Marginality, Migration, and Fragmentation: Coping with Ruptures.

Day 2 – Stream 2: Times: 9.00-10.30; 14.30-16.00; 16.30-18.00 (Popper Room)

Rapporteurs: Prof. Michael Stewart, Prof. Michal Buchowski
Participants and discussants: Michal Sipos (Prof. Jonathan Spencer), Catalina Tesar (Prof. Sophie Day), Martin Fotta (Prof. Akis Papataxiarchis), Gergő Pulay (Prof. Vintila Mihailescu), Aniko Horvath (Prof. Susana Narotzky), Olena Fedyuk (Prof. Janet Carsten)

This panel focuses on the issue of fragmentation as a core experience in the everyday lives of various marginalized groups to whom different types of precarious conditions often bring violence and chaos on a daily basis. Considering that marginality is tightly linked to the devaluation of space, we look at how the experienced marginality defines and is being defined by the various uses of space. Bringing together examples from stigmatized urban groups, nomad populations and other people on the move (i.e. refugees and migrant workers) we hope to tackle the broader issues of social exclusion, territorial stigmatization and the debated concept of a 'culture of marginality.'

The papers in this panel explore the following issues: How do Chechen refugees in Poland deal with the fragmentation caused by the traumatic events in the Northern Caucasus during the last fifteen years, and how can they integrate and negotiate this fragmentation in the context of ongoing everyday relationships? How is the nomadism of Brazilian Calon Gypsies linked to everyday experiences of violence and how does this in turn define their uses of space? How do the inhibitants of a stigmatized Gypsy neighborhood in Bucharest live with social exclusion, territorial stigmatization and a 'culture of marginality'? How has the current property regime been socially produced in Romania and what are its implications on the housing practices of disadvantaged and marginalized urban dwellers? What do the everyday relations and imaginings of the state/s of Bulgarian Muslim migrants in Spain look like? And how are the boundaries of private and public space in Italy disrupted by the presence of Ukrainian domestic workers?

Experiences of marginalization more often than not are based on ethnically coded references and the very boundaries that are drawn between spaces on a day-to-day basis by the involved actors. These forms of boundary maintainance bring us to one more important topic to be discussed in this panel, i.e. the complicated and conflict-ridden relationship of various marginal groups with the state, their fractured social and everyday citizenship, and their precarious relations with the state on both a discoursive and a practical level.

Michal Sipos: Disorder, Fragmentation and Everyday Life. The case of the Chechen Refugees in Poland

> The violent set of events in the Northern Caucasus during the last fifteen years affected the whole spectrum of local societies. The presentation will focus on the issue of fragmentation in the everyday lives of the people who have sought to escape these conditions. Drawing on ethnographic and biographical research among Chechen refugees in Poland I shall discuss how fragmentation could be integrated and negotiated in the context of ongoing everyday relationships.

By taking the idea of fragmentation as central for my argument I attempt to address the problem of contemporary global transformations. These transformations within the most affected societies of the Global South are usually experienced as disorder and chaos. Characteristically, in post-modern anthropology fragmentation is often linked with the failing structures of modernity. In a slightly different vein, in contemporary post-structuralist studies fragmentation usually refers to the social impacts of flexible capital accumulation that often lead to heightened precariousness. While positioning myself among these approaches, I try to elaborate mainly on the literary meaning of the term: following scholars such as V. Das I define the fragment as a form which, if assembled in total numbers, creates a new picture of totality in itself. What I find especially illuminating in this approach is the fact that it places the idea of total destruction within the field of the imaginary. Hence, this approach enables to focus on the fragmented everyday life where violence 'descents into the ordinary'.

In this context, the uprooted Chechens in Poland represent the community which was altogether excluded from the possibility of formal participation in political life. At the same time, the community continues to struggle over its unstable presence out of their new location. It is the violent loss of place, together with a life in motion and the general exclusion that are probably the most profound factors that contiuously make the Chechens question the role of familiar social institutions. Through looking at the steps that Chechens take and opinions they voice in various public and private spaces I will question the roles of the social institutions (such as generation, gender, kinship, family and friendship) which are all faced with the representation of their own destruction.

