EEGA in Dialogue: Interview with Romana Salageanu
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Dieser Beitrag ist hervorgegangen aus der Kooperation zwischen dem Leibniz-WissenschaftsCampus „Eastern Europe – Global Area" (EEGA) und dem ejournal Connections. Die folgenden Interviews und Artikel geben Einblicke in die Forschungen am EEGA-WissenschaftsCampus, die den Entwicklungen im östlichen Europa in ihren globalen Bezügen gewidmet sind.

This item has emerged from the cooperation between Leibniz ScienceCampus „Eastern Europe – Global Area" (EEGA) and the ejournal Connections. The following interviews and articles offer insights of the research projects at EEGA ScienceCampus, which are devoted to the developments in Eastern Europe in their global dimensions.

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Interview with Romana Sălăgeanu

Romana Sălăgeanu has completed her PhD within a joint-supervision programme between the Otto-von-Guericke University, Magdeburg and the Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca on the topic of Regional Participation within European Multi-Level Governance, the influence of Saxony-Anhalt on European decision-making processes and possible lessons for Central and Eastern Europe, published by Barbara Budrich Publishers (2017). During her stay at the Leibniz ScienceCampus »Eastern Europe – Global Area«, she focused on Research Area 5: Eastern Europe in Times of Europeanisation and Diffusion, especially on Romania and the development of political trust in the context of Europeanisation and Globalization.

In short, which questions are you dealing with in your current research?
I have started to work on a research project on political trust in Romania. The developed project pursues political science research using empirical social methodology. The project examines the role of political trust in the political culture of Romania in order to identify the specific societal needs in Romania, which should be tackled for a stable political structure and culture. Based on the theoretical approaches of democratization and political culture, the concept of political trust provides an instrument for the analysis of the stability of the Romanian political system and for the analysis of changes in citizens' attitudes regarding democracy. Such research is currently needed due to the tensions between the society and the government actors, the restlessness and the way towards which the already achieved progress in the justice department is being channeled. Many developments in the economic, social and political areas have been adjusting to overall global developments requiring an inner alignment of positions to be represented outside the country.

What importance do globalization and Europeanization have?
Politically, globalization helped the spread of democracy around the world, but democratic systems were adopted according to specific cultural traditions of the new developing democracies. This can be seen specifically in the EU new member states, where each state had to cope on its own with the development of democratic institutions and processes, according to the *acquis communautaire*, thus implementing Europeanization processes. Given the democratic premise, citizens have a say in the shaping processes of their everyday life. The issue of citizens' attitudes towards the system they live in remains a constant research opportunity that needs re-assessment according to current state of affairs. The research challenge is posed by the interplay of the micro-level of individual citizen's attitude and the result of the aggregated attitudes in shaping the political system's output. Thus, the research gap is about the relationship between the globalized and europeanized effects on a country's political system and the political trust the citizens have for their political system.

In Romania, the law created the framework for most of the projects on EU governance, perceived as „belated modernization". The Union was seen merely as an international organization against which the national interests had to be defended.[1] The dimension of ethnic conflicts and tensions is adding to the interest's conflict. Debates on

democratic consolidation and persistence of values, such as the rule of law, continue to take a tool on the society that is currently witnessing continued efforts of political elites to undermine the justice system and the anti-corruption fight. Hence, the dimension of inclusive and extractive institutions and congruent interests makes the difference how the system develops.[1]

Revisionist research has been promoting an assertive model of political culture that contradicts the model of allegiant political culture, in which the citizens respect political authority and accept the government's decision, becoming a follower and not a challenger.[2] The assertive model presents a new style of democratic politics, based on more participation and citizen-centered democratic processes. In this model, the citizens are more critical, emancipated, and even post-materialist.[3] The last two decades have changed citizens' values and research needs to address the theoretical expectations of how citizens should or can be, allegiant versus assertive, so that the democratic order can prevail.

Easton considers that the stability of a democratic system is based on diffuse support, which embodies the socialization and experience-based identification with the principles of the political system. Next to it, there is the short-term specific support, an immediate reaction, orientated to everyday political decisions and outcomes.[4] Tufiş argues that diffuse support is present in Romania; especially a highest level of institutional trust was recorded for foreign international institutions

such as the EU, NATO and the UN.[5] At the same time, authors consider that the past experiences during the communist regime still exert influence on the attitudes of citizens, each country having a specific pattern.[6]

The relevance of this analysis is that firstly, when dealing with the post-communist countries, it is required to learn the extent of influence of the country's experience with the communist system through memories, feelings and expectations on differentiated groups of people. The different experience of the population with political systems gives sway to different sources, consequences and meanings of political trust. If the communist citizens were rather passive citizens, the generation brought up in a democratizing context must learn to deal with different sources of information and to rely on personal judgement when participating in the political life, either by electing representatives, or joining a political party or becoming an activist. This represents a challenge for the citizens of a young democratic system. Nevertheless, the classification of the citizens into allegiant or assertive citizens renders information on the strength of the democracy, strong or weak.

