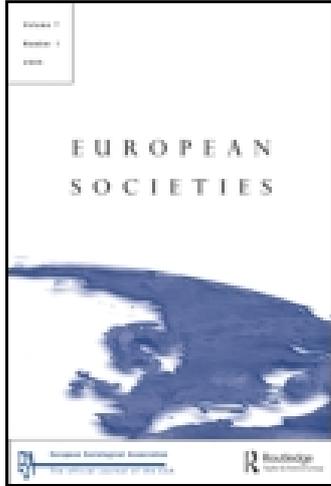


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Sociology in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s: A Decade of Reconstruction

Mike Keen^a & Janusz Mucha^b

^a Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Indiana University South Bend, 1700 Mishawaka Avenue, South Bend, IN 46634, USA

^b Institute of Sociology, Nicolaus Copernicus University, ul. Fosa Staromiejska 1A, 87-100 Torun, Poland

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SOCIOLOGY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE IN THE 1990S: A DECADE OF RECONSTRUCTION

Mike F. Keen

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Indiana University South Bend, 1700 Mishawaka Avenue, South Bend, IN 46634, USA

Janusz Mucha

Institute of Sociology, Nicolaus Copernicus University, ul. Fosa Staromiejska 1A, 87-100 Torun, Poland

ABSTRACT: With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the independence of Central and Eastern Europe, and the disappearance of the great polarity that separated East and West, the climate for sociology changed radically. Throughout the region sociologists found themselves with a new independence, free of the ideological and intellectual restrictions that had been imposed by state and Party authorities. In the post-1989 era, sociology entered a decade of reconstruction and began to take on a new role, helping to understand the transformations that occurred, as well as facilitating the social change they brought about. This article examines this recent history of sociology in Central and Eastern Europe with particular attention to deCommunization, institutionalization, teaching, theory and methods, topics of research, and international collaboration and influences.

Key words: Central Europe; Eastern Europe; history of sociology; deCommunization; institutionalization; theory and methods; teaching

In November of 1989, the image of workers with jackhammers perched atop the Berlin Wall, as if dancing to the beat of the rock music blaring amidst the celebrative crowds below, powerfully and poignantly broadcast to the world the independence of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the imminent collapse of the Soviet Union. Foreshadowed by the rise of Solidarity and the revolt of the Gdansk shipyard workers in Poland almost a decade earlier, with the great transformation that followed, the climate for sociology in the region changed dramatically.¹ Sociologists found

1. Other harbingers before the fall of the Berlin Wall include the Open Table Conference (1988/89), and the first partly free parliamentary elections in Poland (June 1989), which resulted in the first non-Communist government in Eastern Europe since 1948.

themselves with a new independence free of the ideological and intellectual restrictions that had been imposed by the previously ruling Communist state and Party authorities. Planned economies were quickly replaced by emerging market economies, and through them increased articulation with world sociology, as well as the forces of globalization.

The region was opened both politically and economically to foreign goods, services and investments, as well as to foreign ideas and institutions. In most of the newly emerging or once again independent nations, new political parties were legalized, procedural democracy was introduced, and free national and local elections were held. Ethnic and sexual minorities became much more visible and active. Small enterprises mushroomed, commerce bloomed, and many new occupations, for example that of 'entrepreneur' were born. At the same time, many sectors of the socialist economy collapsed, especially the large state-owned industrial enterprises. The very structure of society changed as unemployment and poverty grew quickly, even while new elites and concentrations of wealth also emerged, leading to whole new types of social stratification and marginalization. Western culture, i.e., books and magazines were translated, and music and television streamed into the region, as did email and the Internet. In other words, with the transformation, a new and free civil society and state apparatus emerged as the precondition of a free sociology, as well as its primary subject matter.

Though remarkable, particularly as presented in the vivid images of the mass media, the transformation, admittedly unanticipated by sociologists or historians on either side of the wall, did not occur overnight. Arguably, and in hindsight, it was the culmination of a series of complex events and forces leading up to the glasnost and perestroika that is associated most clearly with Mikhail Gorbachev, but that also had been reflected in a growing albeit often underground critique of and resistance to, as well as loosening of, the ideological and eventually political control of the Communist authorities. Nonetheless, its impact on the history of sociology in the region during the last decade of the twentieth century was considerable.² Not surprisingly since then, the introduction of procedural democracy, market economies, and Western popular culture has progressed much more quickly and easily than the building of civil society.

While we can identify some common features of the recent history of sociology in Central and Eastern Europe, we also want to strongly emphasize that the particularity of their development and the extent to which

2. Though beyond the scope of this paper, one cannot fully appreciate the history of the sociology of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe without a broader awareness of the history of the region. See Davies (1996) and Johnson (2002). For an examination of the history of sociology in the region following World War II, particularly from the time of Khrushchev's thaw to Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika, see our previous work, *Eastern Europe in Transformation: The Impact on Sociology* (Keen and Mucha 1994).

they manifested themselves in each case differed from one nation to the next.³ In part, this variance depended upon the strength of the national tradition of sociology that existed prior to the imposition of Communist control. For example, Poland, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Hungary had long and strong traditions. It was particularly important whether sociologists were recruited and promoted on the basis of meritorious or political criterion. The size of the country and its respective sociological communities was also significant. The small Baltic nations of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have had relatively small sociological communities, which were only recently established, initially under the umbrella of the Soviet Union.

Another factor was the relationship each nation and its sociological community had to the Soviet Union, and at what point and to what extent Communist authority was imposed, and then later loosened and finally lifted. In the cases of Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine, all formally part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, this imposition occurred in the 1920s and 1930s. For the satellite nations, as well as for the Baltic nations, it did not occur until after World War II. And, even within the satellites the course and extent of the imposition differed depending on the nature and character of the national regimes in place. For example, in the case of Czechoslovakia, as other sociological communities experienced a loosening of authority in the 1960s, the Prague spring of 1968 and 'normalization' that followed, led to the re-imposition and extension of totalitarian conditions. Yugoslavia, with its independence from the Soviet Union, and 'third way to development,' likewise experienced its own variation in the impact Communist authority had on sociology.

