governments in the Muslim world.

To find out such complexities, it highlights Moscow’s domestic and foreign policy and factors stimulated Islamic radicalism inside Russia. Examining the extent to which Moscow will be deal with any increased Muslim challenge in future would be another task of this article.

**H. Vaez-zade**

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## **5. “What is my country for me?” Identity construction by the Russian speakers in Estonia and Lithuania**

This paper discusses ethnolinguistic vitality of Russian-speakers in post-Soviet Estonia and Lithuania. A comparative approach to sociolinguistic realities in the Baltic countries is highly relevant. The two countries have a lot in common. Both countries were parts of Russian Empire, both experienced a short period of independence in 1918–1940 and subsequently were occupied and annexed by USSR. Both re-established independence in 1991 and a radical change in language policy took place: Estonian and Lithuanian became the only official languages in the respective countries. Both capitals, Tallinn and Vilnius, have a significant share of non-titular populations (slightly under 50 % in both cities). In both countries, Russian-speaking settlers and their descendents had to master the official languages. Still, there are important differences as well: 1) for Lithuanian Russian-speakers, proficiency in Lithuanian is not a problem (unlike in other two Baltic countries), and 2) in Estonia, the share of Russian-speakers is about 30 %, while in Lithuania it is only 6 %, almost equal with Polish speakers in this country.

Ethnolinguistic vitality is a property that expresses group’s potential to act collectively in intergroup settings. This study presents the results of qualitative focus-group interviews that shed light on identity construction and ethnolinguistic vitality of Russian-speakers in contemporary Estonia and Lithuania. All of informants were from regions with different sociolinguistic concentration and with different backgrounds (age, social status etc). The results show that, in both countries, the Russian-speaking community is quite diverse in respect of their beliefs and attitudes. Diaspora identity is gradually moving apart from the mainland Russian identity.

Linguistic environment is a very strong determinant of ethnolinguistic identity of Estonian Russian-speakers. The data show that the Narva informants have a very strong local identity. Other identity categories identified in the responses may be summarized as “Estonian Russian”, “Estonian”, “European” and “Russian”. Last but not least, non-withstanding their desire to belong to the Estonian community and high level of Estonian language competence, Tallinn and Narva Russian-speakers with “Estonian” identity feel negative attitudes on the part of other Estonian speakers. In Lithuania, Russian-speakers move towards Lithuanian civic identity and try not to bring out their heritage cultural roots. These findings are discussed in relation to ethnolinguistic vitality theory as well as language maintenance issues.

Current research is part of the project “Ethnolinguistic vitality and identity construction: Estonia in Baltic background” that received funding from the Estonian Science Fund under grant agreement no ETF7350.

**Anastassia Zabrodskaja**

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## **6. Migrating West after the dissolution of the Soviet Union: Would you do it again?**

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union when the quality of life deteriorated sharply, many people chose to migrate to the Western countries such as Germany and Norway. However, a large number of people also decided to migrate within the borders of the former Soviet Union. Today, and with 20 years of belated wisdom from the earlier choice, the question is; was the decision to migrate a right one, and would you do it again?

This and other questions were the topics of the research project: "General and special features of the adaptation of Russian-speaking immigrants: comparative analysis of the processes in Russia, Germany and Norway", which was conducted in 2008 and 2009. This comparative study was based on a task-oriented questionnaire, as well as in-depth interviews. The pilot research covered three federal states of Germany, three federal regions of Russia, and the city of Oslo in Norway, with 190 respondents in Germany, 150 respondent in Russia and 62 respondents in Norway.

During the research, different factors affecting the decision to migrate to each of the specified destinations were analyzed. Because of "pull" factors, it is traditionally supposed that migration to the West is more attractive for the migrants from the former Soviet Union, thus making migrants to Germany and Norway more content with their decision than their counterparts moving only within the borders of the former Soviet Union. However, the results of the research point to another "truth"; Migration to the "West" was not necessarily the best solution for the different migrant groups in former Soviet Union.