Catalina Tesar: Gendered bodies and medical technologies among Cortorari Romanian Romany speakers

In this paper I will explore ideologies of gender among the Romanian Romany speakers group of Cortorari, which are based both on conceptions of interrelational sexed and biological bodies and their social behavior in regard to a code of moral values. How does one become a male or a female Cortorar?

Sex of a new born can be predicted through womb scan practices beginning with its forth month of gestation and then acknowledged at birth, yet acquiring femaleness or maleness depends on peculiar cultural constructions of the biological development of the body and its procreative capacities in relation to the category of age. Pre pubertal boys and girls seen as beings belonging to their kin yet whose ethnical belonging is ambiguous, designated by Romanian terms baiatul (boy) and respectively, baiata (girl) are prepared to become aware of their sexuality through sexually segregated games, so that at puberty they are capable of heterosexual intercourse and potential candidates to female and male identities. They are now designated by interrelational sexed denominations (chao romenqi= boy capable of sexual intercourse; chej bari = menstruating chaste girl). The potentiality of sexed bodies for acquiring a gendered ethnic identity is believed to be inscribed in the physical appearance, so that the length of the penis together with pilosity of a boy are measures of his potential procreative capacities, while posture and corpulence of a girl are signs of her chastity.

The influx of capital coming from migration, which engendered increment of the marriage payment, together with the spread of the womb scan which engenders abortion decisions in

case of female offspring among a population that overvalue male in front of female brought about the decrease of the marriageable age. Given that procreation is a sine qua condition for a marriage to endure and that competition on the marriage market is high, pubertal bodies are carved through medical technologies (such as hormonal treatment) to develop procreative capacities at early ages.

This paper will thus discuss incorporation of modern medical technologies into the cultural politics of a group whose persons' procreative capacities are a milestone in acquiring ethnic gendered identity.

Martin Fotta: Nomadism and Violence among the Calons

The Brazilian Calon Gypsies are highly mobile, although there does not seem to be any preordained pattern to their movement. There are various reasons why people change the places where they live: lack of financial opportunities, deaths and murders, conflicts with family members and marriages, evictions etc.

The present paper will discuss in detail Calon nomadism and how it is linked to violence. In the first part of the presentation, I will illustrate the constant movement of the Calons on the basis of three ethnographic examples. I will discuss dislocations over the course of 15 years from the point of view of one individual, changes in tent composition and the coming and going of people during my fieldwork as viewed from one locality, and the movements of members of one extended family during the same period.

The second part will focus on violent events more closely. These events and their resolution define uses of space. Together with their correlates - fear, protection, escape, and evasion of loaded places – they lead to a constant redistribution of the Gypsies. The high occurrence of violence among the Calons which I witnessed is linked to masculine values: honor, taking chances and showing expertise.

It is possible to conclude that the Calon social organization is thus characterized by randomness, immanence and instability. Depending on ideological preferences the Calon sociality can be described as ludic, event-based or as an example of a neo-liberal dystopian society. Valorisation of uncertainty, and its constant stabilization, gives a feeling not only of vertigo but of repeated of an unfolding of future. This sociality in turn raises questions about temporality, geographical use of space, and about society.