During the 1990s, the most immediate and perhaps predominant factors influencing the case of each sociological community were the particular and concrete social, economic, and political developments that occurred in each nation as it moved through the transformation.

3. The findings presented in this paper are based on our collaboration with 22 sociologists from across the region, and the reports they submitted to us based on their investigations of the developments in sociology in each of their countries during the last decade. We would like to give special recognition to these contributors: Wanda Rusetskaya, Olga Tereshenko, Vyara Gancheva, Ognjen Caldarovic, Miloslav Petrusek, Mikko Lagerspetz, Iris Pettai, Denes Nemedi, Peter Robert, Aivars Tabuns, Anele Vosyliute, Petre Georgievski, Mileva Gurovska, Illie Badescu, Radu Baltasiu, Valery Mansurov, Mikhail Chernysh, Bohumil Buzik, Eva Laiferova, Franc Mali, Nataliya Pohorila, and Karel Turza. These reports are available in *Central and Eastern European Sociology: Transformation at the Dawn of a New Millennium* (Keen and Mucha 2003). Because of communication problems due to political and social upheaval, we were unable to recruit contributors from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, and those Caucasus countries that are culturally European, i.e., Armenia and Georgia. For additional information, including on areas not included in our work, see Genov and Becker (2001) on the social sciences in Southeastern Europe, and Kaase *et al.* (2002).

Noteworthy in this regard are the cases of the former Czechoslovakia, now separated into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and the former Yugoslavia. Given its extreme nature, the Yugoslav experience, as an epicenter of instability, war, and unprecedented economic crisis, represents a case unto itself, in the midst of what one observer has characterized as ‘sociocide’ (Turza 1992, 1996).

The ‘deCommunization’ of sociology

Initially, under Communist rule, sociology was banned as a ‘bourgeois science’ and ceased to exist as an independent and autonomous discipline.⁴ Displaced by the imposition of an orthodox Marxist ideology, departments and institutes of sociology, where they existed, were either closed and disbanded, or reorganized and renamed under the moniker of Marxism/Leninism or historical materialism. Sociology courses and curricula were replaced by courses in historical materialism or scientific Communism. If allowed at all, sociological research was subject to Party approval and censorship, and results could not contradict the tenants of official ideology and policy. All sociological publications had to pay homage to the reigning authorities and orthodoxy with quotes of Marx and references to the proceedings of the most recent Party congresses.

Perhaps one of the most distinctive features of the recent history of sociology of CEE following the transformation was how quickly and completely the post-Communist abandonment of official Marxism took place virtually overnight, and with little or no discussion. In Poland there was a bit of hand wringing concerning the lack of ‘coming to terms’ with the Communist past, but this was short-lived (Krasnodebski 1998). And, what is just as remarkable, is the fact that at the same time, no deep, systematic, and formal deCommunization took place, i.e., for the most part, there were no purges or expulsions, there was no wave of forced retirements.

It took a little longer to break the grip of the Marxist–Leninist paradigm in Bulgaria, which only really loosened in the mid-1990s, in large part due to the relative marginalization of the social sciences there. In the Czech Republic some of the most compromised representatives of Marxist–Leninist ‘sociology’ left to work in the private sector. Some unmerited academic titles were removed from their holders and a lustration (screening) law was introduced declaring that no top-ranking positions

4. For additional detail and more concrete and nationally specific examples regarding the deCommunization of sociology in Central and Eastern Europe, the teaching of sociology, and new research topics, consult our paper, “Central and Eastern European Sociology in the Post-Communist Era (Mucha and Keen Forthcoming).

could be held by persons proven to have collaborated with the secret police. But even this law was met with strong resistance, including from members of the opposition to the previous regime who felt the new law represented a violation of human rights. In Slovakia, there was also no general deCommunization, and in 1990, former Communists there were given a clean slate and a new start, leaving no clear distinctions in place that demarcate post-Communists and non-Communist sociologists.

In Latvia and Lithuania, nostrification processes (the reevaluation and recertification of degrees granted during the Communist period) were carried out, but these tended to be largely symbolic, and nearly all degrees were nostrified. In Lithuania, there was no general replacement of leadership within the sociological community, in part, because of its relative small size and the resulting lack of any alternatives.

The case of East Germany ('Neue Bundesländer') in post-1990 Germany was exceptional. All Communist hard-liners were removed from the professorial ranks, and not only in the social sciences and humanities. Western professors took over, and new institutions, originated in West Germany, replaced the old Communist ones.

For the most part, deCommunization occurred through institutional change and development. Even here, only those institutes and centers most closely connected to the previous political authorities and regimes were actually closed down. This included the hundreds of sociological research units typically associated with the large state enterprises, which themselves began to disappear as this sector of the economy collapsed. Most of the other institutes and centers, especially those associated with the national academies of sciences and the universities, were reorganized. Any remaining vestiges of historical materialism and scientific Communism, i.e., those imbedded within the names of various institutes and centers, were removed.

Arguably, the greatest source of 'deCommunization' was the reconstruction of sociology through the reorganization of already existing sociological institutions, and the development of wholly new ones. This occurred within the context of and in response to demands from the newly emerging market, media, and democratic institutions associated with the transformation, as well as from Western commercial interests and international organizations. No doubt, the reestablishment and/or rapid expansion of the teaching of sociology at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and establishment of new sociological periodicals and publishing houses also contributed to this 'deCommunization.'

The almost instantaneous and virtually unremarked evaporation of the previously imposed ideological superstructure of the Communist authorities appears to confirm our own earlier suggestion that those Western scholars who dismissed and/or discounted CEE sociology during the

Communist period as little more than ideologically tainted orthodoxy were premature (Keen and Mucha 2001). For those Central and Eastern European scholars who self-consciously embraced their identity as sociologists, even if covertly, Marxist orthodoxy was seen as little more than an obligatory, if not *pro forma bijouterie*. As we have observed, sociology and sociologists throughout Central and Eastern Europe employed a variety of strategies to skirt the influence of Communist authority and Marxist orthodoxy to keep sociological aspirations and activities alive. In so doing, they produced a body of significant sociology that should not be ignored.