Thus, the general level of feeling of equality with the local population was discovered to be highest in Norway (63.9%) lower in Russia (56.3%) and the lowest in Germany (36.4%). The migrants in Norway feel most comfortable in the country (45.9% of highest comfort feeling), while those migrating within Russia showed significantly lower level of highest comfort feeling (20.9%), and the migrants to Germany expressed the lowest level of highest comfort feeling (16.3%). The same picture can be seen related to the emotion of "feeling at home", with the highest level being two times higher in Norway (44.1%) than in Germany (22.3%) and Russia (23%). When considering the perceived influence of migration on their family, migrants in Norway again seem to be more satisfied with the situation, although the difference from the other countries is moderate at 63.4% in Norway, 60.7% in Russia, and 53% in Germany.

Although the difference in having a sense of comfort etc. is significant, most of the migrants would move to the same countries again if they have had the possibility to do so (46.6% for Russia, 54.9% for Germany and 64.5% for Norway).

So, why do some migrants to Western countries, having a better economic situation, social guarantees and stability, feel themselves only as good as, or sometimes even worse than in countries with unstable and socially less secure living conditions? In our opinion, only a complex analysis of “push” and “pull” factors, as well as objective and subjective aspects of life quality can answer this question.

**Ekaterina Bagreeva**

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**German Mendzheritskiy**

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**Galina Denisova**

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## **7. Russian language – Greek identity: A sociolinguistic approach to the Pontic Greek community**

Pontic Greeks, who live in Russia and those in Cyprus, constitute a particular interest from a sociolinguistic point of view. Having come from Pontos (which is located in today's north-eastern Turkey) Pontic Greeks settled in Georgia and/or Russia a few centuries ago. The majority of Pontic Greeks were Turko-phone at the time of their settlement since very few of them managed to retain their ancestral language - the Pontic Greek Dialect.

The present paper examines the current sociolinguistic situation of Pontic Greeks who permanently reside in Russia, more specifically, in the town of Essentuki, and those who moved to Cyprus in the early/mid 1990s. More concretely, this paper investigates the status of the Russian language and the ethnic/national identity of Pontic Greeks in Russia and Cyprus. It must be mentioned that the linguistic behavior of Pontic Greeks in Russia can be characterized by active oral use of the Russian and Turkish languages while those in Cyprus frequently employ three languages in their mundane interactions, namely, Russian, Turkish and Standard Modern Greek. The preliminary results show that the vast majority of Pontic Greeks, both in Russia and Cyprus, have Russian as their mother tongue (dominant language) while there is no a single and homogeneous view on their identity and a number of different ethnonyms such as ‘Greek’, ‘Pontian’, ‘Greek Pontian’, ‘Russian Pontian’, ‘Greek from Russia’ (for those in Cyprus) have been provided. In this light, the link between language (mother tongue) and identity of Pontic Greeks is not clear. In this respect, an attempt is made to shed some light on how ethnic identity is perceived and reflected in language preference by Pontic Greeks who live in Russia and those in Cyprus.

**Dionysios Zoumpalidis**

*University of Cyprus*

## **8. Russian foreign policy in the "near abroad:" Has the postimperial adjustment happened?**

Recent studies of Russian foreign policy emphasize its postimperial character. However, nationalist rhetoric and unusual assertiveness characterize much of the Russian external initiatives since the Russian-Georgian war in 2008. The character of the engagement with the so-called "near abroad" provides a litmus test of the overall nature of Russia's foreign policy and diplomacy. Moscow's attempts to transform the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organization into the Eurasian analogue of NATO and a new diplomatic offensive in Ukraine betray a desire to return to great power politics and expand spheres of influence. Economic interdependence, bilateral and multilateral security arrangements and the threat of ethnic separatism are all used to tie ex-Soviet states to Russia. Meanwhile, the idea of multivectorism - that is, balancing the pro-Russian and pro-Western moves in external relations - has taken root in Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

The paper will examine the evolution of Russia's relations with Ukraine and Kazakhstan since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It will touch upon the issue of postcommunist nationalism and its impact on foreign policy. It will connect political-economic considerations and security and defense policies of these countries, on the one hand, with their policies toward Russian language and Russian ethnic minorities, on the other hand. I will seek to ground my presentation on Russia's foreign policy toward the "near abroad" in a broader ethnocultural and politics of identity contexts.