What are your guiding questions?

There are some leading research questions for this research. What inherent and extrinsic cultural elements does the population of the Europeanized Romania use in order to form trust-building judgements about its democratic political system? How does the globalization affect the political trust of Romanian citizens?

A current debate question relates to the sources of political trust. Freitag and Bühlmann argue that one source is represented by the political

[1]See Daron Acemoglu, James Robinson, Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity and poverty, London 2013.

[2]Russel Dalton, Christian Welzel, Political Culture and Value Change, in: idem (eds.), The Civic Culture Transformed. From Allegiant to Assertive Citizens, New York 2001, p. 1-16; Gabriel Almond, Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture, Princeton 1965; Detlef Pollack, Jörg Jacobs, Gert Pickel, Political Culture in Post-Communist Europe: Attitudes in new democracies, Aldershot 2003; Susanne Pickel, Gert Pickel, Politische Kultur- und Demokratieforschung, Wiesbaden 2006.

[3]Pippa Norris, The Political Regime, in: Jacques Thomassen, Hermann Schmitt (eds.), Political Representation and Legitimacy in the European Union, Oxford 1999.

[4]David Easton, A framework for Political Analysis, Englewood Cliffs 1965.

[5]Claudiu D Tufiş, Institutional Trust – Victim of the Postcommunist Transition, in: Bogdan Voicu, Malina Voicu (eds.), The Values of Romanians: 1993–2006. A Sociological perspective, Laşi 2008, p. 115-143, Bogdan Voicu, Malina Voicu, How sociability and trust impact on welfare systems: A cross-European analysis, in: Review of research and social intervention 33 (2011), p. 72-90; Bodgan Voicu, Balázs Telegdy, Dynamics of Social Values: 1990-2012, in: Acta Univ. Sapientiae, Social Analysis 6 (2016) 1, p. 7-30; Grigore Pop-Eleches, Joshua A. Tucker, Communist Socialization and Post-Communist Economic and Political Attitudes, in: Electoral Studies 33 (2014), p. 77–89.

[6]Daniela Braun, Politisches Vertrauen in neuen Demokratien, Wiesbaden 2013; Voicu, Telegdy, Dynamics of Social Values.

institutions, which, when perceived as „universalistic, power-sharing, incorruptible, nonpartisan, and sanctioners of noncooperative behavior" can generate general trust in the society that in turn generates trust in political institutions. In Romania, low levels of generalized trust were assessed by the end of the 1990s.[7] The Romanian society experienced the „honeymoon effect" and the „post-honeymoon" phase, showing circumstantial trust in institutions, expressed during cycles of elections.[8] The Romanian society shows a high general acceptance of the democratic system. Further research inquiries are invited to explain the long-term consolidated support for the political system.[9] One step in this direction is the analysis and the categorization of the specific sources of political trust that enforce the stability of the democratic system.

Can you comment on the relationship between democracy and political trust?

The relationship between democracy and political trust is considered essential and at the same time paradoxical. Trust implies a person's judgement that another person has both the motivation and competence to act in his or her interests, and will do so without being overseen.[10]

Trust means, then, to give up control over activities to the will of others. On the other hand, renouncing to do everything increases the chances

of cooperation and collective action. But the question remains whether this is also the case in Romania. Does relieving from duties increase the collective actions or civic participation? Warren differentiates between different types of political trust: in experts and professionals, in office-holders in agencies, ministries and judiciaries who hold public trust, in political institutions, and in political representatives. He argues that democracies institutionalize distrust because institutions are used to monitor those in power. Since trust can be misplaced as well, there are democracy-supporting and democracy-undermining types of trust. The main argument of Warren is that the political trust relationship is legitimate as long as it can be justified to all those affected by its externalities. The opposite of being justified is the relationship where corruption is involved and the relationship cannot be made public because it would affect negatively those gaining from it. Thus, Warren makes the difference between the following opposing pairs of trust types: direct social trust vs. direct protective trust; associative trust vs. mediated protective trust; generalized cultural trust vs. particularized cultural trust; public confidence vs. media clientelism, and institutional trust vs. institutionalized corruption.[11]

Why do you focus on Romania?