Institutionalization during the 1990s

As early as the 1950s, following Khrushchev's thaw, Communist authorities across the region began to recognize the value of sociological analysis, and began to establish, or in some cases to reestablish, institutes and to allow some research and teaching of sociology, but only under careful scrutiny and harnessed to the needs and interests of the Party and state. This allowed for the beginning of the reinstitutionalization of sociology in the region, though in fits and starts. The 'normalization' in Czechoslovakia stopped this development in its tracks, in 1968, with its reimposition of strict totalitarian rule, which included dramatic purges and expulsions, and disruption of contacts with Western sociology. This repression pretty much remained in place until 1989. A similar but more episodic suppression occurred in Romania, with the fickle warm and cold attitudes of the Ceausescu regime toward the discipline.

The institutionalization of sociology in Central and Eastern Europe during the 1990s, built upon the already existing foundations, though more progress had been made and greater autonomy and independence achieved in some countries than others. Not surprisingly, those with the strongest and longest traditions, and the largest intellectual and sociological communities were typically in the forefront. Such was the case with Poland, which had been a regional leader in the discipline both before and during the Communist period, as well as Hungary, which never experienced the same levels of repression as some of her sister satellites. In Estonia and Latvia, sociology was only introduced in the 1960s, mostly in Russian and under the Soviet umbrella. Interestingly, it was easier to teach Western theory in the Baltic region than in Moscow since the Russian supervisors were unable to understand the lectures taught in the native languages. It was not until the independence of Central and Eastern Europe, and the final collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, that sociology could be said to have established, or in some cases, reestablished itself as

a fully autonomous and independent discipline across the region. This was especially the case for example with the former Soviet republics of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine.

One of the characteristic and long-standing features of the structure of sociology in Central and Eastern Europe has been its institutional duality, separating pedagogical (teaching) and academic (research) activities into two differing and independent spheres, the universities on the one hand, and the academies of sciences on the other. Historically, there was little interaction between these two realms. However, financial crises and necessity, changes in funding structures, and a concomitant reduction in the number of positions and demand for sociologists led to a blurring of boundaries between the two, as well as that of the public versus the private. This was especially the case in those countries where the institutional structure of the discipline was either relatively small or had not yet reached sufficient development and maturity, e.g., the Baltic nations. In Poland, Hungary, and Russia, these institutional boundaries have remained more defined, though they have become much more porous as greater interaction and overlap has developed among them. In particular, some academies of sciences have opened up their own graduate and postgraduate schools.

One of the most significant institutional developments in Central and Eastern European sociology during the 1990s was the proliferation of an entirely new actor on the institutional scene, the private commercial research institute or center, mostly concerned with public opinion polls and/or market research. Made possible by privatization and development of market economies, and created in order to capitalize on the demands of the information marketplace, many of these centers were either established in partnership with multinational commercial partners, or, since their establishment have become partially owned subsidiaries of them, for example, such well-know enterprises as Gallup and Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (GfK).

Because of the limited pool of resources available for sociological research as a whole, some traditionally public institutions, universities as well as academies of sciences, had to establish their own commercial research organizations in order to compete for contracts from the government, media, national and international corporate clients, politicians, and international foundations and NGOs. At the same time, this institutional development led to the emergence of a new identity or role within the discipline, to complement and/or compete with that of university faculty member or academic, that of the sociological entrepreneur. Therefore, there is no clear-cut boundary between the commercial research institutions and the academic ones. What has emerged is a plurality of research centers with some private institutes doing only commercial research,

other private institutes (and research foundations) doing both commercial and basic academic research, along with universities and institutes of the academies of sciences doing both commercial and basic academic research.

In many of the smaller nations of the region, the commercial and proprietary research organizations constituted the major institutional development of the discipline, and have been responsible for the bulk of sociological research carried out within them during the last decade. These institutional developments have eroded the public/private distinction. As a result, in the Central and Eastern Europe case, more conceptually fruitful and historically accurate definitions and distinctions between the types of research being conducted might be made by replacing the public/private dichotomy commonly used in the West, with that of a commercial/non-commercial or proprietary/non-proprietary one. Such a revised dichotomy provides an increasingly accurate picture of what is happening to research in the United States and Western Europe as well.

Another important area of institutional development was that of periodicals, journals, and publishing houses. With the reinstitutionalization of sociology begun in the 1950s, many new sociological journals were established. Once again, however, when, how many, and whether or not these were purely for sociology, or more generally for the humanities and social sciences depended on the size and levels of development the sociological traditions and communities had achieved prior to Communist domination. Typically, journals were published either by a particular university faculty, politically centralized and controlled professional association, or academic institute. During the 1990s, many of these journals continued to exist, though freed of Party control and censorship. In some cases, financial considerations led to the cancellation of some journals. However, several new journals were started, particularly within the larger sociological communities, i.e., Poland and Russia, and a few of the other smaller countries with less long-standing and developed traditions in sociology, and where they had not existed before.

The biggest change in this area of institutionalization occurred with the publishing houses. Prior to the transformation, most textbooks and monographs were published by a relatively few large publishing houses in each country, sometimes associated with the major universities or academic institutes and centrally controlled by the political authorities. Following the transformation, as was the case with the commercial research centers, a plethora of smaller publishing houses, often developed by university faculty and/or academic researchers, emerged. At the beginning of the decade, many of these houses, often with the support of international foundations, dedicated themselves to publishing previously unavailable translations of classic and contemporary Western sociology, as well as to

providing publishing outlets for indigenous researchers, and homegrown textbooks for university instructors and students.