**Mikhail A. Molchanov**

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## **9. The persistence of mental mappings: The EU and the politics of reinventing the Central and Eastern European Other**

This paper focuses on analyzing the narratives of the European identity making in their exclusivist features. A particular analytical emphasis is placed on the processes of othering that are involved in framing a European identitarian project. Inscribed in the established tradition of constructivism and discourse analysis, this paper aims to locate and unfold the alterity making processes within current European identity narratives. While the existing literature on the topic is focused on the dynamics of a European process of "othering" towards the EU borders, I will follow the traces of "othering" *inside* the European Union by arguing that, within the EU identity making, a core-periphery nexus is involved in integration processes while the East-West slope retains specific determinant features after the Eastern Enlargement. The paper confronts the roots, the shapes and the uses of the narratives of laggardness or "less Europeaness" of Central and Eastern European EU members. These narratives are considered illustrative samples of the centripetal dynamics of European identity making. The paper therefore seeks to evaluate the impact of these patterns of alterity making on the forces of contestation and types of resistance toward the European

identitarian constructs that lead to decreasing popular support for the European Union in Central and Eastern European countries. The argument is that the European identity making creates and reproduces through daily practices an internal alterity while the enlargement made the process of othering constitutive to most of the European identitarian endeavours by preserving and reshaping the mental mappings formed during the Cold War. The discourses and the construction of interests and identities within the EU's constitutive process of othering significantly impacts the potential formation of a cohesive European demos. Thus, in a reshaped paraphrase, a new spectre is haunting the European Union: the spectre of the internal Central and Eastern European "other".

**Emanuel Crudu**

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## **10. Quest for political identity in Russia: authoritarianism or democracy?**

Over the last years this problem has been actively discussed by scholars in Russia and elsewhere.

However, these discussions have not yielded definitions of authoritarianism and democracy that could be generally accepted (there is probably one point of view commonly used – that democracy is a more complex form of government than authoritarianism). Whenever one undertakes an attempt to specify democracy there appears a question of cultural-historic peculiarities of a nation, or region, that has declared itself democratic. And the study of these peculiarities is the key to understanding of new democratic regimes and differences among them.

It explains why even within the circle of former communist societies authoritarianism was not uniform in character and they should be considered from the point of view of different factors. Russia for example over the course of its history was often the subject for foreign invasions and it has formed a certain sense of caution and readiness to fend off aggression.

Very important was the level of economic development of the authoritarian country, as well as the cultural and psychological factors. So it does not seem productive to compare Germany with Kazakhstan, or Albania with Byelorussia - which is sometimes the case with political studies.

The democracy in Russia is the result of coincidence of various historical circumstances. In Western political literature it is called "semi-democracy". In Russia it has got termed "governed democracy". What does it imply and how does it compare with the Western understanding of democracy – this will be brought into focus in the paper.

**Marat Vernichenko**

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## **11. Cast ashore on different islands: Impediments for sultanistic regimes to democratize**

The USSR disintegration into independent states resulted in three different outcomes: countries that successfully democratized or are in the process of transition, countries that never made significant steps towards democratization remaining authoritarian and countries that failed the process of transition and “rolled back” to non-democratic regimes. This paper compares two regimes that fall within the category of sultanistic regimes and did not democratize: Belarus, often called as “the last dictatorship of Europe”, represents the failed transition and Turkmenistan a country where transition never took place. Following major democratization theories (Linz & Stephan 1996; Chehabi & Linz 1998) that suggest that chances of democratization in this type of countries are highly reduced.

I identify the factors that play the major role in preventing their democratization. I test the influence of three different factors derived from previous research: 1) historical (as externally determined) independence, 2) Socio-economic (i.e. tribal structure of society, isolation of rural masses, lack of education and possessing of considerable amount of easily-exploitable resources), and 3) Rulers' personality. The analysis also delves into prospects of future democratization for these regimes and sees international assistance or aid policy as helpful tools in democratizing sultanistic regimes.

