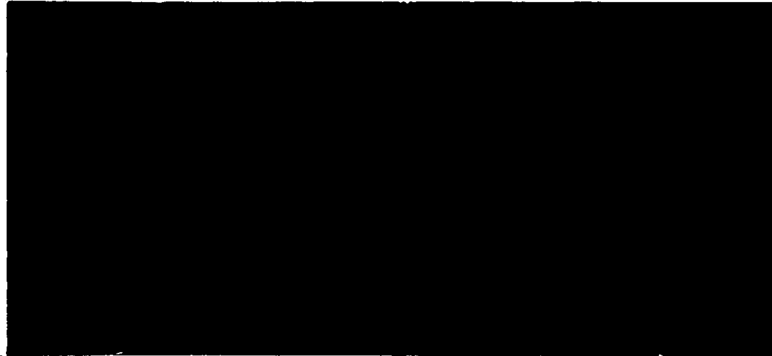
TRANSFORMATIONS

comparative study of social transformations



CSST
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The University of Michigan
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RESEARCH FELLOWS CONFERENCE PANEL ON SUBORDINATE ACTORS AND THEIR MARGINALIZATION IN SOCIAL THEORY

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RESEARCH FELLOWS CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS

Tuesday, April 25, 1989

Rackham East Conference Room

First Session: The Politics of Social Transformation. 1:15-2:25

Seong Nae Kim, Anthropology:
"Gender and the Discourse of Resistance: Reading the Autobiographical Narratives of Korean Militant Factory Women."

Joanne Goodwin, History:
"State and Single Motherhood: Women on Welfare, Chicago 1910-1930."

Commentator: Kathleen Canning, History

Second Session: Struggles, Conflict, and Constraints on Social Change. 2:25-3:35

Anne Gorsuch, History:
"Soviet Youth Culture and the Struggle for Social Transformation, 1921-1928."

Sharon Reitman, Sociology:
"Class Capacities and Union Political Formation."

Commentator: Geoff Eley, History

Third Session: Subordinate Actors and their Marginalization in Social Theory. 3:45-5:15

Nilufer Isvan, Akos Rona-Tas, Cynthia Buckley:
"Margins of Theory and a Theory of Margins: Underexplored Territories of the World System."

Akos Rona-Tas, Sociology:
"The Second Economy in Hungary."

Theresa Deussen, Sociology:
"Peasantry, State, and Social Theory: Accounting for Agricultural Policy Change in Cuba, 1975-1985."

Commentator: Mayfair Yang, Anthropology and Center for Chinese Studies

Wine and Cheese Reception: 5:15-6:00

TRANSFORMATIONS
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MARGINS OF THEORY AND A THEORY OF MARGINS: UNDEREXPLORED TERRITORIES OF THE WORLD SYSTEM

Paper presented at the CSST Fellows Symposium,
The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, April 25, 1989

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Our perceptions of the world are dominated by conceptual polarities. We are accustomed to visualizing social reality in terms of either dichotomies[1] or continua that are, in actuality, dichotomies in disguise. By the latter, we mean dimensions of observation where the contrast between the two extreme points provides the basis for the construction of conceptual categories, and for the generation of predictive and/or narrative statements. All points between the poles are expected to behave accordingly. Those that "misbehave" are regarded as impurities which, while inconvenient, do not negate the overall validity of the model, and which, for all practical purposes, can be disregarded. It is precisely these marginal areas of social reality that constitute the major focus of this paper.

These spaces between conceptual poles are marginal at two distinct, yet interrelated levels: perceptual and epistemological. The former refers to our perception that they are unimportant, insignificant and negligible with respect to what we regard as the core of social and economic reality. The latter refers to the inability of prevailing theoretical approaches to detect, enumerate, evaluate, ascribe meaning to, and derive meaning from these blocks

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1 Such as: militant vs. industrial society (Spencer), _Gemeinschaft_ vs. _Gesellschaft_ (Tönnies), folk vs. urban society (Redfield), mechanical vs. organic solidarity (Durkheim), charismatic vs. legal- rational leadership (Weber), and traditional vs. modern society (modernization theory).

of reality.[2] We will not pursue the question of causal precedence between these two levels of marginality; to do so would lead to some of the epistemological traps that we warn against. Instead, we hope to show that perceptual and epistemological marginality simultaneously produce and reproduce each other.

How, then, can the margins be incorporated into the mainstream of sociological inquiry? The answer, we believe, lies in critically reviewing and, whenever necessary, rebuilding theoretical approaches and methodological tools, in view of their relevance to the margins. In the first section of this paper, we attempt to briefly review those aspects of the "social science project" that have contributed to the marginalization of important aspects of social reality. The last section takes us towards a theory of the margins by examining them as a problem of knowledge, understanding and theory.

I. MARGINS OF THEORY: A NARRATIVE DEFINITION OF THE MARGINS

At this point, we have yet to establish a clear definition of the margins. We believe that a full definition needs to include not only what they are, but also, how they became what they are. What follows is a brief review of those moments in the recent history of the production of sociological knowledge that contribute toward such a "historicized" definition.

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2 Teodor Shanin ["Expoliary Economies: A Political Economy of the Margins - Agenda for the Study of Modes of Non-Incorporation as Parallel Forms of Social Economy," _Journal of Historical Sociology_ Vol. 1, No. 1 (March, 1988), pp. 107-115], coins the term "expoliary" to capture these two levels of marginality. At the perceptual level, "expoliary" means "external to the _polis_ when, like in ancient Greece, the _polis_ stands for the state as well as for origins of the market society. At the epistemological level, expoliary means "external to the poles of prevailing analytical scales".

We have already referred to the role of dichotomous thinking as a necessary condition for the creation of margins. It is, however, by no means sufficient. All non- critical and non-self-conscious observation, after all, involves a certain amount of dichotomy deriving from the juxtaposition of the Self (with appropriately drawn boundaries that might incorporate person, family, race, gender, nation, "the civilized world", etc.) and the Other. The dichotomies that have dominated sociological thought from the nineteenth century onwards can all be interpreted as variants of this juxtaposition.

Such Ego-centric dichotomizations of the world lead to specific epistemological evils. Referring to a particularly pervasive version of ethno-centric dichotomization, namely, the picture of the world as painted by modernization theory, Eric Wolf argues as follows:

> By casting such different entities as China, Albania, Paraguay, Cuba, and Tanzania into the hopper of traditional society, it simultaneously precluded any study of their significant differences. By equating tradition with stasis and lack of development, it denied societies marked off as traditional any significant history of their own.[3]

The above can be said, not only of modernization theory, but of other versions of progressivist theory as well. In general, progressivism has reduced the history of the world to the history of the "progressive" pole of the dichotomy which is nothing but the Self from the point of view of the producers of historical knowledge. The social groups that Wolf refers to as "people without history" are conceptually very similar to our definition of the margins: Both are specific instances of the Other.

What, then, is the added ingredient which transforms mere "otherness" into marginality in the specific sense in which we use the term? The margins, we argue, are not merely the Other, but they comprise the Other that has

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3 Eric Wolf, Europe and the People Without History. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982, p. 13

failed to develop along a prescribed path. In other words, marginality is a historicized version of otherness. In this historicization the margins are denied their own histories. They enter the stage as expendable extras and not as actors in their own right.

The historicization of otherness can be traced back to the birth of evolutionary/progressivist thought. Shanin argues that during the nineteenth century, the accumulation of anthropological accounts of non-Western societies combined with the "discovery of prehistory" and the consequent extension of historical time, to pose a serious intellectual problem. He points to the paradigm of evolutionary progress as the stone that killed two birds in the sense that it solved, in a single stroke, the dual problems posed by social change and by the simultaneous existence of multiple forms of social organization:

> The diversity of forms, physical, biological and social, is ordered and explained by the assumption of a structurally necessary development through stages which the scientific method is to discover. Diversity of stages explains the diversity of forms.[4]

Thus, the Other was no longer simply an arbitrarily defined and artificially homogenized category, but it was, in addition, locked into a necessary and inevitable path of social change prescribed by the predictive powers of a newly-developing "science" of society.

The "people without history" were thus being assigned a historiography. This was, however, a historiography drastically different from that of Europe[5] in that it was constructed upon predictions deriving from European experience, rather than upon observations of actual local developments. It was, in other words, a hegemonically constructed historiography.

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4 Teodor Shanin, Late Marx and the Russian Road: Marx and the Peripheries of Capitalism. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983, p. 4.

5 Here, we adopt Shanin's somewhat humorously offered definition of Europe as including North America but not, say, Bulgaria (Late Marx, p. 249).

In short, social and economic forms that developed according to the predictions of either Marxist or non- Marxist versions of progressivism have come to constitute the core of observed and studied social reality. Needless to say, these two versions of progressivism are at odds as to the ultimate stage of the necessary and inevitable path of progress. They do, however, converge on the prediction that the market and/or the central bureaucratic apparatus will eventually dominate all social and economic relations.

The core, then, comprises those sets of socio-economic relations based on large-scale mass-production, supported by the job-system of specialized and time-oriented wage labor. They are mediated by the commodity form, market mechanisms, bureaucratic formalization, and/or central plans; and are supervised, regulated, and protected by the state. The margins, on the other hand, are those sets of relations that have "failed" to succumb to the onslaught of mass-production, formalization, and state regulation. Since, as mentioned earlier, the historiography of the Other is predictive rather than observational, these sets of relations have been relegated to the ash-heap of history regardless of their actual path of development.

Within all contemporary social formations, there are pockets of economic activity and related social relations that operate outside of the mediating and regulating functions of the core institutions. Furthermore, these areas of social reality are not merely vestiges of archaic forms; neither do they show signs of being on the way to extinction. To the contrary, some of these structures have increased in importance in recent years, and have shown signs of consolidation and resilience.