The institutional development of CEE sociology also included the establishment of fully autonomous and independent professional associations of sociologists in every nation in the region. In many cases, i.e., Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, etc., this was simply a matter of declaring and establishing the independence of already existing sociological associations.⁵ However, for the former republics of the Soviet Union, whose sociological associations were all established, conglomerated, and controlled under the umbrella of the Soviet Sociological Association, this required significant reorganization and in some cases rebuilding. The same has been the case with the Masaryk Czech Sociological Society and the Slovak Sociological Association, which had to further untangle their already complex relationship following the division of the former Czechoslovakia, as well as the associations of those countries previously part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which have had to do the same.

Almost all CEE sociological associations are now, or are about to become members of the International Sociological Association and the European Sociological Association. The exception is the former Yugoslavian Sociological Association which was banned because of international sanctions, but even more importantly, since 2002, Yugoslavia as such has ceased to exist. In most cases, during the decade, these professional associations sponsored a series of conferences or congresses in each of their respective countries, dedicated to sociological analysis of the challenges of transformation and/or the reconstruction of the discipline. Another major concern that continues into the present, was the creation of codes of ethics and the establishment of methodological standards for the discipline.

Teaching sociology

Following the transformation, in virtually every country in the region, there was a quick expansion in the teaching of sociology. DeCommunization removed the last vestiges of historical materialism and 'scientific Communism' from already existing sociology curricula (they remained somewhat longer in philosophy). Those departments of Marxism/Leninism or historical materialism that still existed were either closed down or renamed as departments of sociology. As new departments were created in a number of faculties across the university, and at virtually

5. The Polish Sociological Association, though operating within the institutional framework of the Communist state, was relatively independent throughout the period. See Antoni Sulek (2002) for a detailed account.

every university in each country, the teaching of sociology was decentralized institutionally, geographically, and paradigmatically. Sociology courses were also introduced into many other faculties and specializations as general introductory electives or as ancillary courses directly related to these specializations, i.e., urban sociology, social ecology, medical sociology, etc. New Masters, and for the first time in some countries, doctorate programs were established both in the universities as well as at the some of the Institutes of Sociology of the national academies of science. In many cases, sociology was also expanded into the secondary schools.

Given the virtual explosion in the teaching of sociology at all levels, and the lack of an adequate pool of previously professionally trained sociologists, at the beginning of the 1990s, in order to meet the demand, many of the university instructors called upon to teach these classes were actually former instructors of historical materialism or scientific Communism. In some cases, special programs were created with the support of international foundations such as the Ford Foundation, to help retool and retrain these instructors. By the middle to the end of the decade, new graduating classes of sociologists who had earned their degrees in the newly established programs across the region began to populate the teaching ranks.

At the beginning of the 1990s, there was also a lack of adequate textbooks. Many instructors simply used translations of Western textbooks (James Vanderzanden, Anthony Giddens, George Ritzer, Zygmunt Bauman, Henri Mendras, Jonathan H. Turner). However, as the decade progressed, particularly in the larger countries, CEE sociologists began to write their own textbooks and various university presses, as well as many of the newly established commercial publishing houses, began to publish them.

In some countries, such as Poland, national accreditation regimes were also begun, and several programs in sociology were accredited. In addition, a desire to articulate higher education curriculums, including sociology, with those of the nations of the European Union, has also led to some accreditation activities, carried out with the support and under the aegis of the European Credit Transfer System.

The biggest problem plaguing the teaching of sociology throughout Central and Eastern Europe was that of resources. While in most countries, in public colleges and universities tuition is free or supported by state scholarships, typically, anywhere from four to 10 students apply for each sociology slot available. Some private, tuition-paid programs in sociology have also emerged. And, at some state-supported schools, some evening, 'paid' programs are being offered. In these cases, instructors teach during the day to non-paying or scholarship students, and in the evenings or on

the weekends, to paying students. These arrangements provide a much-needed financial supplement for the insufficient budgets of the state-supported universities, as well as the abysmally low salaries of faculty members. But, because of the relatively high teaching loads resulting from the shortage of university instructors and the demands of this two-tiered system, as well as the necessity of many if not most CEE faculty members to maintain two or more positions just to survive, the research efforts of university scholars were considerably hampered. This often has delayed the possibility of younger scholars to pursue their doctorate and habilitation degrees in a timely fashion, and thereby move up through the university or academic ranks.

These financial constraints also had a significant impact in the area of information technology. While the Internet has spread to every country in the region, and almost all university faculty and academic researchers have access to it, there is insufficient access for students. Nonetheless, even in the face of all of these challenges and constraints, more students are studying sociology than ever before, even though the employment opportunity for many is quite bleak. Dedicated faculty members are conscientiously working hard to offer their students up-to-date and demanding curricula.

Developments in theory and methods

Under Communist rule, one theoretical paradigm was politically imposed upon the discipline (or perhaps more accurately displaced it). With the exception of Poland, and to some extent Hungary and Yugoslavia, open access to, and the teaching of, Western sociological theory were shut down. Translation and publication of classic and contemporary Western sociology was discontinued in many countries, and access to Western journals was denied or at least greatly restricted. For example, in Russia, access to Western theory was restricted to *spezkbran*, special libraries open only to Doctors of Science or researchers with special permission. Theoretical activity was limited to the exploration of historical materialism or the critique of 'bourgeois science.'

Not surprisingly, the imposition of this theoretical monoculture led to a general avoidance of theory (although not in every country) as sociologists either did not want to subscribe to the enforced orthodoxy, or sought shelter from controversy and possible political sanction by taking refuge in less potentially critical, and safer, more 'scientific' empirical research. The result, when sociology was allowed to reemerge in the 1950s, was a heavily empirical sociology with little connection between theory and methods, and a strongly applied dimension having been harnessed to the

needs of the state and political authorities. Throughout the Soviet Union, this was often referred to as 'concrete' sociology.

During the Communist period, the flight from theory, along with the positivist bent of the historical materialist paradigm, contributed to the development of a largely empirical discipline. This was manifest in the development of an almost entirely quantitative methodology, though in Poland the tradition of post-Znaniecki 'humanist sociology' remained much alive. In part, qualitative methodology was avoided or not allowed because of its greater potential to turn up results that might contradict official pronouncements or be critical of the reigning status quo. In addition, many sociologists who did not subscribe to historical materialist orthodoxy, but like many of their Western and especially American counterparts did embrace a positivist epistemology, also considered qualitative methods to be less 'scientific' and legitimate than quantitative because of their lack of a mathematical foundation.