**Mariam Naskidashvili**

*Leiden University*

## **12. Parliamentary democracy experience in Central Asia: A comparative analysis of the 10 October 2010 parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan**

On 10 October 2010, in Kyrgyzstan, which is one of the five independent republics of Central Asia, the introduction to the parliamentary system was experimented through the parliamentary elections. 29 political parties participated in the elections, but only 5 parties, according to the preliminary data, achieved to pass the 5% threshold to enter the parliament. The total number of voters was 2.852. 762, but the turnout was only 1.679.710 (55,31%).

The election process was observed by international organizations, such as OSCE, Human Rights Watch, Independent Countries Parliamentary Assembly and other organizations for democracy. There were 850 international election observers representing 32 organizations and 52 countries.

Kyrgyzstan is the first country among the independent post-Soviet Turkic republics, which decided to implement the parliamentary system. The introduction of this new political system is not only important for Kyrgyzstan but for all post-Soviet political environment.

After the independence in 1991, Kyrgyzstan was governed by Semi-Presidential System until 2005. In 2005, in connection with the so called colored revolutions in

the former USSR republics, Georgia and the Ukraine, the government of Kyrgyzstan also collapsed following a popular uprising. But five years later the new government was also deposed through a similar process. On April 2010 a popular uprising led to the fall of the government, and until November 2010 the country was governed by the interim government.

In this paper first the constitution will be examined with its impact on the political culture of the Kyrgyz Republic, the law on political parties, the structure of the election law and the election's level of accordance to democratic principles. Then, the communication strategies of political parties, which passed the 5% threshold, will be analyzed on a comparative basis. It is aimed to derive some results on the application of global democratic norms and the Kyrgyzstani political culture and election system.

A special emphasis will be paid on political parties' promises to voters, whether political parties were able to organize creative election campaigns, the similarities and differences in election communication, the coherence of the party identity, image of the leader, the party program, and political and ideological structure of the party, which will be analyzed according to their brand identities. The research will be conducted through the application of qualitative methodology.

**Emine Yavashgel**

**Dr. Yaşar Sari**

**Kanyshay Muktarova**

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### **13. Eco-nationalism and the crisis of the Soviet empire (1986-1991)**

The political-economic changes started in 1985 under M. S. Gorbachev resulted in a crisis of state system of the multinational Soviet Union and its downfall in 1991. The weakening of political and ideological control, the opportunity to discuss formerly taboo subjects resulted in the rise and growth of national movements in the Soviet republics. It also led to the aggravation of old and appearance of new interethnic conflicts. Given all essential differences in the level of social and economic development and national consciousness of the population of the Soviet republics, the dynamics of national processes in different regions shared many traits with each other. One of the phenomena manifested to a greater or lesser extent almost in all Soviet republics, was a phenomenon of eco-nationalism. In accordance with J. Dawson's definition we call eco-nationalism the rise of social movements that closely connected the problems of environment protection with national purposes, first of all, the achievement of the state independence or the high-grade sovereignty in the structure of the USSR.

It is worth noting that during the period previous to Gorbachev perestroika, the movement for environmental protection, together with the movement for protection of cultural monuments, remained in Soviet national republics one of the few legal, although rather limited, ways to oppose rigid centralization and party dictatorship. In Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania the discussion on problems of

local environment protection became at the end of 1987 a starting point of rise of powerful national movements for independence from the Soviet Union. The process, which began with moderate statements in support of perestroika, a few months later, became a sort of avalanche completely out of control of local and central authorities. At the beginning of 1988 the Estonian mass media began to consider the problems of the local environment in a wider political context. In the course of one of television discussions economist E. Savissaar called upon to create the popular front, a mass movement in support of perestroika in Estonia. By mid 1988 the Popular front of Estonia had become the most influential political force in the republic uniting representatives of different social and political groups.