Romania presents an exception to attitudes and civic participation, namely the cohort born in the 1980s, which opens further opportunities for research of the post-transition society in Romania.[12] Another opportunity for closer investigation is the effect of religion and the role of church on the construction of attitudes and the construction of political trust among the citizens.[13] Rusu argues that, in Romania, there is a struggle between the elites' narrative of communism as cultural trauma (red narrative) and the narrative of communism as a better alternative to the current society (black narrative).[14] Hence,

[7]Markus Freitag, Marc Bühlmann, Crafting Trust. The Role of Political Institutions in a comparative perspective, in: Comparative Political Studies 42 (2009) 12, pp. 1539, 1542.

[8]Gabriela Catterberg, Alejandro Moreno, The Individual Base of Political Trust: Trends in New and Established Democracies, in: International Journal of Public Opinion Research 18 (2005), p. 32–48; Bodgan Voicu, Social capital: bonding or bridging Europe?, in: H. Rusu, Bogdan Voicu (eds.), European Integration Process from EAT to EAST: Civil Society and Ethnic Minorities in a Changing World, Sibiu 2005, p. 77-98; Daniela Braun, Politisches Vertrauen in neuen Demokratien, Wiesbaden 2013; Gergō Závecz, Post-communist societies in Central and Eastern Europe, in: Sonja Zmerli, Tom W. G. Van der Meer (eds.), Handbook on Political Trust, Cheltenham 2017, p. 440-460.

[9]Voicu, Telegdy, Dynamics of Social Values.

[10]A. Baier, Trust and Antitrust, in: Ethics 96 (1986) 2, p. 231-260; Pippa Norris, Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revised, Cambridge 2011; Mark Warren, Democracy and Trust, Cambridge 1999, Mark Warren, What kind of trust does a democracy need? Trust from the perspective of democratic theory, in: Sonja Zmerli, Tom W. G. Van der Meer (eds.), Handbook on Political Trust, Cheltenham 2017, p. 33-52.

[11]Warren, What kind of trust does a democracy need?, p. 40.

[12]Voicu, Telegdy, Dynamics of Social Values.

[13]Jerry Poppe, Political trust and Religion, in: Charis: A journal of Lutheran Scholarship, Thought and Opinion 4 (2004) 1, p. 27-41.

[14]Mihai Stelian Rusu, Battling over Romanian Red Past: The Memory of Communism

the population follows one of the two main streams of dealing with the difficulties of the transition and the democratization process that requires more time to be indeed internalized within the population and within the institutions. The internalization of democracy is highly connected to the fight against corruption.[15] The competition between actors of the three state branches (legislative, executive and judicial) and the opposite goals some of them pursue increases the uncertainty of citizens to engage with their political representatives and to develop attitudes that comfort them to have political trust.

Can you sum up your methodological approaches?
The research uses the most recent definition of political trust considered broad enough to be used in several aspects of the research concerning political trust. This is the concept provided by the handbook on political trust, in which political trust embodies the following elements:
1. National identity, manifested through feelings of national pride, patriotism and identity.
2. Approval of core regime principles and values, approval of democratic values and ideals.
3. Evaluations of the overall performance of the regime, satisfaction with democratic governance.
4. Confidence in regime institutions, legislative, executive, judicial, security forces, central, state and local governments.
5. Approval of incumbent office-holders, attitudes towards specific party leaders, etc.[16]

Is national identity changing in times of globalization and Euro-

peanization?
The national identity is usually taken for granted, but since Romania is celebrating a century of its union in 1918 and the country is still facing conflict of interests with ethnic minorities, the national identity might be as well subject to change. If globalization has been taking place since the middle of the 19th century, the current Romanian state and its society are faced with the challenge of figuring their identity before being able to support an intrinsic political regime led by members of the national community and not by others, which is actually difficult in times of Europeanization and globalization.

How do you summarize and measure the term „political trust"?
Political trust is based on the subjective belief that the political system can provide positive outcomes and mandatory normative political rules, without the necessary involvement of citizens or their constant control. It legitimizes the political regime and guides the behavior of citizens, politicians and civil servants.[17] Social trust, on the other side, is based on relationships and networks that people have within their everyday life, in other words social capital. The participation in voluntary activities within associations or organizations helps build social trust due to the common values and pursuit of collective welfare.[18] Hence, political trust is the most specific expression of political support and it cannot be considered an isolated concept. Understanding the „dynamic interdependencies of political trust and more diffuse levels of political support" is crucial for analyzing political trust in a difficult environment such as the post-communist Europeanized societies.[19] The most specific levels of support are the ones for the democratic institutions and for the incumbent office-holders.

How is your research format structured?

between Elitist Cultural Trauma and Popular Collective Nostalgia, in: Romanian Journal of Society and Politics 10 (2015) 1, p. 29.