During the pre-1989 period, sociological contacts between the East and West existed (one of the ISA Congresses was held in Varna, Bulgaria, in 1970), but they were highly ritualized, formalized, and politically controlled by the Communist authorities. Toward the end of the Communist period, Western sociology began to seep into Central and Eastern Europe as restrictions loosened, perestroika and glasnost took hold, personal contacts and travel began to bloom among many more Western and CEE sociologists, and underground *samizdat* publications critical of the status quo and discussing Western sociology began to circulate. By the end of the 1980s, many sociologists in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly in the satellite nations of the Eastern Bloc, such as Poland and Hungary, as well as within the Yugoslav constellation, i.e., Slovenia, were fairly conversant with Western theory. In addition, in a few countries, a critical analysis of the reigning theoretical orthodoxy took place.

With the transformation, all bans were lifted and the floodgates to Western and world sociology were opened. However, this did not lead to the kind of theoretical renaissance that one might have expected, particularly at the beginning of the decade. For example, in Poland, during the transformation there actually appears to have been a retreat from theory, which had maintained a healthy presence prior to 1989. Several factors may explain this. No doubt, financial constraints slowed down the rate at which Western sources could be translated and published, and it took a while for the new publishing houses to put their Western publishing programs in place. But, perhaps more importantly, the strongly empirical and positivist tradition of the discipline carried over into the new era.

In addition, since theory tends to be more 'basic' and less 'applied' in nature, CEE sociologists had difficulty competing for resources for theoretical research and as a result, its conduct was generally only possible in

the universities and academic institutes, and therefore once again in those larger countries and sociological communities where these institutions were able to re-establish and maintain themselves in a sufficient manner. Even here, the necessity to compete with the commercial and proprietary centers for the limited pool of sociological research funds that were available had a chilling effect, especially since the new, albeit democratic authorities, as well as private enterprises and multinational corporations appeared to be no more interested in the potentially critical results of theoretical research than were their previously ruling Communist counterparts. Finally, as some Hungarian scholars have suggested, the suppression of a potential theoretical renaissance may also have been due to the 'colonization' of Central and Eastern European sociology, whereby CEE sociologists were largely reduced, within the global intellectual division of labor, to the role of data suppliers for their Western counterparts (Tamas 1994; Wessely 1996).

Nonetheless, the theoretical restrictions were lifted. And, while for the most part Marxist theory disappeared from the scene, especially in the immediate aftermath of the transformation, no other single theoretical perspective emerged to take its place. Instead, as has been the case in the West, the configuration of the theoretical environment that developed and continues to exist was a pluralistic one. By the end of the decade, both the classic and contemporary canons of Western theory were generally available throughout the region, i.e., works from the likes of Emile Durkheim, C. Wright Mills, Max Weber, alongside those of Jeffrey Alexander, Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens, Michel Foucault, Jurgen Habermas, Niklas Luhmann, Ulrich Beck, etc. Notably absent, at least from an American perspective, seems to have been any concern with previously marginalized and unrecognized Western sociologists such as W. E. B. Du Bois, E. Franklin Frazier, Harriet Martineau, etc. The most prominent perspectives being bandied about include the functionalist, interactionist, rational choice, social constructionist, and various streams of postmodernism. In addition, toward the end of the decade, Marxism, in its humanist versions concerned with the problem of alienation, began to reappear in some nations, i.e., Russia and Yugoslavia, no longer as reigning orthodoxy but as yet one more perspective in the pluralist panoply. However, similar to the American case, theory remained the province of a small, relatively marginalized community of specialists within the discipline, separated from methodological and empirical research.

In the decade following the transformation, empiricism and quantitative methodology maintained their influence in Central and Eastern Sociology. This made CEE sociologists uniquely open to the importation of Western quantitative methods, and welcome as well as welcoming

partners for Western quantitative sociologists, international foundations and NGOs, and international research firms. One of the major factors in the continuing dominance of the empirical and quantitative traditions in Central and Eastern European sociology was the newly institutionalized commercial and proprietary research centers that blossomed throughout the region, very often in partnership with or in an attempt to attract funds from these sources. The collaboration and exchanges with Western sociologists, and the demands of Western clients contributed to an increase in the standards and quality of quantitative research across the region, particularly in the development of much more sophisticated sampling and statistical analysis techniques.

One major development during the decade was the introduction and growing popularity of qualitative methodologies, i.e., oral history, intensive interviewing, content analysis, conversation analysis, focus groups, etc. To a large extent, these methodologies were introduced through the newly institutionalized commercial and proprietary sector of the discipline, and in response to Western interests which were demanding richer, more detailed, and culturally sensitive and sophisticated qualitative data concerning peoples attitudes, values, definitions of the situation, wants, needs, and lifestyles than available through standard quantitative techniques. Once demonstrated to be as empirically legitimate as their quantitative counterparts, the lesser cost and technical demands associated with this type of methodology also contributed to its popularity. This was particularly the case given the limited resources and research infrastructure, i.e., limited access to the latest computer technology and statistical processing software, with which most CEE sociologists must work. This also facilitated its introduction to students, who faced even greater limitations in this regard.

Topics of research in transition

In the late 1950s, when Communist authorities began to recognize the potential usefulness of sociology, it was allowed to reemerge, but only under close scrutiny and control. In addition to the imposition of a theoretical orthodoxy, restrictions were also imposed on the range of topics that could be investigated. Political sociology was virtually banned because of its potential to contradict or critique the status quo and the hegemonic control over all other sectors of the society that was concentrated in and exerted by the state and Party. In addition, those areas that might lead to revelation of social problems, which might contradict the promise of socialist society or cast a poor light on the political authorities, were also restricted (though not totally forbidden). This included topics

such as social stratification, ethnic relations, gender inequality, and religion.