Similar movements during the same period of time appeared in Latvia and Lithuania. In their programs the questions of environment protection were thoroughly developed as a part of the strategy aimed at the separation from the USSR. In Lithuania the attention of the public interested in environmental problems, first of all was concentrated on the work of the nuclear power station in Ignalina. Leaders of the movement pointed out that the recurrence of the nuclear power station accident, comparable with Chernobyl one, will mean a national catastrophe. Lithuanian environmentalists drew attention to the fact that two reactors in operation of Chernobyl type were technologically and morally obsolete, and a number of unplanned disconnects and other incidents considerably increased. In the summer of 1988 the majority of participants of the Lithuanian ecological groups took active part in the Sajudis, Lithuanian movement for Perestroika whose purpose became restoration of the state independence. In view of this purpose, the ecological problems, including questions of the functioning of the Ignalina nuclear power station, became one of the guidelines for the Sajudis. One of the most appreciable actions of the Sajudis was the organization of "the Ring of life" on September 17, 1988 when tens of thousands of people were built in the living chain surrounding the buildings of the Ignalina nuclear power station. The main purpose of the action was to protest against the plans to construct the new third power unit of the Ignalina nuclear power station. The success of this nonviolent protest action actually confirmed that Sajudis had become the most influential political power in Lithuania capable to resist both to the local communist party, and the Union centre.

Eco-nationalism was developed in full measure in the Baltic republics where its role in the formation of national movements for independence was extremely great. At the same time the participation of representatives of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in the work of the new Soviet to a great extent drew attention to the problems of the environment protection. Later they were given much more serious attention at the Union level. Environmental problems raised by the representatives of Baltic republics in many respects coincided with demands of ecological groups in Russia and other republics of the USSR. Most Russian environmentalists took a positive view of the idea of sovereign Russia as an organic part of the USSR, which was defended by Boris Yeltsin and his supporters who in their turn followed the Baltic example.

Environmental movement put in national claims in other Soviet republics too. As is known, the Nagorny Karabakh conflict began when representatives of the Armenian public there put forward a number of environmental demands. However a few days later these demands had already receded into the background, and the central problem of political struggle was the fate of Nagorny Karabakh.

The phenomenon of eco-nationalism was of great historical importance. Its appearance was caused by the system crisis of Soviet Union, synergy of aggravated environmental problems, rise of national movements and impossibility to rule using the former command - administrative methods. Eco-nationalism was one of symptoms and at the same time a new impulse for disintegration of the Soviet Union and gaining independence of its former united republics. It is worth noting that connection of national and ecological movements promoted becoming ecological problems the political priorities of the central united government in the last years of the USSR. Later when the basic national demands were realized, most ecological groups returned to the environment protection problems though till now it is possible to speak about the certain inertia of eco-nationalism in ecological movement in the newly independent states.

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## **14. Continuity or rupture? A look into post-socialist gender politics in Russia**

This paper aims to provide an overview of post-socialist gender politics in Russia with a specific focus on the redefinition of citizenship. Its main question is whether there has been rupture or continuity with the Soviet gender politics under the circumstances of transition to neo-liberalism.

Despite a strong state aspiration to resolve gender inequality in Soviet Russia, citizenship, that is, rights and duties, was differently defined for women and men. In the lack of treating women as citizens, emancipation of women through achievements like amendments in civil code, labor force participation, education, social provisions, etc. remained limited. This essentialist approach to gender difference seems to exist in Russia under the rule of both Mikhail Gorbachev and Vladimir Putin. Behind the discourse of bringing the women back in home and that of working mother, there lays an essentialist approach treating women's social position on the basis of natural differences.

This study consists of two parts. In the first part, the Soviet gender politics, its definition of citizenship, and its ideological and political strategies are overviewed. In the second part, post-socialist gender politics is examined by focusing on two main discourses put by Gorbachev and Putin. The specific focus is put on redefining the rights and duties category of citizenship for women. It is concluded that there has been no drastic change in understanding and treating 'woman' before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

**Gokten Dogangun**

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### **15. «Women-scientists resemble guinea-pigs....» (Female academics in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia: The transformation of discriminatory practices)**

Studies of biographical scenarios of individual members of the Russian intelligentsia to and after perestroika long ignored research into the history of the daily life of female academics within the society ("Scientific workers") out of a certain "unconsciousness" of that social group. Over the past twenty years there have been hundreds of stories and books of the history of private life (past and current) of many social groups, but, as yet, no work has explored these issues for the scientific intelligentsia. Sociologists have allotted greater attention to the problem, but their research does not accentuate the influence of socio-political, politico-cultural, and traditional, ethno-cultural factors and does not engage the problem of the reconstruction of the details of everyday life of researchers as a social group.