Below are some examples of structures and relations that have "defied" progressivist predictions:

1. Peasant forms of production have "failed" to give way to capitalist relations in as uniform a fashion as was predicted by orthodox Marxism. This became clear in Europe as early as the end of the last century, and created considerable theoretical confusion within the German social democratic movement.[6] More recently, a number of studies have provided specific examples of the persistance of non-capitalist relations in the face of agrarian capitalism. For example, Harriet Friedmann has shown that there were social and economic conditions that favored household production of wheat over capitalist production, in an era of expanding wage relations.[7] Likewise, Shanin has forcefully argued that in response to expanding capitalist relations, Russian peasants did not neatly polarize into capitalist farmers and landless rural proletarians.[8] On a more recent note, there is evidence to suggest that the development of capitalism in rural Turkey proceeded parallel with the consolidation of small, owner-operated farms.[9]

2. More damaging to the progressivist paradigm, the predicted sweeping concentration has failed to occur in industry as well. Advocates of anarchistic socialism called our attention to this counter-evidence already in the last decade of the last century.[10] Artisans and craftsmen buried alive by

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6 For the debate between Kautsky and Vollmayr and the subsequent attempt by Kautsky to come to grips with the problem, see P. Goody (ed.) _Karl Kautsky: Selected Political Writings_. London: McMillan, 1983.

7 Harriet Friedmann. "World Market, State, and Family Farm: Social Bases of Household Production in the Era of Wage Labor." _Comparative Studies in Society and History_, Vol. 20, No. 4, (1978) pp. 545-586.

8 Teodor Shanin. _The Awkward Class_. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972.

9 Caglar Keyder. "The Cycle of Sharecropping and the Consolidation of Small Peasant Ownership in Turkey." _Journal of Peasant Studies_ Vol. 10 (January/April, 1983), pp. 130-145.

10 P. Kropotkin. _Fields, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow_. London: George Allan and Unwin, 1974(1889).

progressivism have survived and in many respects represented and still represent a historical alternative to mass-production.[11]

3. Within the capitalist Third World, a host of family-run or otherwise self-employed forms of economic activity, such as petty-trading and personal service provision, dominate the squatter-settlements of large metropolitan centers. Generally referred to as the informal sector, this category of economic activity has increased over the years, to become a permanent and characteristic feature of underdeveloped capitalism.[12] Although no longer possible to ignore, this sector of economic activity and its accompanying social and political relations are still not sufficiently theorized.

4. In even the most advanced capitalist formations, there are areas of economic activity such as housework, cooperative living, child-care pools, and other forms of informal or non-regulated labor relations, incorporating both the service and the productive spheres, that have not been penetrated by the commodity form, and/or by state regulation.[13]

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11 Charles Sabel and Jonathan Zeitlin ["Historical Alternatives to Mass Production: Politics, Markets, and Technology in Nineteenth-Century Industrialization." Past And Present No. 108 (August, 1985), pp. 133-176] argùe the historical case; M.J. Piore and C. Sabel [The Second Industrial Divi de. New York: Basic Books, 1984] build a case for the current relevance of these forms.

12 For a discussion of the impact of this sector on class structures, see Alejandro Portes, "Latin American Class Structures: Their Composition and Change During the Last Decades." Latin American Research Review Vol. 20(1985), pp. 7-39. For a significantly different interpretation of the implications of the informal sector for Third World political economies, see Hernando De Soto, The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World, New York: Harper & Row, 1989.

13 For a review of the classic debate on housework under capitalism, see Maxine Molyneux, "Beyond the Domestic Labour Debate," New Left Review, No. 116 (1979). For a more general treatment of the "margins of advanced capitalism", see A. Portes and S. Sassen-Koob, "Making It Underground: Comparative Material on the Informal Sector in Western Market Economies," American Journal of Sociology Vol. 93, No. 1 (July 1987), pp. 30-61. For a comparative treatment of the informal sector under developed and underdeveloped capitalism, see A. Portes, M. Castells, and L. Benton (eds.) The Informal Economy: Studies in

The above are a few examples of the margins of capitalism.

5. State socialist formations have their own margins: Various forms of informal labor exchange have persisted within, and adapted themselves to the socialist regime. In the Soviet Union which has carried out the most aggressive and coercive agrarian collectivization program in the world, thirty percent of the total agricultural product is currently produced on private plots which constitute less than two percent of total arable land.[14]

The "submerged" or "unofficial" economy in the Soviet Union is not limited to agriculture. Private artisan production of such items as plastic bags and knitwear is blossoming outside the centrally planned and bureaucratically regulated economy.[15]

The margins are contemporary structures rather than anachronistic survivals. They have not merely persisted despite predictions to the contrary, but they constantly change in order to continue to reproduce themselves in a changing world. For example, in the Tepito district where Mexico City's informal petty trading and contraband activities are concentrated, one of the important forms of livelihood is the small-scale sale and repair of modern electrical appliances.

In other words, these activities make use of the very structural transformations (such as technical innovation and large-scale industrialization) that were predicted to bring about their demise. As such, they pose a challenge to theoretical approaches which view large structures as

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Advanced and Less Developed Countries. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, Forthcoming.

14 Zhores Medvedev. Soviet Agriculture. New York: W.W. Norton, 1987.

15 Konstantin Simis. U.S.S.R.: The Correct Society. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982.

purely disabling individual actors. Instead, they suggest the usefulness of an approach that views structures as simultaneously enabling and disabling.

As we pointed out above, these structures change in response to changing national and world conditions. However, they do so with inputs from local resources and from numerous individual innovations. The combination of these ingredients endow the margins with a distinct historical dynamic of their own.

II. TOWARDS A THEORY OF Margins: THE MARGINS AS A PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND THEORY

The above examples are, by no means, a systematic review of possible types of marginal structures. Nevertheless, several shared dimensions begin to emerge, and promise to pave the way toward a systematic approach.

1. Economic activities in the margins lack a structural tendency toward accumulation. Put slightly differently, their aim is simple, rather than extended reproduction. Given a dominant political philosophy that equates absence of growth with stagnation and eventual decline, it is not difficult to see that the perception of the margins as extinct or disappearing structures is ideologically constructed rather than observed.

The kind of accumulation that is most characteristic of marginal economies is not economic but social accumulation. People produce to accumulate security, prestige, or human capital. In many cases, one accumulates trust or social credit through the activity itself. For example, this is the case in community help, or other forms of labor exchange.

2. The margins are localized. Within them, social and economic relations rely heavily on physical proximity, face-to-face interaction, and affective ties. Furthermore, they are, in important ways, shaped by local

peculiarities and idiosyncrasies. Yet, as demonstrated by the home-working lace-makers of rural India whose products find their way into European department stores, the margins are, by no means, isolated pockets within the world system.[16]

An effective line of research needs to focus equally on their localized nature and on their ties to world markets. This has been difficult to accomplish due to a prevailing assumption that structures are either totally cosmopolitan, or totally vernacular, but never a combination of both. We believe that this dual nature of the margins can be addressed by first noting that the localized aspect centers around production, while the distribution of goods and services are frequently carried out through a network which connects into world markets. This suggests a line of research which distinguishes between relations of production and distribution, and investigates their interrelationship without conceptually subordinating one set of relations to the other.

3. Labor in the margins is deployed in a task oriented rather than in a time oriented manner. The discipline of the factory clock does not keep marginal labor in its grasp. Therefore, the margins can utilize residual labor, a flexibility the core does not possess.

The unit of labor deployment and control is typically located at a level of aggregation _in between_ the individual (i.e. micro-level), and the level of the core institutions such as the labor market or the central bureaucracy (i.e. macro-level). In most cases, this intermediate level is the household,

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16 Maria Mies. "The Dynamics of the Sexual Division of Labor and Integration of Rural Women Into the World Market," in Lourdes Beneria (ed.) _Women and Development: The Sexual Division of Labor in Rural Societies._ New York: Praeger, 1982.

though it could conceivably be the village community, the urban neighborhood, or some other community of shared interests.[17]

In any case, the relations of production that are dominant in the margins are under-theorized. Political economy has generally focused on relations of production within the context of macro-structures; those were perceived as the only legitimately social relations of production. Household, neighborhood or community relations of production were relegated to the domain of the "natural", and hence, were considered outside of the domain of political economy. This is one possible theoretical blind spot which inhibited the development of a political economy of the margins.

4. Economic activity and social interaction in the margins follow sets of organizing principles and logical structures that are distinct from the logic of core institutions. Yet it is important to keep in mind that prevailing models of social and economic action are permeated by the logic of core institutions. For example, such concepts as "systematic", "rational" or "deliberate" have no intrinsic meaning independent of core institutions. They are tautologically and somewhat arbitrarily defined as those types of behavior that conform to the logic of the core. In other words, "systematic" actually refers to behavior that can be generalized and aggregated through the application of prevailing models of economic behavior. Likewise, "rational" means behavior that can be understood and explained through the prism of these models.

Be that as it may, such terms have been uncritically used to refer to intrinsic aspects of behavior, rather than to aspects of behavior as juxtaposed against the logic of core institutions. As a result, those sets of

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17 Nanneke Redclift and Enzo Mingione (eds.). Beyond Employment: Household, Gender and Subsistence. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985.

relations which we call the margins appear as unsystematic, irrational or nondeliberate action, almost by default. This perception removes them from the domain of legitimate study, and dumps them in a residual category usually referred to as "noise" or "the error term".

CONCLUSION

We have reviewed some of the theoretical blind- spots that make it difficult to detect and to study the margins. In doing so, we posed the margins as a challenge to some of the prevailing theoretical approaches, and suggested ways in which those approaches might be altered to incorporate the margins into the body of sociological knowledge.