For example, throughout the Soviet Union, prior to perestroika, the concept of social stratification could not be used. Class-based research was allowed, but using instead the concept of 'social homogeneity,' drawn from an officially approved class based analysis of socialist society which argued that unlike capitalist society, where the division of classes was one of exploiter and exploited, in socialist society the classes were working in harmony to achieved the goal of advanced socialism and Communism (Rutkevitch 1982). On the other hand, Gyorgy Konrad and Ivan Szelenyi were able to investigate the question of power under state socialism, and write their still recognized sociological classic, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power: A Study of the Role of the Intelligentsia in Socialism* (1979, 1989). However, it had to be published first in the West, and only a decade afterwards, in 1989, in Hungary.

Polish and Hungarian scholars did study stratification (under various names like evaluation of occupations, social differentiation, etc.), and even published their work abroad (Wesolowski and Sarapata 1961; Machonin 1970; Sawinski and Domanski 1986; Slomczynski and Krauze 1986; Kolosi 1988). Zsusa Ferge and Rudolf Andorka in Hungary, as well as Krzysztof Zagorski in Poland were conducting stratification research within the frameworks of the national statistical offices of their respective countries.

Topical restrictions notwithstanding, during the Communist period, CEE sociologists across the region investigated a wide range of issues, especially those related most closely with the major challenges facing their societies. These include industrial organization, urbanization, the peasantry and agricultural development, youth, family, etc. With perestroika, topical restrictions began to loosen, and with the transformation, as was the case with theory, all official restrictions disappeared.

The topics of research that emerged and dominated CEE sociology in the 1990s represented a combination of the continuation of many of the most important topics of the pre-transformation era, topics that had been previously restricted, and entirely new topics brought about by the development of a new social formation.⁶ Among the most important and most common topics during the decade were those most directly connected to social and economic transformation, including privatization,

6. The topics listed herein refer primarily to those associated with the research carried out in the university and academic sectors of the discipline. The sociological research carried out in the newly institutionalized commercial and proprietary sector was almost entirely dedicated to public opinion surveys, political polling, and market research for the private use of clients. The exception tended to be with research contracted or supported by those international foundations and NGO's that had as part of their mission providing information and support for CEE sociology and sociologists.

globalization, the emergence of new social roles such as the entrepreneur, the attitudes of workers, industrial relations in the context of democracy, unemployment and underemployment, and attitudes towards joining the European Union. Social stratification and inequality became more important than ever, with attention to the development and dynamics of new class structure, educational inequality, social mobility, and social marginalization. A range of social problems, many emerging from and/or exacerbated by the transformation, or what was sometimes characterized as the new 'risk society', were also examined. These included poverty, homelessness, crime, delinquency, substance abuse, prostitution, health and illness, and the black-market. Research into family and youth, a mainstay of the previous period, continued.

Political sociology saw a renaissance, with particular attention paid to democratization, the emergence of new political parties, political elites, and electoral behavior as well as the development of a public sphere beyond the political realm. This latter involved the study of the mass media. Another new and previously suppressed area that became very important was ethnic relations and national identity. This was largely due the extensive amount of ethnic diversity that exists across the region and within its nations, as well as the long history of ethnic conflict that has plagued the region and reemerged following the transformation, sometimes with explosive force. Religion, the environment, and gender also developed as new topics of research.

In a few nations, there developed some unique areas of research, related to special circumstances or events not experienced by the rest of the region. In the case of Ukraine, a body of what might be called catastrophe sociology developed in response to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and its social consequences. In Yugoslav, the social and economic consequences of hyperinflation, ethnic conflict, and war became very important.

Much of the sociological research that was carried out during the 1990s, and that is likely to be carried out for some time in the future, was conducted at the behest of private enterprises, government ministries and agencies, the mass media, politicians, and/or international firms and foundations, and carried out by the commercial and proprietary research centers. This type of research constituted a large proportion of the total amount of research carried out during the decade, and the preponderance of that conducted in some of the smaller nations, such as the Baltics where the commercial and proprietary sector constituted the dominant institutional sector of the discipline. Since the bulk of this type of research took the form of public opinion surveys, political polling, or market research, it was subject to little or no theoretical or critical analysis. And, because the results were contractually the property of the client, they often could not be shared with the broader sociological community or contribute to

the development of the discipline. Not surprisingly, this has led to some concern as to who is currently in the driver's seat in terms of determining the direction and future of the research agenda for Central and Eastern European sociology. For example, some Czech sociologists have criticized the popularity and prominence of this type of market driven research as biased, banal and trivial, while others have praised it as a significant new source of longitudinal data (Machonin and Tucek 1996; Mateju and Vlachova 1999).

International collaboration and influences

During the height of the Communist period (though as we have qualified, not the entire period and not in every country) contact with international sociologists outside the Communist bloc was virtually forbidden. Any contacts with Western sociologists had to be approved by and/or reported to the political authorities. Travel restrictions kept most CEE sociologists from attending Western sociological conferences, and all but a few Western sociologists from traveling to Central and Eastern Europe.⁷ To the extent that there was any regular and ongoing international collaboration and influence, it was contained within the Eastern Bloc. However, even these relationships were carefully monitored and strictly controlled politically, undermining the results and value of the projects. Sociologists from several of the countries in the region participated in some comparative longitudinal studies. For example, the Paths of a Generation study included sociologists from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Tajikistan and Russia, though its results were entirely written up in the Soviet Union. The sociologists of the Baltic States and Russia also established good collaborative relationships.

With the lifting of the Iron Curtain and the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, all travel restrictions were removed and international exchange and communication resumed. CEE sociologists took advantage of every opportunity to participate in international conferences and collaborate with Western counterparts, though severe financial limitations presented and continue to present a major obstacle. At some congresses and conferences, the former 'official delegations' contained more delegates than have been able to attend in the aftermath of the transition. Western

7. After 1956, several prominent Western sociologists (Talcott Parsons, Robert K. Merton, C. Wright Mills among others) were able to travel to Russia, Poland, and a few other countries. Many Poles and a few sociologists from other CEE nations, i.e., Hungary, travelled to the United States as graduate students. A Pole, Jan Szczepanski served as President of the ISA, and two other Poles (Stanislaw Ossowski and Magdalena Sokolowska) served as Vice-Presidents.

sociologists, including some of its most prominent representatives, travelled to Central and Eastern Europe.