The gender aspects of the problem are multifold -- including the differences between male and female researchers regarding individual survival strategies, everyday struggles, lifestyles, social attitudes, values, time budgeting, social leadership roles, and models of inter-individual and inter-group cooperation -- but these questions remain marginalized to the studies.

After 1985 and the collapse of "Soviet historical sciences" change in the categorization of gender discrimination was possible as that type of discrimination was destroyed. Rigid socio-cultural stereotypes of sexual roles in the scientific community had influenced women's lifestyle strategies until perestroika and (with noticeable changes) continued to act upon women's lives after 1985. This study asks, what commonalities and differences in gender relations are there between Soviet and post-Soviet Russia in regards to the systematic discrimination of women in the sciences? To answer these questions, this study undertakes a multi-disciplinary platform, engaging methodological paradigms from sociology, history, cultural anthropology, and feminist ethnology. These have permitted a deeper understanding and analysis of the problems of gender asymmetry in the scientific community as seen through the eyes of the members of this very social and economic group.

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### **16. Sustainable livelihoods and vulnerability: The case of urban Russian households**

The epochal changes in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet bloc led to fundamental changes of economic, political, social and cultural circumstances. Uncertainty, planning deficits, crises in the economic system of the national

states are only some catchwords which can be stated for this period. In the literature as well as in political discussions it is often emphasized that “socialism” was as an all-embracing system that penetrated every domain of political, economic, and social life and that the socialist nation-state provided the basis for inclusion and social cohesion because most people were employed or fell into an ascribed, socially acceptable alternative status (e.g., veteran, a mother of many children, a pensioner, disabled, etc.). The omnipresence of the state in the socialist period implied that the self-initiative of private planning and protection by households with regard to the achievements by state and state-companies was weak. Moreover, the embeddedness of individuals into the “collective” led to the fact that individual responsibility and long-term planning of private households for future and age was scarcely perceptible because the “collective” has substituted these requirements. Few studies did investigate survival and coping strategies of Russian households concerning the 1998 crisis, but there are almost no studies about household’s behavior for the current economic crisis in Russia and its impacts.

This research project is about sustainable livelihoods and vulnerability of urban households in three cities of Russia’s North-West (St. Petersburg, Petrozavodsk, and Novgorod). By carrying out field research and case studies vulnerabilities and capabilities of Russian households shall be examined. As vulnerabilities and capabilities do not depend only on environmental change, but also on structures of inequality and developments at the macro-level (institutions, policies, and processes) the livelihood strategies of households at the micro-level shall be explained. Using the sustainable livelihood approach, developments on both macro level (institutions, laws etc.) and micro level (private households) and the vulnerability context (also its dynamic and characteristics) of households are studied. Moreover, the study refers to the question of the mobility of Russian household members to find new working places, to adapt to ecological changes, to migrate to other region to increase the household budget etc. The report points out that crises, shocks and trends are influencing the household behavior, its decision-making, gender and breadwinner relations, childbearing questions, investments, consumption, internal composition of households etc. in a variety of ways: e.g. decline in household incomes, eroded savings by inflation, unemployment, increasing poverty rates, looking for jobs in the informal market, subsistence agriculture (plots and gardening, “dacha” phenomena). The report reflects how urban Russians after 20years of the collapse of the Soviet Union make their living (livelihoods), which forms of capital (social, financial, natural, physical, and human) do they combine and which kind of strategies (e.g. coping, survival, stabilization, expansion, gender strategies) do they use to avoid vulnerability and create capabilities to improve or to claim a certain standard of living. To investigate the livelihood strategies of Russian households a set of research methods is used: questionnaires and interviews with household members, statistics (e.g. Russian Long Monitoring Survey) and computer programs (UCINET, VENNMAKER) to analyze social networks of the respondents.