In particular, we have tried to show that those structures that appear as peripheral within a world-systems perspective, also embody sets of relations which can be characterized as "core". Likewise, formations that are the core of the capitalist world-system, also have their margins. Arguing along these lines, the foregoing analysis can be further developed to pose a challenge to the view of the world as painted by a modernist perception of social space.[18]

It is important to note that this discussion is not intended to propose a dichotomy between the core and the margins. We do not believe that such a duality exists in any real sense. The border separating the core from the margins is an epistemoligical one: It separates those sets of relations that

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18 For arguments along similar lines, see Saskia Sassen-Koob, "Recomposition and Peripheralization at the Core," Contemporary Marxism Vol. 5 (Summer, 1982), pp. 88-100; and Renato Rosaldo, "Ideology, Place, and People Without Culture," Cultural Anthropology Vol. 3, No. 1 (1988), pp. 77-87.

prevailing sociological models can comfortably accomodate from those for which such an accomodation is problematic.

We have proposed ways in which to deconstruct mainstream discourse in an effort to explain the marginalization of large and increasingly important blocks of social reality. In doing so, we hope to pave the way for a conceptual reconstruction which can help sharpen our understanding, not only of the margins, but also of the core.

AKOS RONA-TAS

EVERYDAY POWER AND THE SECOND ECONOMY IN HUNGARY:

LARGE CONSEQUENCES OF SMALL POWER

Draft. Not for quotation

Paper delivered at the Annual CSST Symposium at the

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I. Everyday power and everyday resistance

The literature on everyday resistance introduced us to a new concept of power by pointing to new sources from which power can emanate. To show how foot-dragging, refusing to pay taxes and sticking to certain symbols can serve as "weapons of the weak" is to remind us that the "weak" are never automatons, never completely powerless, and that there always exists an irreducible margin of freedom that allows us to exercise our human agency. It is important to understand these small hidden reserves of freedom, the different forms of 'small time' or micro power, because often they constitute the real limits of 'big time power', that is the power embodied in corporate actors, most importantly in the State and its coercive apparatus. Everyday resistance makes do without organizing, forming trade unions, guerilla units, political parties or without any form of concerted collective action. In circumstances where organization is impossible or impractical these tiny pockets of individual discretion may become the only way people have to assert their own interests.

The concept of everyday resistance, however, carries a serious danger. Our insistence on finding resistance in "trivial" places can make us lose our sense of proportion, an appreciation of true powerlessness in the face of enormous odds and can trivialize the courage and resolve often necessary to resist *effectively*. I can't help

recalling my grandfather telling me proudly, that when the German troops marched into our district in Budapest in 1944, he was standing in front of our house watching the formidable stream of troops moving down our street. The crowd was standing on the sidewalk, silent and confused. Suddenly my grandfather made an obscene gesture toward the passing soldiers. There were several people who took notice of it. It wasn't completely riskless, and the message it conveyed was loud and clear. Yet I would hesitate to compare my grandfather with people who took up arms or who were hiding Jews in their homes. I would even hesitate to compare him to my other grandfather, who escaped from a labor camp where he had been drafted as a Jew, and who spent the rest of war underground, skillfully shuffling my grandmother, my father and his sister around from hiding place to hiding place, showing up always a few hours before the Nazis came to search the place. He saved two out of three. The difference between the two acts of resistance is in what they achieved. This is by no means a point to be ignored.

The danger of identifying power everywhere is that we can lose sight of the enormous differences in power that make the weak weak and the strong strong. In fact, one must keep in mind that power is a relational concept and that, if the issue of contention is well defined, whoever has more power *has* power, and whoever has less power does not have power at all. What everyday resistance teaches us is that

might always defines itself more broadly than the sphere it can actually master. It demonstrates that the different domains of power are not linked automatically. The Nazis could occupy Hungary, but could not prevent my grandfather from venting his anger, and they could not prevent some people to inform my other grandfather where the next raid was going to occur.

A. Fragmentation of power

The domains of power are segmented and gaining control over one's life in certain matters may not help winning command over others. However, once we recognize the autonomy of different power domains, we cannot have it both ways: we cannot assume that power is fragmented and in the same breath claim that small time power can automatically be turned into big time power, or that discretion in one aspect of everyday life by necessity implies freedom in others. Just because the Communist government has the power to build factories and to force people into them, does not mean that it can keep labor discipline as well. But by the same token, workers -- who can often successfully resist certain aspects of harsh factory discipline of forced socialist industrialization, who can get away with absenteeism and shoddy work, and who can thus spare their energies to attend to their own business after work -- do not necessarily have the freedom to negotiate their wages, to preserve their

health and improve their job conditions, or to choose their colleagues or bosses. Above all it does not necessarily give them the power to change the factory regime that makes the discovery of these freedoms necessary. Only because they are already forced into the factories do they need the freedom of dodging factory discipline.

B. Marginalism of everyday power

This leads us to the second problem, that everyday resistance is always resistance on the margins. And the margins are set by the powers that be.

To illustrate this marginalism of everyday power let me quote from an interview with a previous chairman of an agricultural *kolkhoz* in Hungary, who described what happened after he had returned from a Soviet POW camp in World War II, and was put in charge of an agricultural cooperative forced on his village:

> I recalled the words of the commander of the POW camp, a very conscientious man, who used to be the deputy head of GUM [the largest department store in Moscow]. He told me: "Wherever we set our foot capitalism disappears and only socialism can exist. I had to realize that set against this huge country and political system I am not even a speck of dust, I also had two kids, why should I have argued? Everything would turn red in this country, so [when they asked me]

I agreed to organize the cooperative. No one younger than seventy came anyway, my wife was in tears, so was my father-in-law... Then they gave us the first plan. The plan required us to keep thirty cattle, and grow cotton on 42 acres. They were out of their minds! Cotton does not grow around here, and who will do the work anyway? Was I supposed to hire day labor? I went to the local district council to complain, but it did not help. Finally I exchanged the 42 acres of cotton to 21 acres of seed lettuce with [neighboring]... cooperative. That is better, the women said, because, even though [the lettuce here] grows no seed, at least it can be fed to the ducks. Then uncle Pali [Fazekas] -- may he rest in peace -- told me: "Listen, the river Tisza will be flooding. Let's plant the lettuce next to the river, there it will be taken by the devil, anyway." You are right -- I said, and we planted 8.4 acres. One day there came this insurance guy, and wanted me to take out insurance. You are my guy, I said, and I insured the crop.

Later on a young, educated man came from [the central authorities] to check upon the lettuce seeds. He climbed into the ferry boat, and I whispered to uncle Miska, the ferryman; uncle Miska, scare him just a little bit ! The water was wide, the wind blew, there were big waves....

Do you swim ? -- Uncle Miska asked [the young fellow].

My head is swimming ! -- he answered.

Either way, let's go -- I pushed.

I won't go ! -- said [the young fellow].

Then I described him the lettuce field in words. In the evening he told me confidentially, that he understood, and that he didn't worry about us, we were smart enough to make a living out of the cooperative. The first sign of this was that the insurance paid for 21 acres of flooded lettuce... You have to dance around the numerous and stupid regulations. [Pünkösti 1988 pp.20-21]

The limits of the marginalism of everyday resistance are obvious. No one wanted a coop in this village; no one wanted to be told what to grow. However, given that these conditions had been imposed by the State, it was still possible to "dance around the regulations." It was better to have a coop right away than to wait, be punished, and still be forced to accept it. And it was better to plant lettuce that was washed away by the flood, than to plant cotton, which would have required a lot of labor and which would not have grown in any case. Nevertheless the people who joined the coop and planted lettuce benefitted only in comparison to an even worse situation, imposed upon them by the plan, and not compared to their previous position where they could

farm the way they wanted. Before the cooperative, it never occurred to anybody in the village that it was a good idea to plant lettuce just to get it flooded by the river.

The marginalism opens everyday power to manipulation. Smart enough planners always leave a certain amount of leeway for the discreation of the coop chairmen. Planners always calculate resistance into their plans. For instance, they set targets higher than they actually believe possible to achieve and then let the chairmen bargain a lower target, which is what the planner wanted to begin with. Even in the most authoritarian social organizations, like the military, there is a margin of error, which can be factored in without jeopardizing the goals the generals want to achieve.

Segmentation of power domains and marginalism of everyday power are two considerations that could reduce our notion of everyday resistance to a hermeneutic suggestion, to merely another way we can interpret mundane facts of everyday life. To avoid that we have to specify the different ways everyday power can cumulatively transcend its own narrow and trivial domain. We have to find the mechanisms through which small time power can turn into a force that can contest big time power with the hope of success.

The most obvious way micro power gets collected and finds expression at the macro level is through organizations. Yet organization is often an option precluded, and then resistance must find alternative ways to

challenge macro power. I will try to describe three mechanisms that can turn the snowflakes of isolated protests into avalanches of resistance. These mechanisms mediate between micro-level acts and macro-level consequences without micro intentions articulating themselves through organizations created for this purpose.[1] To describe some of these mechanisms I will turn to the second economy in Hungary.

II. The second economy

The single most important and pervasive change that has occurred recently in Hungary has been the blossoming of a wide variety of economic forms outside the state sector. These include small scale agricultural production (household farming and even commercial private farming), small, artisanal enterprises (tailors, masons, carpenters), licensed an unlicensed private services (car mechanics, house cleaners, language teachers) family business (catering), and forms of informal labor exchange (in residential construction and agriculture). Moreover, these activities are mostly pursued on a part-time basis, thereby allowing people to keep one foot squarely in the State economy. The expansion of the second economy has resulted in the expansion of income earning possibilities for the

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1 An overview of the problem of micro- vs. macro-level phenomena in sociology, and some suggestions about how to fill the gap are offered by Wiley [1988], Collins [1988], and from a more general perspective Schelling [1978].

population, paying wages two to four times higher than the official State sector wages, the rebirth of a limited labor market, and the opening up of new spheres of economic activity, with each sphere following its own logic of operation independent of State guidance. This 'second' economy exists in all socialist countries, though to different degrees. The theoretical confusion surrounding this problem is reflected in the numerous terms coined to describe this phenomenon, such as the 'second and third', or even 'second, third and fourth', the 'underground', the 'private', and the 'non-plan' economy.