Gergő Pulay: Gypsies, Lawbreakers, Vagabonds and Junkies: Practices of Spatial and Social Distinction in a Bucharest 'Roma Ghetto'

As everyday forms of Romanian anti-Gypsism suggest, the low qualities associated with the Roma are often localized in specific marginal spaces. But the dangers attributed to marginality are also seen as threatening the 'mainstream' with invasion. Ethnicity is part of a larger set of distinctions here, as it is accompanied – and often interchanged – with other forms of social closure. The neighborhood presented in this study is usually seen from the outside as an ultimate 'no-go area', a stigmatized Gypsy ghetto of Bucharest. With regards to the diversity of housing conditions and the social profiles of the inhabitants, both of these

terms seem to be problematic. Inter-ethnic co-habitation, interaction and transgression or exchange with the Roma are parts of everyday life here while these are represented in dominant discourses as dishonest acts against the national self. Inhabitants of the neighborhood resort to a diverse set of distinctions in order to deal with these tensions; they draw boundaries between spaces and peoples within their neighborhood, dinstinctions which are not necessarily based on ethnically coded references. These forms of boundary-work rely on diverse concepts of personal worth, value and achievement; hence they contribute to the creation of the neighborhood as a distinctive moral universe. The aim of the paper is to provide an ethnographically grounded argument that connects broader discourses on social exclusion and territorial stigmatization with the debated concept of the 'culture of marginality'.

Aniko Horvath: Reproduction of Marginality in Post-Socialist Property Regimes: Historical Continuities and Ruptures in Home Ownership in Urban Romania

Ideologies that see the house as a commodity are increasingly widespread in post-socialist Romania: Real estate is advertised by banks, international developers, and state and nonprofit actors as an "investment in one's future". This mainstream discourse – which presents renting as "living for the present" (Day, Papataxiarchis, and Stewart 1999), along with the quick and almost complete privatization of formerly communist state housing in the early 1990s – led to a radical change in the housing policies of post-socialist Romania, and resulted in the disappearance of affordable rental housing. As it is now, many people are deprived of real options in terms of housing, are stigmatized for not being able to take part in the shared "societal dream", and are pushed into decisions that destroy their "promised" futures. This paper examines how the current property regime has been socially produced in Romania and what its implications are on the housing practices of disadvantaged and marginalized urban dwellers. It pursues two main goals: Analytically, it explores the nature of the urban property regimes of socialism and post-socialism, with a particular focus on the power relations, ideologies, and values that shaped home ownership structures during the past decades. On an empirical level, it provides ethographic material about a unique Romanian case, the property and home ownership structures in one district of Cluj Napoca. Analysis of these concrete, localized processes will be used to engage a wider set of issues in anthropology regarding production of property regimes; commodification of housing and processes of gentrification; power relations among local, national and international actors; and (re)production of marginality in both communist and post-communist settings.

Olena Fedyuk: Circular Migration of Two Generations: Ukrainian Female Labor Migration to Italy

My research looks at one of the most popular survival strategies in post-Soviet Ukraine, i.e. temporary labor migration abroad. While migration to Italy constitutes only the third largest migration stream (estimated to be at 700.000 people) it is the most outstanding in terms of

its gender composition; out of 195.000 officially registered migrants, 83% are women, a majority of whom are in their late 40s (Caritas 2007).

In light of this gender and age composition and prolonged absences(2-7 years), women who migrate to Italy are often stigmatized as "fallen women." To protect themselves from these accusations, the women emphasize that they are mothers, who sacrifice everything in order to give their children opportunities in life. Thus, migrating women often find themselves carrying a "triple burden" of working and earning money, managing their life in a new country and language environment, and providing emotional support for left-behind husbands and children.

The focus of the paper that will be presented at the Marie Curie closing conference 2010 will be on the kind of the ruptures and coping mechanisms that are triggered and created by these particular types of migration (transnational and feminized). What kind of ruptures in migrants' biographies and coping mechanisms are created specifically in two locations in Italy, i.e. Naples and Bologna? How does the arrival of a new generation of migrants change relations, hierarchies and burdens within the migrants' transnational fields? What kind of dynamics does a "second generation" bring along; what new ways of coping with ruptures as well as new challenges are being created? Based on a year of field work in Naples and Bologna, the paper will use collected ethnographic material in order to explore the transformation of sexuality, shifts in the social age of migrants, new subjectivities and an intricate pattern of pragmatic, emotional, personal and "for-better-good" decisions that shape migrant women's choices.