One of the most important developments in the international realm was the large amount of financial support, in the form of grants and scholarships, as well as technical assistance from Western universities and research institutes. In the United States, much of this support was provided through the efforts of international foundations such as those of George Soros and the Ford Foundation, as well as the American Council for the International Exchange of Scholars and its Fulbright Programs, the International Exchange and Research Board, and USAID (these programs, with the exception of the Soros Foundation that emerged later, supported Eastern European scholars even earlier). The European Union provided support through programs such as TEMPUS, SOCRATES, and PHARE. Support also came from transnational development agencies such as the United Nations Development Program, UNESCO, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.

Ironically, as international exchange with the West opened up, previous relationships among CEE sociologists actually deteriorated and declined. Czech and Slovak contacts which had been quite robust, all but disappeared. For instance, the first and the only Czecho–Slovak conference was organized in Slovakia in 1999, but a second has yet to follow. The same thing has occurred with the sociological communities of the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Slovenian sociologists appear to have been particularly successful in establishing an exceptionally high level of contacts with their international counterparts, averaging six per sociologist per year (Splichal and Mali 1999). With their new international freedom, CEE sociologists also began to participate in comparative projects beyond the region, i.e., the International Social Survey Program, the World Values Survey, and UNESCO's Management of Social Transformation (MOST) project. The ISA's Research Committees as well as the ESA's Research Networks have provided important additional and particularly fruitful frameworks for collaboration.

However, even though contact with international sociology was robust throughout the decade, Central and Eastern European sociologists and sociology were underrepresented in both the realm of international sociological associations, as well as that of international journals. Almost every CEE sociological association joined the International Sociological Association as well as the European Sociological Association. Exceptions were those from nations, such as Yugoslavia, which have been hindered in their international collaboration and research support from the West because of international sanctions. And, while some CEE sociologists have been quite active in the ISA and ESA, they were not proportionately represented in leadership bodies, or as keynote speakers in the major

plenary sessions. A similar situation occurred with regard to the publications of CEE sociologists in the major national and international journals (Keen and Mucha 2003).

There were some significant exceptions to the rule. The election of Czech sociologist Juri Musil as President of the European Sociological Association in 1999, and more recently, in 2002 of Polish sociologist Piotr Sztompka as President of the International Sociological Association, and for 2004 Marek Ziolkowski as a Vice President of the European Sociological Association may be an indication of a change in this situation. Jadwiga Staniszkis, Marek Ziolkowski and Piotr Sztompka gave plenary lectures during the ESA conferences in Helsinki in 2001 and Murcia in 2003. Some time ago, Ivan Szelenyi and Zygmunt Bauman, and later Sztompka and Staniszkis have emerged as not just representatives of the region but as leading scholars in global sociology. Sztompka's textbook (1993) was translated (from English) into many languages and is in use worldwide. Rudolf Andorka's textbook (2001) was translated from Hungarian into German and is in use in the training of sociologists in Germany. However, it should be noted, that almost without exception during the 1990s, those CEE sociologists that have been visible in leadership positions in the ISA and ESA came from only a few countries. A similar observation can be made regarding the situation of publication in major national and international journals.

Sociology in search of a role and an identity

One major and common concern that seems to have dogged virtually all of the sociological communities of Central and Eastern Europe during the 1990s was the struggle to construct, or perhaps more accurately in some cases, to reconstruct, their own independent and autonomous identities, as well as to establish a role for themselves within their own societies. During the period before the transformation, this was largely determined by and harnessed to the interests of the political authorities and the state.

In Belarus, sociology was not well recognized by the new authorities. Sociologists did do some work on development and served as consultants for the creation of a new constitution. Bulgarian sociologists, close to the regime prior to the transformation, also played an instrumental role in the transformation, as the Institute for Sociology provided office space for the major opposition party, the Union of Democratic Forces. Between 1995 and 1999, Bulgarian sociologists participated in more than 100 studies of national importance and regularly offered consultation to various NGO's. Because of the political upheaval and series of wars that have engulfed the region, sociologists played little role in public policy in Croatia, Slovenia

or New Yugoslavia. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, sociologists had been very active in the 'Velvet Revolution,' but following the transformation they were eclipsed by the economists. The separation of Czechoslovakia, in 1991, into two independent states left both sociological communities sorting out and in search of new identities separate from one another.

In Estonia, there was little interest in sociological expertise in the early part of the decade and sociologists rarely engaged in public policy debates. However, towards the end of the decade, growing stratification, poverty and alienation from public power began to fuel a greater interest in the discipline. Demand for sociology was similarly light in Latvia, where sociologists had relatively poor working relationships with local and national government officials, although they did participate in the construction of a national development plan and regularly published articles in leading newspapers and journals. Like their Estonian counterparts, towards the end of the decade they began to gain greater recognition.

In Lithuania the situation was much more positive. Lithuanian sociologists were active participants in the transformation, working closely with politicians and regularly participating in public discourse through the mass media. In some ways, in Lithuania, it was the sociologists who became the stewards of the new conceptual discourse of social transformation, economic liberalization, and democracy. In Poland, sociologists, especially in Warsaw, also became regularly sought out figures by the mass media. However, to a large extent, their participation in this realm of the public sphere consisted of little more than sound bite sociology, often with little or no sound foundation in sociological research. And, despite the increase in the numbers of students, there did not appear to be any general social recognition of the importance of investing in more sociological research and teaching in the academic and university realms. In Romania, with few exceptions, sociologists had little or no involvement or consultation in decision-making and economic policy. Toward the end of the decade, private companies and government officials were just beginning to recognize the importance of sociological research and to request the service of its sociologists.