A. The second economy as a political concept

Despite what the name implies, the second economy is not an economic but a political category. It is political not simply because the activities it encompasses, -- like all human activities -- have political content, but because the only thing that all these activities have in common is political: they are all ways in which people circumvent State control over labor by working outside the imposed system of State employment. With the exception of certain economic constraints imposed on them by political forces, the variety of ways private individuals seek material gains

in the second economy do not possess a general economic logic.

In economic terms the second economy is best described as a space existing either outside or within the interstices of the framework of the official State planned economy, which is filled by activities that can survive without the institutional, legal and administrative infrastructure which can be provided only by the State.

Participants in the second economy are sometimes harassed and even persecuted. Lacking solid and predictable institutional protection, the risk operators in the second economy face is not so much economic as political. Amid the shortages that plague the life of socialist countries, the main risk is not whether there is demand for the services or the goods of the second economy, but rather whether or not the State will decide to increase taxes, decrease and control prices, limit private imports or, even to unleash a media campaign against profiteers.

Apart from ideological concerns, the State has good reasons to worry about the second economy. This alternative economic sphere loosens the State's control over labor. Alternative sources of income makes the worker less dependent on the State for his livelihood, and gives the worker a measure of control over his own life. People -- no longer only pawns of an historical transformation imposed on them from above,-- have become active agents in this complex process of economic and social change as a grass-roots

social movement. The second economy has achieved major concessions from the State in recent years.

I am aware that to describe the opening of an alternative economic sphere in socialist countries as a "social movement" is an unorthodox usage of the concept. The traditional literature on social movements has focused on collective activities aiming at some common goal which participants consciously seek to achieve through some form of collective action. Social movements we know well are equipped with both self-consciousness and an internal organization.

Until recently, social movements in centrally planned and controlled societies were always nipped in the bud. To organize in a socialist country seemed highly imprudent. First, organization made groups visible and thus vulnerable to repression. In Hungary until 1988, organization from below has been severely sanctioned by criminal law as conspiracy and racketeering. And even when organizations succeeded in surviving, it invariably became an instrument of control in the hands of the State. Religious organizations and trade unions are sad examples of how, under certain conditions, 'joining forces' in the form of a corporate actor can actually make individual members even more powerless. Strength in unity meant the strength of the state to control those who united.[2]

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2 To illustrate, how an organization can turn against those who organize, one should consider the decree issued by the Presidium of the National Council of Trade Unions, in May 1950, which called trade union functionaries not to

In socialist societies, the central will has possessed an historically unprecedented self-consciousness; it has had confidence in its historic mission, a powerful organization, an elaborate ideology and a political vision. Apparently, then, the only social action that could succeed in creating social change challenging the system was action without the need for overt aims, for formal organizations or ideologies, and which did not have to understand itself in political terms. These are "social movements" of atomized resistance and at the macro-level, they are "movements of unintended consequences". Their strategy is, as Foucault has put it, a "strategy without a strategist", and, indeed, strategically so.

Political atomization does not imply the complete social isolation of each individual; it simply means the absence of organization that can overstep the restrictions of informality. The cobweb of kinship and friendship ties plays an important role in the day to day functioning of the second economy. However, seriously disturbed and strained in the rush of industrialization, these informal relations are localized, and their content is not political.

Participants in the second economy follow no distinct political values neither do they pursue distinct political aims. Manchin [1988] found in a survey that, if anything,

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tolerate tardiness, absenteeism, "strolling around during the work day," the underutilization of work-time, leaving one's work early, irresponsible and careless handling of material, tools, machinery and public property, low product quality and, finally, liberalism on the part of management (!) in enforcing discipline and proper work quotas.

participants involved in the second economy are more 'cautious'. People involved in private farming tend to be politically somewhat more submissive, probably not wanting to compound the risks of private farming with further risks of political intransigence. The original and deliberate political atomization of society carried out by the Communist State is thus reinforced by the second economy, which encourages people to improve their own lot individually. As Burawoy [1985 pp.197-200] has pointed out, as long as this is possible people are reluctant to pursue collective action. [3]

Yet, these individual actions do add up, but the way they do depends on the political power individuals intend to outwit.

B. The nature of macro political power in socialism

The unique feature of State power in socialism is, that to a large extent, it is based on the State's direct

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3 In my view Burawoy [pp.200-202] overestimates the difference between the Hungarian and the Polish case. He sees Poland, after Solidarity, as the collectivist alternative to individualistic Hungary. Burawoy reaches this contrast by underestimating the second economy in Poland. A comparison of Poland and Hungary would take another paper, here I would like to point out that the differences between Polish and Hungarian collectivization of agriculture, the different historic role played by the church in those two countries, State policies towards the second economy, and the way the second economy excluded a large portion of the population (by adopting the dollar as its currency in Poland but not in Hungary) explain why pressure towards collectivist strategies was stronger and why those strategies were possible in Poland.

involvement in the economy as the manager of economic development and socialist industrialization. This direct involvement means that the political and economic roles of the State are inseparable. Economy becomes the extension of politics -- politics by other means, as the slogans and names of socialist factories persistently remind us. The politicization of the economy turns society into one taut system where everything is related to everything else. This creates both advantages and disadvantages for the State. Just as all the victories of socialist industrialization become monuments to the superiority of socialism, all the economic failures are blamed on the system, and ultimately on the Communist State. The chief advantage of the politicization of the economy is that it allows for the permanent mobilization of people and resources. The chief disadvantage of such a taut system is that the damage of each breakdown is harder to contain and isolate.

Yet, I am not concerned here with the so called ripple effect, frequent in taut systems, in which a micro event acquires macro consequences through an amplifying chain of events. The story of the lost horse shoe that was lost for want of a nail, which resulted in the loss of the horse, then the rider, then the battle and finally the loss of the kingdom is quite instructive. The ripple effect describes a chain of events which makes one tiny event influence large outcomes.[4] This paper addresses mechanisms where many

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4 Another example is the story of Michael Kolhaas by Heinrich von Kleist, which describes how the personal

similar and isolated micro events of resistance reach macro significance without the participants coordinating their actions.[5]

III. Mechanisms of aggregation

The aggregation of micro power does not necessarily lead to the victory of the weak. In fact, in most cases aggregated micro power is just one of the factors involved in a conflict. In the following examples, therefore, I will not claim that the aggregated micro powers themselves forced the State to change its policies, my attempt is more modest, I will try to show that the accumulation of the multitude of everyday powers did and can forcefully influence macro-level decisions.

A. The Imprisoner's Dilemma: Bureaucratic Aggregation

If a huge number of individuals misbehave, there comes a point when punishing them becomes very costly, both politically and economically. This is an aggregating mechanism which is bureaucratic in nature. If enough people resist, this can force the State to erect a punitive

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grievance turns into an all-out peasant rebellion. In physics, chaos theory tries to model this phenomenon [Gleick pp.11-31.]

5 Demography is yet another area that studies the macro-consequences of the aggregation of micro-level decisions. Demography also dispenses with the notion of organized action.

apparatus which in the end becomes too costly and dangerous to maintain.

In the 1950s to push through forced industrialization the Communist State set out to draw the entire economy under its control. This involved the twin task of building up industry and forcing peasants out of agriculture. This inevitably involved coercion.

The basic contradiction which socialist industrialization had to resolve was carrying out a massive industrialization and concentration of production without allowing labor to turn into a commodity, as had happened in capitalist development. The Communist master plan could not allow workers to sell their labor 'freely' through a labor-market for several reasons. First, the Communist leadership was ideologically hostile to any form of the market. Second, it felt it needed complete control over the labor allocation process and it preferred direct administration over the indirect allocation through the market. But the most important reason why the labor market had to be abolished was that the labor market was incompatible with the rapid, centralized accumulation which was the principle objective of socialist industrialization.

An efficient labor market is impossible unless central planners are able to provide the necessary economic incentives to attract workers into jobs in the socialist sector. Historically, industry attracted labor by paying wages higher than available in the traditional sector,

especially in agriculture. Industry is usually able to pay higher wages because concentration in agriculture generates rural unemployment and because productivity is higher in industry than in other sectors of the economy. In Hungary, however, a recent land reform has created a huge class of small holder peasants who had no desire whatsoever to leave the land they had been dreaming about for centuries. The peasants were even willing to accept material disadvantages just to be able to stay on the land.[6] Furthermore, even though industrial productivity exceeded that of other sectors, this did not translate into goods that could be used as incentives to attract people into those jobs. Those incentives were not available because the Communist leadership saw its task in pursuing a policy of forced accumulation by increasing the share of investment to the detriment of consumption. Bricks and cement were used for building factories rather than residential housing, factories made machines for other factories rather than for the use of households, semi-finished goods like steel, iron or industrial chemicals had a higher priority in the overall economic plan than did food and clothing.

The ambitious plans of socialist industrialization needed as much labor as possible, but it could not afford to

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6 In 1949 the average income per capita in families of wage laborers in the State sector was 296 Fts compared to 154 Fts in agriculture.

pay for it.[7] Under these conditions, the State had to create a system of State employment in which it could take complete control over labor. The State achieved this partly through political coercion.

To herd the population from the countryside into large factories turned out to be much more difficult than the leadership had originally expected. Peasants were reluctant to leave their newly acquired land or join the agricultural equivalent of the factory, the *kolkhoz*, even though they were subject to a ruthless system of forced deliveries. The socialist tithe cleaned out not only the peasant's pantry, but also the seeds and livestock that were necessary to produce in the following years. As the amount squeezed out of the peasant one year became the base of his delivery quota for the next, the peasant usually failed to meet his higher quota in the following year. This was seen as sabotage, and a manifestation of 'intensified class struggle'. The inability of the peasant to meet artificially high quotas was punished with stiff prison

7 TABLE 1.

	Employment		Real Wages in State Sector (1949=100%)	
	Industry All employees	Ind.Workers	All employees	Ind.Workers
1949	782	468	100.0	100.0
1950	812	610	101.3	107.4
1951	871	729	89.7	94.1
1952	957	827	82.3	84.5
1953	1054	887	87.0	87.9
1954	1123	853	102.3	103.9
1955	1139	848	106.0	107.1

[Source Belényi 1984 p.89, Petö and Szakács 1986 p.221]

sentences and hefty fines [Magyar 1986, Závada 1986]. After fulfilling all its obligations, in the draught stricken year of 1952 the average peasant family was left with 80 kilograms of grain to feed itself and for seed, which was less than one third of what the average French peasant family had had in the eighteenth century [Rév 1987].