[15]Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, The Quest for Good Governance: How Societies Develop Control of Corruption, Cambridge 2015; European Commission, Progress Reports for Romania and Bulgaria, URL: https://ec.europa.eu/info/effective-justice/rule-law/assistance-bulgaria-and-romania-under-cvm/reports-progress-bulgaria-and-romania_en, 2017.

[16]Pippa Norris, The conceptual framework of political support, in: Sonja Zmerli, Tom W. G. Van der Meer (eds.), Handbook on Political Trust, Cheltenham 2017, p. 23-24.

[17]David Easton, Reassessment of the concept of 'political support', in: British Journal of Political Science, 5 (1975) 4, p. 435-437; Sonja Zmerli, Marc Hooghe, Introduction: the context of political trust, in: idem (eds.), Political trust; Why context matters, Essex 2013, p. 1-11.

[18]Robert Putnam, Making Democracy work: Civic Traditions in modern Italy, Princeton 1993; Pickel, Pickel, Politische Kultur- und Demokratieforschung.

[19]Norris, The conceptual framework of political support, p. 30.

The research comprises the empirical and statistical evaluation of second-order data from surveys made at international level (EVS, WSV, Global corruption barometer, Eurobarometer, Flash Eurobarometer) in order to determine the trends of social and political trust and its consequences that have been defining the Romanian society after the communist regime and its development during the democratization, Europeanization processes and the NATO accession. Specific methods used are the confirmatory factor analysis that explores the variation and co-variation among trust judgements and variables that account for the variation. Based on the statistically analyzed trends, further qualitative research of the sources of political trust can enrich the statistical results. Interviews with different categories of citizens need to be conducted in order to pin point the differences in generations, occupation, social status, education of people. Such differences can confirm the types of trust, cited from Warren before.

Romania is considered to be the only country in the communist Europe to „experiment an almost sultanistic dictatorship and a violent transition."[20] Hence, the individual cause of analysis on Romania is dignified by its specific experience with the transition, in an environment filled with distrust and confusion related to whom to consider trustworthy.[21] Further exceptions in Romania are represented by the high trust levels in the Church and the positive significant effect of corruption on political trust, citizens being more accepting to some forms of corruption, so Závecz.[22]

Adaptation of the society to the democratic system involves developing own feelings and attitudes towards the democratic polity. The circumstances of the development of attitudes are the object of this research. These attitudes cannot be transplanted from the western environment into the post-communist one without taking into consideration the historical and cultural context. The new developed attitudes

are delicate and subject to quick changes. Such changes may occur even more often in the present day, where artificial intelligence and advanced technology enhance the rapid creation and dissemination of new information. In this respect, the citizen in the political system of a country faces the rush of information that challenges his capacity to follow everything that happens. For citizens to be able to go about their everyday activity, they need to transfer the burden of the political activity into the hands of very few people. Hence, they are required to invest their trust in other people. Based on their ability to trust people around them, they need to trust that the democratic system and the people running it will be able and will work in the interest of the citizens and of their voters. In the end, it is a question of interests and their achievement.[23]

If active citizens keep a democracy alive, the current research seeks to categorize the types of active citizens in Romania and their political interests. Depending on their political interests is their political support for a specific group of actors within the system. Hence, the project will identify:
• Types of citizens (allegiant vs. assertive, dissatisfied democrats).
• The intrinsic values that generate social and political trust.
• Intrinsic and external sources for constructing political trust.
• The relationship between political trust and the democratic system.
• The relationship between political trust and the communist legacy.
• The role of corruption in the construction of political trust.

The resulted quantitative and qualitative knowledge will deliver a complementary theoretical base for the empirical analysis of political trust that has been implemented so far by international survey instruments. It provides the opportunity for the re-assessment of the political culture of Romania in times of diffused effects of globalization.

Notes

[ ] Josef Niżnik, Krzysztof Iszkowski, Research on EU Governance in Central and Eastern Europe: National Specificities and a Common Le-

[20]Elster et al., Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies, Cambridge 1998.

[21]Pop-Eleches, Tucker, Communist Socialization and Post-Communist Economic and Political; Závecz, Post-communist societies in Central and Eastern Europe.

[22]Závecz, Post-communist societies in Central and Eastern Europe, p. 455.

[23]Warren, What kind of trust does a democracy need?, p. 40.

gacy, in: Beate Kohler-Koch, Fabrice Larat (eds.), European Multi-level Governance. Contrasting Images in National Research, Cheltenham 2009, p. 148f.; Klaus Goetz, Making Sense of Post-Communist Central Administration: Modernization, Europeanization or Latinization?, in: Journal of European Public Policy 8 (2001) 6, p. 1032-1051.