One problem that was unique to a few of the smaller countries of the region, for example, the Baltic nations, was the language of scholarship. In Belarus, Russian remained the primary language of science and education, and therefore of sociological scholarship as well. This dominance continued because the Belarusian population is made up of 59% ethnic Russians, and 63% of the entire population considers Russian their mother tongue. As a result, there is a relatively small market for publications in Belarusian. During the period of Soviet domination, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania suffered exactly the same problem. With the transformation,

the problem has not disappeared, only the language in question has changed. By and large, Baltic sociologists must decide whether to work in their own native languages and risk the potential of little exposure and relatively small audiences, or to adopt English as the new language of scholarship. Some international foundations are supporting the translation of classical and contemporary sociology into the native languages of these nations as well as those of the rest of the region. Nonetheless, the erosion of the mother tongue in these countries seriously challenges their ability to maintain a national sociological identity and tradition. In many ways, these smaller sociological communities may well just be sociological canaries in the culture cage of globalization, and serve as a harbinger to the challenges that face all sociological communities, if not all societies in the postmodern era.

At the beginning of the decade following the transformation, sociologists struggled to maintain their independence and objectivity in the face of the politicization of expertise, as many sociologists became partisans of one faction or another. As the decade proceeded, this was further challenged with the growing commercialization of a significant portion of the discipline. In order to establish more clearly defined and recognized identities within their own nations, CEE sociologists will have to improve their cooperation and collaboration with the broader society while at the same time maintaining their autonomy and high levels of professional development. They will also have to sort out the changing relationships and newly emerging roles brought about by the development of the commercial and proprietary research sector which has breached the traditional boundaries of the university and academy within which sociological identity historically resided.

Conclusion

As would be expected, the great transformation of Central and Eastern Europe has had a considerable impact on its sociology, and at the same time presented it with an entirely new set of social structures and processes to investigate. The replacement of the previously existing totalitarian state structures with their emerging democratic predecessors, and the dethroning of the Communist Party, has led to an end to the imposition of an ideological orthodoxy and single paradigm on the discipline. In its place, intellectual freedom has blossomed, and a multi-paradigmatic sociology has emerged. This has included the continuation of research into some subjects prevalent before the transition, youth, family, rural sociology, as well as the emergence of new or previously forbidden topics, such as stratification, political sociology, ethnic relations, gender, religion, and

the environment. However, this transformation (with the exception of the former GDR) did not occur through a formal and deep deCommunization involving the purge of former-Communist personnel, but rather was for the most part the result of a positive reconstruction of the institutional and professional foundations of the discipline, building on a process that had already begun in some nations as early as the late 1950s.

Perhaps the most significant development during the decade was the emergence of a new commercial and proprietary sector of the discipline, dedicated primarily to public opinion and political polling and/or market research. Unlike the West, where public opinion and market research roles exist, but are located outside the bounds of sociological identity, in much of Central and Eastern Europe this was the dominant institutionalized sector of discipline and therefore an important new role within the bounds of the sociological community. In less than a decade, in Central and Eastern Europe, this non-academic professionalization has extended the institutional foundations beyond the boundaries of the university and academic spheres within which it had previously resided, and led to the emergence of new sociological roles and identities. More than likely, this transformation in the institutional structure and identity represents yet another harbinger CEE sociology offers to Western, and for that matter, world sociology.

International support from government programs, universities, foundations and development agencies, as well as corporate interests and multinational research firms exerted a significant influence on the discipline. Funding and investment from these sources contributed to the rebuilding of the institutional and technological foundations of the discipline, helped to make Western literature available, and contributed to advances in methodological expertise, including the introduction and legitimation of previously suspect qualitative methodologies. The new openness to the West allowed Central and Eastern European sociologists to begin to fully participate in world sociology, but not without some reservations concerning the impact of sociological globalization:

Sociology, which was once conceived as the critical consciousness and conscience of 'its' society, is becoming an international research machine. While the role sociology (and other social sciences) has in national education systems gives credence to the existence of separate national scientific communities, the realities of international research make these national boundaries irrelevant. Of course, for reasons of convenience, sociologists deal mostly with 'their own' societies. But the real networks of science cannot be grasped in national terms. The integration of the sociologies of former socialist countries in Western science networks is proceeding fast, and will change the shape of science in that part of the world as well.

(Nemedi and Robert 2003: 85–86)

The biggest challenge for Central and European sociology during the 1990s, was the chronic and widespread shortage of adequate support for teaching and research. The transformation not only brought about economic liberalization and the emergence of new markets, but also economic crises as well. This scarcity of resources resulted in inadequate support for students, low salaries for faculty members, and difficulties in building and maintaining the increasingly important technological infrastructure of teaching and research. No doubt this is one of the reasons the commercial and proprietary sector constituted the most dynamic sector of CEE sociology during decade.

Nonetheless, in the face of all of their challenges and adversity, CEE sociologists continued to investigate the most pressing problems facing their societies. They also continued to develop new courses and programs, and to introduce and excite a new generation of students about sociology. While many of the problems they struggled with in the 1990s were unique to the region, or one or another of its nations, many of the issues they have faced, for example commercialization, declining support for the teaching of sociology and sociological research, continued suspicion or at least disregard by political and policy authorities, maintenance of national identities and disciplinary autonomy and independence, are challenges that are increasingly shared by world sociology and all of its communities.

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Mike Forrest Keen is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Master of Liberal Studies Program at Indiana University South Bend. His previous work includes *Eastern Europe in Transformation: The Impact on Sociology*, edited with Janusz

L. Mucha, and *Stalking Sociologists: J. Edgar Hoover's FBI Surveillance of American Sociology*.

Janusz Mucha is Professor of Sociology at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Poland. He is interested in contemporary history of sociology, sociological theory, social anthropology and ethnic studies.

Address for correspondence: Professor Mike F. Keen, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Indiana University South Bend, 1700 Mishawaka Avenue, South Bend, IN 46634, USA. E-mail: mkeen@iusb.edu