Peasants resisted this enormous burden in various ways. Some hid the seeds or the livestock; others devised devious ways of showing less land on paper than they actually owned; and others simply disappeared when the collectors came. Quite a few took matters into their own hands and either roughed up the collectors or butchered them with axes, scythes, and pitchforks. After the summer of 1952, many of the collectors refused to go to certain villages because they feared for their lives.

Those who left the land were at least as much trouble as those who stayed. This newly born proletariat stubbornly resisted industrial discipline. At harvest time, production in factories often came to a halt, as thousands of workers failed to show up. Most of them returned to the land to help their peasant kin to avoid stiff prison sentences for not meeting their quotas [Gyekiczky 1984]. These new members of the industrial working class had a hard time getting accustomed to the time-oriented work which the factory required of them and to the miserable working conditions which were ruining their health.

Many of them returned to the land after the first couple of days or weeks, others tried to find a different factory job. As of 1950, "arbitrary quitting" -- that is leaving a job without the consent of the employer -- became a civil, and later a criminal offense. One legal decree issued by the Council of Ministers on February 16, 1950, (effective as of January 1, 1950 !) made any act harmful to the execution of the plan punishable with a prison sentence up to 2 years. In 1951 the Supreme Court handed down a decision that decreed that even "absence from work *without harmful intent* or leave without proper excuse" was covered by this law and "should *normally* be punished by corrective-educational labor." [Belényi, 1984 pp.14-15, emphasis added] The actual penalties usually did not exceed a fine and "corrective labor" at the work-place because factory management simply could not afford to lose any workers. Although in certain cases the offenders were sent to prison.

In 1952, some 7,000 cases of "refusing to continue employment" were brought to trial.

The penal system was in full swing. Sentences were handed down in huge numbers. By 1951 many convicted had to wait up to ten months to start their prison sentences, because prisons were overcrowded and to relieve the overcrowding of the criminal justice system, a new 'misdemeanor court' was introduced. This new court made it possible to quickly prosecute those who had not broken any criminal law, but who had not acted with the ardor and

discipline expected of a socialist citizen. The misdemeanor court was not a court in the true sense, because it was operated by the State apparatus. As the official clarification accompanying the measure [Szamel 1952] explained, one of the important innovation of the new misdemeanor court was that it simplified legal procedures." Experience shows that with respect to the misdemeanor courts, lawfulness is not guaranteed by the multi-level appeal system in and of itself. On the other hand, it extends the procedure, it creates unnecessary office work, and it burdens the State budget to a serious extent." [p.421.]

Table 1 shows that "collective consumption," the budget item that covers chiefly military and law enforcement expenditures and the costs of State administration, more than quadrupled by 1953, compared to 1950, while the national income grew only 28%. The size of the State bureaucracy was up 64% [Csatár 1954 p.53.].

TABLE 1.

The Distribution of the National Income (1950=100%)

	Year						
	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
Consumption	100	105	112	119	125	128	135
Households	100	103	98	100	119	125	135
Collective	100	147	362	462	241	179	138
Accumulation	100	171	132	169	118	139	37
National Income	100	116	114	128	122	132	117

[Source: Petö and Szakács 1985 p.214.]

Between 1950 and the end of the first quarter of 1953 650,000 people were tried and of which 387,000 were convicted, and from the beginning of 1951 to May 1 of 1953 the police issued 850 000 penalties, only 19,000 of which resulted in jail sentence [A Magyar Dolgozok... Nehez Esztendok... p.500]. The Ministry of the Interior kept files on 1.2 million people [Ormos 1989].

The cost of enforcing these Draconian laws was enormous.[8] The natural question to ask is, why the State did not enforce the law more selectively by handing out harsh

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8 The Hungarian labor laws were modelled after the Soviet Labor Code introduced in the 1930s. The Soviet laws were so cruel that not even the legal system was quite prepared to carry them out. A campaign had to be launched against "liberal" and "slow" prosecutors who engaged in "criminal inactivity and direct cover-up." The real explanation is, of course, that the legal system was simply overwhelmed. From 1940 trials were carried out with one judge, without assessors and without preliminary investigation [Nove 1982 p.263.].(See also Solzhenytsyn's Gulag Archipelago).

punishment to a well-chosen few in order to deter others ? This was impossible because the political atomization of the resistance. Since each person acted on his own, there were no ring leaders. Moreover, to follow a strategy of selective punishment was also inadvisable, as selection was already taking place, except not according to the leadership's interest in keeping the population obedient. Factory bosses suffering from severe labor shortages were reluctant to let anyone to go to jail. Village party secretaries whose standing depended on how well their regions fulfilled the plan and who were consequently dependent on the cooperation of the local population often tried to mitigate the harshness of these regulations. The problem with selective punishment was that the middle and lower level bureaucrats, who had to make the ultimate decision concerning who would be punished, could not be trusted. Selective punishment would have necessitated a very costly monitoring of the selection process.

Lindblom [1977] argues that, in what he calls "authority systems," once the forces of repression are set up, "the marginal cost of control is zero or nearly so. Indeed repeated exercise of it often helps to maintain it." [p.19]. An idle policeman costs as much as another that is making arrest. However, as he himself admits, the original setup costs of "authority systems" is usually quite substantial. Thus it is not each act of repression that is costly but to maintainence of the repressive apparatus

itself. Precisely because at any given moment the employment of the weapons of the repressive arsenal is free, these weapons tend to be overused. This, in turn, will provide the case for further upgrading the arsenal. The process creates an internal momentum for growth in the coercive apparatus.

The thaw following Stalin's death forestalled a complete breakdown in the State machinery. In June 1953, Imre Nagy announced the New Course in economic policies. The New Course brought some temporary results: prices of many necessities were reduced, new resources were committed to residential construction (especially in Budapest and other, larger industrial cities), and realwages were increased. There was a jump in the number of new operating licenses granted in the private sector, the pace of forced collectivization was slowed, the Labor Code was modified to protect the workers' 'right to recreation' by curbing the powers of firms to force workers to work overtime. Also, some of the Draconian penalties meted out for violating labor discipline were eased and some measures were enacted to increase work safety and to protect pregnant women and young workers [@Habuda 1980 p.45.] Moreover, the Party promised to return to the norms of "socialist legality" and vowed to put an end to arbitrariness in the criminal justice system.

The costs of these measure were political as well as economic. As an internal Party document pointed out, past

practices of legal arbitrariness made the population "less trustful" of the leadership, and consequently less cooperative and created a climate of unpredictability which "hampered the construction of socialism". They also gave birth to a runaway security apparatus which threatened those within the Party and the State administration as much as the population at large.

The multitude of isolated offenses were aggregated through the institution of the penal system. The criminal file of the south Hungarian peasant who raised chickens and hid them from State officials was indiscriminately grouped together in the Budapest office of the coercive apparatus with the file of a northern mineworker who left his back-breaking work and found employment in a factory. In the extended criminal justice bureaucracy--which now included many of the State administrative organs--these two files attained a common quality. The most important effect of these State efforts to extend its control over the labor force was that the prosecution of these two cases tended, above all, to overburden the judicial bureaucracy and to further the expansion of the police apparatus without contributing in any substantial way to increasing national productivity.

B. The Market as a Focusing Lens

The aggregation mechanism can also be economic. The market can focus individual decisions and allow them to coalesce and exert macro-level pressure on State power. The intellectual fascination of markets is precisely that they provide a simple model how small instances of individual behavior add up to large-scale phenomena by simple mathematical aggregation.[9]

In 1968 a New Economic Mechanism was announced in Hungary, which was to introduce some market mechanisms into the country's planned economy. In the early 1970's the Stalinist wing of the Hungarian Worker's Party staged a concerted attack on the New Economic Mechanism, and as a part of this campaign an attack was unleashed on all forms of private production. In early 1973 a series of articles castigated, vilified, criticized and condemned both the 'petty bourgeois or private small-producer mentality' and 'private greed'.[10] There were venomous attacks on private

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9 As Collins puts it:"Market models are not very difficult to micro-translate: for a market is precisely a set of exchanges among real people in real transactional situations. The macro contours of a market are nothing but irreducible macro variables: *the sheer numbers* of exchanges of various kinds, which present each individual with a set of constrained choices... [p.247. emphasis added].

10 The shrill and moralizing style of these attacks is well exemplified by Faragó [1973] and Sólyom [1973] two columnists of the Party daily Népszabadság. Faragó preaches "a higher level collectivism", which is able to subordinate petty bourgeois private interest to the collective good. The real problem as he sees it is that much of this "petty bourgeois individualism" falls within the boundaries of the

artisans, small entrepreneurs, and moonlighters, but the most abuse fell on household farming which had brought moderate prosperity to the countryside. The propaganda contended that working on the private plots kept people from fulfilling their obligations to the collective. Some Party leaders pointed out that the Party must attend to the needs of the working class, who were, they claimed, had been slighted by the gains of the peasantry [Berend 1988 p.10]. The fact that industrial workers were more likely to be found among household farmers than peasants was scarcely a counter-argument [Oros 1983 p. 1219].

In 1974 local organs of the State began to crack down on all forms of the second economy, including part-time household farming. Suddenly, household farmers found that their net taxable income was assessed to be higher than in previous years, even though they had not produce any more. Many found themselves in the highest tax bracket starting at 50 000 Fts, in which tax rates were progressive [Pünkösti 1975].