**Denis Gruber**

## **17. The social transformation in former “closed” cities in Estonia: Case study of Paldiski and Sillamae**

My paper focuses on analytical and comparative studies of social and economical structure transformations in the former military “closed cities” in Estonia for last 20 years.<sup>1</sup> The main subjects of this comparative study are former “closed cities” Paldiski and Sillamae. Both of the cities were founded after the Second World War for the soviet atomic project and for more than 40 years were ruled by strict military regime of functioning. We have to take into account that the population of these cities consisted of Russian immigrants from the European part of Russia.<sup>2</sup> Closed cities were characterized by limited communication with outside environment and by the lack of exchange of information. The state institutions, such as police or Public Prosecutor's Office, had extended legal power in “closed” cities. These and other restrictive boundaries were offset by state benefits and by better abundant supplies for the city. The risk factor of local economy was the military focus in exchange for self sustainability.

Closed status created artificial "greenhouse" conditions for the functioning of socio-economic system in Paldiski and Sillamae, which disappeared with the Estonian proclamation of independency. After the collapse of the USSR and the loss of state funding these cities fell into a deep social and economical crisis, which is needed to overcome until now. The main question of my paper is if the post-soviet development of those cities has different or common elements and if a specific way of transformation of those cities exists. I think it is important question because the phenomenon of “closed military city” still exists in today’s Russia, Belorussia and Kazakhstan. One day those cities will be forced to implement the demilitarization process.

In the beginning of 1990s Paldiski and Sillamae had a common platform for social transformation. They were similar to the following parameters: geographical location, date of occurrence, monoprofile system of economy, ethnic and gender composition.

The main hypothesis was the assumption that the former “closed cities” Paldiski a Sillamae have a special way of transformation which is different from the experience of other cities in Estonia. This hypothesis based on the example of Paldiski and Sillamae confirmed, primarily in the sphere of economic diversification and low social mobility of city population. In Estonia, the platform for the social exclusion of non-Estonian population is language, nationality, citizenship and place of residence. Due to the „closed past“ the population of those cities does not speak Estonian and do not have Estonian citizenship. The unemployment rate among non-Estonian population is traditionally high, reaching in 2009 19%. The non-Estonians without Estonian citizenship have the lowest

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<sup>1</sup> Rus. „ЗАТО” – закрытые автономные территориальные образования.

<sup>2</sup> The biggest wave of immigrants (scientists and militaries) moved to those cities between 1947 and 1965.

income and the difference in annual income between them and the Estonians in 2007 was more than 20,000 croons. Because of the difficulties in obtaining Estonian citizenship in 2009 in Sillamae were registered more Russian citizens than Estonian.

In my paper I will try to analyze the process of social transformation in Paldiski and Sillamae and follow the development of those cities, depending upon the strategies of controlling governmental structures (EU). I believe that the main way to overcome the heritage of "closed city" is the process of social inclusion of the Sillamae and Paldiski city population into Estonian society and the diversification of the economy.

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## **18. The social aspect of the informal economic activity of the Russian policemen in the post-Soviet period.**

This socio-economic research is devoted to studying the problems of the Russian police system that have appeared as the consequences of transition from Soviet Union. Police is the part of public sector and its employees have to follow the official rules to maintain the order and this fact resolve negative attitude of policemen to additional earnings. After the transition period from planned economy of Soviet Union to market economy the police system has been changed: without permission policemen joined in economic activity. They began work up as taxi drivers or night watchmen and also they began take bribes for some services. Nowadays there is a prevalence of policemen's informal economic activity in the Russia and this issue has become an urgent priority. We intend to examine the informal economic activity of policemen, in particular the social aspect of this phenomena. The study makes an attempt to facilitate understanding the motives of Russian policemen to get involved in informal economic activity. To advance our understanding of the nature of policemen's informal economic activity it is necessary to observe whether beginning policemen have a potential motivation to join in informal economic activity or they tend to secure the society and their motivation changes under the group norms. The empirical database is presented by semi-structured interviews with policemen of different levels.

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