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law. Sólyom tells the tale of a Party member, who threw away his respectable past as a manager and succumbed to the devil of greed. He began to borrow money right and left and failed to pay the loans back. Why he did what he did remains a puzzle to the reader, but not to the columnist, whose explanation faults the sickness and drug of greed [sic!]. To the relief of all the man was reprimanded by his Party peers. Bizám [1974] finally makes the link between egotism and the second economy explicit. In an article entitled "What makes a petty bourgeois?" she explains that a good Marxist must not look at simply matters of consumption, but should think in terms of production. Greed and selfishness are only symptoms. What makes the petty bourgeois is that he is engaged in "private work, at public expense, instead of or within the work he undertook in the socialist division of labor.. ." [p.47.].

All this happened at a time when prices of their produce were falling. Most of the produce from household farms was -- and still is -- sold through government wholesalers, who lowered their prices in accordance with central directives [Zsuffa 1975]. The State also decided that inputs like fodder was too cheap, and acted accordingly.

These household farmers had no organization that could represent them in this matter.[11] They could not form a cartel; nor did they have any other means of legal recourse. In 1967 household farms bred 220 000 pigs, a number which had increased to 2.4 million by the first half of 1974. This meant that over 50% of national production of pork was produced in the second economy. However, in response to this government crackdown, the number of sows dropped by 30% by the end of 1974 [Berend 1988 p.13]. By the spring of the next year the Party revised its policies. The important question for us is what made the State change its mind ?

In response to the new measures, household farmers began to slaughter their sows and simply stopped breeding for sale. In the fall and winter of 1974 it seemed that everybody in the countryside was slaughtering their pigs, smoking the meat, and making sausages and crackling. In villages pig slaughters are always festive events.

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11 This is not to say that there were no factions in the leadership of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party which were more sympathetic to peasant concerns.But this 'agrarian lobby' was not accountable to its constituency and cannot be seen as an organization of the peasantry.

Relatives and neighbors help in the kill and in the butchering and preparation of the meat. Slaughters are usually followed by feasts with plenty of brandy and liquor. In every village, people were celebrating.

But while pantries got filled in the villages, the meat supplies in urban stores were rapidly dwindling. Very soon the threat of serious meat shortages loomed large in cities. This put enormous pressure on the Party from the very constituency it claimed to be protecting through these restrictive measures: the urban working class. The multitude of individual decisions to stop pig farming were collected by the lens of the meat market and focused to exert pressure on the urban population. At this point the State was not faced with the intransigence of this or that peasant; it had to deal with a meat shortage and with the ire of the urban population.

C. Implied Threats and Collective Memories

The grumblings of the urban population did not force the State to change its stance on the second economy simply because it recognized the contradiction between its declared but dubious intention of championing the interest of the working class and the unintended harm inflicted upon the urban proletariat by the ensuing meat shortage. In socialism, the State was *creating* the class structure, not representing it [Walder 1988]. The State ignored real

working class interests just as much as it neglected those of the peasantry. Why then did the State respond to numerous, anonymous and in themselves insignificant complaints such as letters to newspapers, rumors, and private expression of personal frustration? In the 1950's Hungarians had to survive much worse hardships without the State having felt any obligation to alter its policies.

The State did not relent because these small signs of protest had any immediate effect, but rather because of the threat they implied. Since the uprising of 1956, the Kadar-regime, which was responsible for cruelly crushing the revolt, had been acutely aware of the possibility of a violent collective action. The collective memory of the uprising which took place in urban areas with the participation of the working class and the intellectuals was painfully present in 1974, just as it is today.

In the early 1970's this awareness was heightened by several factors exogenous to the urban meat shortage. Since 1972 intellectuals, who had in the late 1960's and early 1970's proposed to revise Marxist orthodoxy -- Marxism with a human face -- had been under constant attack from the State, at least in part because they invoked the memory of the Petöfi-circle, a club of revisionist Marxist intellectuals who had played a large role in igniting the events of 1956. Many of them were disciples of the Marxist philosopher Georg Lukács, who himself played an important part in the Petöfi-circle. Papers and books on such

politically seemingly innocuous topics as the philosophy of Husserl or Wittgenstein or the world view of the Renaissance were viciously attacked by Party hacks, and several of the leading members were expelled from the Party and eventually from the country as well.

The 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia gave fresh evidence of the Soviet Union's unwillingness to tolerate profound internal changes. Hungary in 1973-74, just like in 1956, was after a series of cautious internal reforms, which somewhat weakened the State. Even though I doubt the political elite was familiar with Tocqueville's ideas, the experiences of Hungarian history showed clearly that revolts in Hungary occur exactly when repressive political regimes begin to reform themselves.[12]

Political discourse in Hungary in the early 1970s was framed in the terms set by the 1956 revolution. However this discourse could not make overt any reference to 1956 because that would have opened up a flood of grievances against the regime in power. It was not in the Party's interest to make public reference to what it tersely labelled as 'counterrevolution'. The articles filled party publications couched their tirades in moralistic terms, harping on themes of egotism and the neglect of the collective interest. Of course, the collective interest was eternally entrusted to

12 This was the case in 1919, when the Communists took power after the progressive bourgeois government of Count Karolyi. It was also the case in 1956, which had begun as an attempt to resume the New Course which had been buried in 1954.

the Party-State. The argument was simple to manufacture: one just had to move backwards, taking an instance where the State's interest was violated, alleging that this was a violation of the collective interest, and finally preaching against privatization, individualization and greed. These attacks were easy to mass-produce since the State had successfully atomized society, thereby precluding any collective articulation of individual needs.

In the context of the public memory of 1956 the significance of the multitude of small protests gained amplified significance. As the peasantry by and large stayed out of the 1956 revolution, their dissatisfaction was not registered by the Party and State apparatus. Only when they managed to transfer most of the costs of the State's restrictive policies onto urban population, did the State feel threatened.

In this case, even though there was no effort to channel expressions of dissatisfaction into large and organized protest, the aggregation of small instances did occur through the prism of the collective memory. It is important to see that the threat of organized resistance did not come from the micro actors themselves. The success of this implied threat did not emerge from the self-confidence of society, that it would be able to join forces if necessary. The implicit, unstated threat had given these micro protests their effectiveness not because of the bitter and heroic memories of the population but because of the

unpleasant recollections of the political elite. To the extent to which the heightened morale by society itself played a part in forcing the State to change its stance on the second economy, it did so through the effects anticipated by the elite and not through its actual manifestations.

IV. Conclusion

I attempted to illustrate three ways a multitude of micro-level everyday power can 'add up', and can influence macro-level decision making. Bureaucratic, market and cultural mechanisms can serve as proxies for organization. There are advantages and disadvantages of being atomized. The main advantage is that the diffuse pressure isolated resistance can create is very costly to eradicate [Rév 1987]. The fact that macro resistance occurs as an unintended consequence of everyday behavior which is hard to criminalize deprives macro power of a well defined and easily punishable enemy. Atomized resistance can often require less courage and commitment than organized action.

On the other hand, atomized resistance has numerous disadvantages. Its result is much harder to calculate or calibrate, it does not foster an overall understanding of the situation, and it is often inefficient and rarely allows

for complex responses at the macro-level.[13] It also tends to erode solidarity and other values of community.

The kinds of everyday powers available to individuals however must be viewed in the context of macro power, for several reasons. First, if we fail to do that resistance can get easily trivialized. Second, the kinds of small options open to individuals are always strongly influenced by big time power. And finally, if we are seriously interested in human emancipation, we must systematically address the way micro power can effectively force a change against the formidable structures of macro power.

13 As the large literature on cooperation in game theory indicates, atomized action can often lead to suboptimal outcomes. The famous prisoner dilemma is a case in point.

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Theorizing the State-Peasant Relationship in Post-Revolutionary Cuba: A Proposal

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Typical social science conceptualizations of the relationship between the socialist state and peasantry have relied on images of a powerful, near-totalitarian state and a passive or sullen peasantry. State agricultural policy formation is generally depicted as a process relatively autonomous of societal input, although it may be influenced by the ruling class, the world economy, the internal economic situation, or state ideological commitments, depending on the theoretical perspective. Once the state has determined policy, it then hands down its decisions to peasants who are unavoidably bound by it. The entire picture is very "top-down." One of my goals in studying the state-peasantry relationship is to alter that portrayal, which I argue underestimates the capacity of subordinate actors to play a role in shaping their own lives.

Traditionally, it has been the job of the political scientist to study which factors influence the choice of a policy, while it has been the task of the rural sociologist or the anthropologist to study the impact of that policy on the rural community. What I hope to do in my dissertation is to combine the two approaches, in a study of Cuban agricultural policy. I am specifically interested in state policy towards the private agricultural producers, who today cultivate about twenty percent of Cuba's farmland (Benjamin et al. 1984). Combining the two traditionally separate approaches should help to reverse the top-down image by asserting that the response of the peasants to policy in turn represents a constraint

on future state policy formation. This paper examines how such a perspective might prove useful in addressing some questions about state policy formation and the peasant-state relationship in a socialist society.

Post-Revolutionary Cuban Agriculture

Pre-revolutionary Cuban agriculture was characterized by a large concentration of landholdings in the hands of a few wealthy Cubans alongside high seasonal unemployment, tiny and fragmented landholdings or even landlessness, and poverty for the majority of rural inhabitants. Shortly after the triumph of the revolution in 1959, the First Agrarian Reform Law was passed, issuing titles of ownership to all those who worked land they rented, sharecropped, or squatted. Between 1957 and 1966, the number of small private farmers actually increased about 110,000 over the already existing 45,000 small landholders (Pollitt 1979; Benjamin et al. 1984). According to Lehmann (1985), private producers obtained a net benefit from the revolution, enjoying a greater degree of security and an improved standard of living, with relatively few demands placed upon them in return. Nevertheless, the small peasants were not without their complaints; for most of the first fifteen years after the revolution, these private producers suffered from a relative lack of credit, technological inputs, and marketing opportunities that might have enhanced their operations. They had the lowest priority to purchase all sorts of agricultural inputs, from tractors to simple watering hoses. They proved nonetheless to be more efficient producers of almost every crop than were the

state farms, the other major form of productive organization in rural areas (Mesa Lago 1984).

The state farms, or granjas del pueblo, were the recipients of all the inputs and investment that private peasants lacked. These farms were designed as the solution to the question of what to do with the pre-1959 large estates. When the First Agrarian Reform Law had confiscated most landholdings over 1,000 acres, the state decided not to break up the large estates and distribute them amongst the proletarianized workers, but instead opted to maintain them in large units and treat their workers as state employees.

These state farms maintained an important ideological edge over private peasant holdings. On the former, rural workers labored for "the people"; on the latter, a family toiled for itself. The government, especially in its first idealistic decade, therefore heavily allocated resources to the state sector. It also attempted to incorporate the private farms, voluntarily, into state farms. After 1966, private peasants were subject to ideological exhortations to sell their holdings voluntarily to the state sector, or to incorporate themselves into one of the two plans promoting coordination with state farms. At their peak in 1973, these plans involved roughly 25 percent of all private peasants, and participation has declined since then (Dominguez 1978:453-4).

After 1967, the state was legally permitted to evict small peasants from their lands if it was thought that state ownership of the land was needed to improve productivity, establish industry, build dams or roads, or if a small farm was surrounded by a state farm. The combination of voluntary sales and evictions reduced

private landholdings in Cuba from 37 percent of the arable land in 1963 to 20 percent by 1977 (Dominguez 1978: 453-5). The trend appeared to be towards the gradual dissolution of the entire private sector.

However, in the mid-1970s, state policy underwent an abrupt about-face. Almost without warning, private agriculture was back in favor with state planners. This was evident in several policy changes, but the most notable manifestation of the altered attitude was the promotion of private agricultural cooperatives, credit, service, and especially production cooperatives. The latter could be formed by a group of private peasants pooling their land and resources, for which they would later be reimbursed from cooperative profits. Members were to receive a share of about half of the profits generated each year, after debts and taxes were paid. The possibility of forming these new cooperatives was embraced with enormous enthusiasm in rural Cuba; the number of cooperatives grew from forty-four in 1977 to 1,480 by 1983, with some 78,000 members and accounting for 53 percent of privately held land (Benjamin et al. 1984).

Not as far-reaching an organizational reform as some enacted elsewhere, such as decollectivization in China, the Cuban cooperatives nevertheless did mark a notable shift from past policies. This shift raises a number of general questions which I will examine in my dissertation, including the following: What factors contributed to the policy shift? Why did it take place when it did, rather than a decade earlier or later? Why was it met with such rapid acceptance by private producers?

Reviewing the existing literature on state policy formation, I found that although Cuba itself is understudied, there is no shortage of theoretical approaches to explaining policy changes in socialist countries. Here I will simply highlight some of the major explanations which are most commonly employed.

The first of these cites an economic necessity at the root of most policy reform. This "necessity" may arise either out of the inherent inefficiencies associated with trying to plan an entire economy, or it may be a result of price changes for commodities sold on the world market (primarily sugar, in the Cuban case). A second alternative is convergence theory, which finds the level of technological development of a society to determine more of its characteristics than its ideology or history. For convergence theorists, the road to modernity includes, among other things, increasing "rationality" in attitudes toward production and a corresponding decline in the significance of ideology. The "New Class" thesis argues that the intelligentsia, a class which puts greater value on efficiency, is replacing the bureaucracy as the class with power in state socialism, and policy is shifting accordingly.

Although the specific strengths and weaknesses of these approaches vary, two problems stand out. Much of the work done on state policy is marred by a teleological vision of history, such that Cuban policy represents a particular, necessary stage, either in the transition to socialism or in the process of modernization. Either way, the state has no choice but to act as that stage calls for. Convergence theory is certainly the worst offender, but

representatives of other approaches similarly assert that Cuba is on an historical trajectory which make certain policy choices somehow "inevitable". I would argue, on the other hand, that the state does have choices, even if the costs associated with certain choices are exceptionally high.

The other glaring problem with these theories is a strong elitist assumption about who shapes policy -- and history in general. It is of course true that much of state policy comes "from above," indirectly from macroeconomic forces, directly from technocrats and party officials. But elite decision makers do not function in a vacuum. On the contrary, they too are constrained and shaped by that fact that all human beings make history, including the perpetually underestimated peasants.

Generally social scientists recognize the power of peasant action only when it takes the form of overt, violent resistance. These extreme cases are the easiest to recognize, but they make up only part of the picture of the political significance of peasants. At times when peasants are not rebelling, they are hardly passive robots submitting to the will and whims of large landowners, or of the state. Rather, they are rationally proceeding about their work, responding creatively to opportunities to defend their interests in a world where they have little power. For the case of Cuba, I am making the argument that we can not fully understand state policy, neither its formation nor its success or failure, without reference to organized and especially <u>unorganized</u> responses of peasant households to the structures around them.

In some settings, organized peasant activity may be extremely important to state decision-making processes. However, such organization is relatively rare in most socialist countries, given the Communist Party's monopoly on political and economic institutions. Peasant organization did exist in the early years of the Cuban revolution in the form of ANAP, the National Association of Small Farmers (Asociacion Nacional de Agricultores Pequenos). Founded in 1961, ANAP was known to be an active lobbyist for its peasant members until about the mid 1960s, when its role became more of an extended arm of government policy in the countryside.

More important, in the Cuban case, are all of the unorganized, everyday activities through which peasants can have an impact upon the state. A few of these can perhaps be understood as resistance, of the type suggested by Scott (1985). However, finding symbolic resistance in even the most petty activities may not only blind us to the distinction between significant and insignificant actions, but may lead us to overlook the numerous instances of compliance which are also part and parcel of subordinate behavior.

Quite apart from any conscious resistance, peasants undertake a number of activities which are nothing more than simple coping strategies, activities which in sum have important consequences for the state. Interpreting these, and their significance, requires attention to the details of peasant life. Peasant actors are distinguished from other economic agents in a number of ways; two of the most significant are that they are invariably tied to a household (that is, a focus solely on the peasant individual is methodologically indefensible) and that they produce for

consumption as well as exchange. These characteristics give them room to manipulate and maneuver, within boundaries, to their own advantage. Within the household, labor can be allocated to different tasks, depending on how worthwhile one or the other appears under current policies. If there are certain advantages to employment in the state sector, such as social benefits, one member of the household might seek part- or full-time employment there while the rest of the household remains responsible for private production. Unless a household is involved in a specialized or integrated plan, it can decide to cultivate different crops, or to reduce the production of an unprofitable good, or reduce overall production to only what is required for its own consumption and the minimum amount of cash needed. None of these could reasonably be considered resistance, but rather strategies peasants have for coping, of achieving the Chayanovian balance between the pleasures of consumption and the drudgery of work.

And these strategies do have consequences, often unintended ones, for state policymakers. For example, when in the 1960s the state lowered the prices of agricultural inputs needed for industry, some members of the ANAP protested officially, but the prices were not changed. Instead, prices of non-processed food products were raised to compensate. The outcome, not surprisingly, was that the peasants shifted en masse to the production of consumer food crops and created a severe shortage of raw materials for industry (Duyos 1964). From the point of view of the peasants, they were simply coping with the economic structures in which they were embedded, but from the point of view of the state, the

peasants had created a real crisis that required new pricing and procurement schemes.

What I want to do then, is to ask what strategies of the peasants contributed to the rethinking of state policy that resulted in the active promotion of private agriculture in the mid-1970s. This alternative approach should permit the correction of the problems of teleology and elitism I mentioned earlier. But perhaps even more importantly, it offers the opportunity to incorporate women into the study of the state and development policy. Frequently the studies connecting the two have emphasized the impact of some policy on rural women -- which is important, of course, but not conducive to recognizing the autonomous political power of female actors. Examining the state from the "ground up" allows for the incorporation into theory of the household, of gendered interests, and of the sexual division of labor.

Recent studies of Cuban rural women provide an example of the way in which gender differences might be important to an understanding of the state. One of the incentives attached to production cooperatives, once the government decided to promote them in 1975, was the availability through them of the materials needed for the construction of new agricultural communities; the cooperative members simply had to provide the labor. This meant that for the first time, rural residents not employed on state farms would have access to modern housing with running water and electricity. Furthermore, shops, day care centers, health clinics, schools, and communal eating facilities were to be constructed in these communities.

In interviews conducted by Deere (1986), rural women reported that the improvement in their families' standards of living was a major incentive for joining the cooperatives. The state gained the support of women and facilitated the mobilization of female labor through the construction of the new communities. Additional research by Stubbs and Alvarez (1987) has shown that rural women are especially inclined to favor the new cooperatives, for two additional reasons. Women also welcomed the opportunity to gain some economic independence from their husbands and fathers, and noted that many of the traditionally female tasks are easier and more pleasant when undertaken collectively.

On the other hand, many men are less than enthused about relinquishing their individual control of the land and the decisions relating to it. Nor do they welcome the increased independence of their wives or daughters or the work which brings them into the public sphere and the sight of other men (Benjamin et al. 1984). That cooperative membership grew nonetheless suggests that either women were winning the household debates, or men had additional interests in joining that were not captured by Stubbs and Alvarez. Either way, this example illustrates the importance of paying attention to micro-level sociological relationships, such as those within the household, because it is partially at that level that the fate of macro-level social and economic policies are determined.

Thus, a view of state policy from the ground up may allow us to incorporate gender into theoretical realms from which the concept has been traditionally excluded. Similarly, I plan to pay

attention to race and other distinctions which might illuminate the dynamics of peasant responses to state policy. (Examples might include the amount of land held, the crop(s) produced, age, or pre-revolutionary experience.) Taking these things into account allows me, on the one hand, to construct a more sociologically accurate conception of the peasant actor -- often dismissed as conservative, individualistic, and assumed to be male without further thought -- and to understand what interests and resources peasants have to draw upon as they cope with a powerful state apparatus.

By no means do I wish to exaggerate the ability of the peasantry to manipulate the political system. Clearly the peasants' tools are few and fragile compared to those held by state policymakers. Nor do I wish to convey the impression that I think that the global economic system or the class in power or the level of technological development are irrelevant. They all clearly have some bearing -- yet none have the power to "determine" outcomes. Peasant activity is not all-determining either. But it is an essential part of the complex and multidimensional process through which all men, and women and children, make history.

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Comments on Panel on

"Subordinate Actors and their Marginalization in Social Theory"

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I am pleased to comment on an excellent and thematically well-integrated panel of papers on marginalization. I will begin with the first paper--jointly written by three research fellows: Nilufer Isvan, Akos Rona-Tas, and Cynthia Buckley of the Sociology Department--which is a theoretical statement succinctly summing up the panel's main theme.

The paper addresses the fact that, contrary to the assumptions and predictions of both Marxist and non-Marxist progressivism (forms of modernization theory), many anomalous socio-economic features continue to be vibrant in the modern world, yet they are given only marginal status by our reigning forms of understanding. Examples of marginality treated in this paper are forms of production and exchange such as the household production of wheat, small owner-operated farms, artisans, and informal labor exchange in advanced capitalism; the second economy in state-planned economies; and the informal sector in the capitalist Third World.

Three important point are made about the marginalization of social phenomena. First, that marginalization operates at two distinct yet interrelated levels, the perceptual and the epistemological. The perception that certain social practices do not belong to what is deemed to be the core of reality is in part produced by the very epistemological (or representational) categories that have been constructed to apprehend reality. In turn, the perceptual creation of margins invents and confirms the epistmological apparatus.

Second, both levels of marginalization are achieved through "egocentric dichotomization of the world." Dichotomies are not constructed from some abstract mid-point between two poles, but always from the vantage point of the Self, which is privileged as the point of departure from which an opposite is defined. This is a point well taken, in that to see the world in dichotomies is to reduce the world to something other than oneself (non-modern, mechanical solidarity, folk, Gemeinschaft, etc.). Hence, many features of the world that do not fit into a dualistic schema are left out of core reality and theory to languish at the margins.

Third, what I especially like about the paper is that it does not stop at the issue of dichotomization, but also criticizes the "historicization of the Other" in terms of the Self, or the temporal construction of dichotomies. The problem of writing other people's history in terms of an opposition to oneself is that the margins are given someone else's history instead of their own. They are given an inevitable path of social change based on the trajectory of Western history. This problem is found in the models which posit that either the universal market or central bureaucracy will eventually dominate, along with large-scale production, wage labor, centralization, and standardization. What these models of history fail to take into account is that margins are not anachronistic survivals of the past, but ongoing developments in the present, changing and developing in response to he modern world. Margins make use of and are produced by the very structures which are supposed to erase them from the present (new technologies, large-scale

industrialization). Thus, implicit in this paper is the recognition that the survival of the past in the present is not a sign of backwardness, but a critique of the present, or a way of coping with it.

I do have a few questions for the authors' consideration. You still seem to want to maintain the various dichotomies instead of throwing them out completely in favor of tripartite schemes, or better yet, models of multiple strands, themes and developmental directions. Is it that you see merit in maintaining the core-margin relationship? Is it that you think it is still fruitful to posit a dominant set of institutions and contrast it with a set of informal, unrecognized set of practices? Or can the marginal and the anomalous be seen as the basis for constructing a new core and new trajectories so that margins can also be regarded as primary processes instead of secondary ones? What prevents you from seeing margins as a certain dimension of core institutions hitherto unnoticed and peripheralized?

Finally, the relationship between core institutions and their logic, and that of marginal practices, needs to be addressed. The specific relationships of opposition, interpenetration, accommodation or supplementation between margins and core need to be examined in detail.

* * * * *

It is this relationship of the marginal second economy to the Hungarian state, which Akos Rona-Tas' paper explores, a relationship which the paper asserts is one of opposition. The argument is that the second economy is a form of political resistance just like a full-fledged social movement, although it possesses no formal ideology, no explicit intention of resistance and no formal organization.

I would like to single out two insightful points this paper makes which I think are especially pertinent to understanding state socialist societies. First, in the structuring of state socialist societies, there is a deep blurring of boundaries between the political and economic spheres. This feature, I believe, is what makes Rona-Tas' argument that the second eocnomy is a "political category" especially compelling, even though the second economy's agents and actions do not understand themselves in political terms.

The special interpenetration of political and economic spheres in this type of society produces a marked irony in the relationship between the state and the second economy. The irony lies in the fact that, on the one hand, the state convinces itself that it is interested in production and economy when it is actually more interested in state control and the politicization of culture and the economy. Economy, then, is an extension of the state and that is why the state would also like to control the second economy. On the other hand, the second economy thinks of itself as a series of economic transactions when it is actually, in its effects, political action countering state

power. By loosening the state's control over their livelihood, the second economy is a form of politics. Thus, this irony of the disjunction between intentions and effects underscores how the political and the economic are only aspects of each other.

A second point well taken by the paper is that the reason why resistance takes this guise is because visible organizations or movements of resistance have not accomplished anything in the past and have, in fact, proven dangerous until the recent changes of the late 1980's. Formal organizations have proven to be easy targets of state repression or have been coopted into the state, as the example of the Hungarian Trade Union and the Church show. Therefore, argues Rona-Tas, resistance works through the unintentional consequences and through the cumulative actions of "atomized individuals," each simply thinking about their own livelihood instead of concerted poltical action.

It is at this point that I would like to take issue with the paper's analysis of the mechanism of such resistance. Although the second economy does produce resistance effects through unintended consequences, it seems to me that it does not mean that it does so through the aggregation of isolated individual actions. What also makes up the second economy are sets of relationships--between buyer and seller, between producer and the supplier of raw materials, between small entrepreneur and the state. The second economy produces a logic, culture, and discourse of its own which means that it is more than individual actions. People talk about the second economy; in the process they interpret it in certain ways, give it meaning, ascribe

certain political and social attitudes, and they learn how to behave in its practice. The case of peasants killing their pigs and feasting on them rather than turning them over to the state is an example of how there is communication involved in such forms of resistance. Perhaps the mechanism of uncoordinated and unorganized individual actions with unintended consequences needs to be enriched by a notion of culture, or, in this case, counter-culture. As it stands, the chaos theory model implies actors who do not interpret or communicate their actions, who do not produce a discourse or certain shared practices and attitudes beyond isolated decisions concerning their material livelihood.

So I would not share the paper's concern that the atomization of society by the state is reinforced by a second economy which encourages people to improve their lot individually. Since to do well in the second economy, one has to depend on certain others and engage in exchange activities with them, it would seem that the second economy could only help multiply and strengthen the social relationships outside of the state, which are necessary for the emergence of a relatively independent civil society.

* * * * *

Theresa Deussen's paper attempts to redress the marginalization of an important social category too often left out of sociological and political scientific analyses, that of the peasantry. She proposes some alternative ways of analyzing

socialist Cuban state and peasant relations instead of the usual big-state-passive-peasant model. She hopes to avoid teleological models of change which assume some inevitable forces determining state policy decisions. Examples of teleological models are those which posit that policy changes are determined simply by economic contingencies arising out of a planned economy or intruding from the world economy, or models which give primacy to a vision of history as proceeding through inevitable and ultimately convergent stages of economic development. Furthermore, the paper is also critical of the elitist top-down perspective which reduces the complex process of social change to the influence of key figures and documents of the state, or of a new or old ruling class.

What Deussen would like to see is a "bottom-up" study of social transformation and state policy changes. The two micro-level sites of analysis she highlights seem to me very pertinent and they promise to open up the discussion of rural state socialism out of its stultifying straitjacket of totalizing and elitist discourse. First, she wants to examint peasant household strategies vis-à-vis state rural policies. Peasants are arranged into sociological units of households, within which and for which economic decisions affecting state policies are made about what to grow, how much to grow, where to sell, division of labor, etc. The outcome of peasant household strategies may engage the state in terms of resistance or compliance.

Second, she also thematizes an important element of state-peasant relations, gender as a variable factor in changing state

policies. It has been found that women peasants tend to be more willing to join state-supported cooperatives than men because it enables them to gain independence from husbands and fathers and gives them a degree of financial independence. In my own area of research, China, there are signs that in some ways the rural decollectivization of 1979 has benefitted men more than women. Going back to the household mode of production and peasant entrepreneurship has sometimes meant the reinstatement of patriarchal power within the family, and women being left to work in the home and fields while men travel to nearby towns and meet the larger world. Therefore, state policies affect peasants differently according to gender and, likewise, peasants respond to the sate in different ways according to gender. The implication of the gender dimension is that peasant-gender relations and conflicts have important repercussions for the formulation and implementation of state policies.

While I think Deussen's proposals for alternative approaches to studying peasant-state relations are laudable, there are many more angles from the micro-level which could be highlighted. For example, the conflict between different social units of integration or relationship, such as those between peasant families and the state, and between local village or community and the state, could be a fruitful avenue of investigation into peasant-state relations. These differences in levels and units of social integration express themselves in terms of conflicting loyalties to families, locality and nation-state and in efforts

by peasants to foreground local commitments over the interests of the state.

Another angle worth pursuing in efforts to open up a micro-level analysis of state-peasant relations is the examination of different levels of the state and their varying responses to peasant interests and strategies. The crucial level of course is the lowest level of the state, rural officials who themselves are part of local peasant communities. It would be interesting to explore the various strategies peasants actively employ to try to win these officials to their side, and to see how the responses of these local officials to peasants affect higher levels of the state, resulting in state policy changes.

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