State Relations

Local state and social security in central Serbia

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Abstract

How do states actually work? This thesis answers this question by studying local state relations in a rural-urban region in central Serbia, defining the local state not as a bounded, but a grounded, concrete-complex network of relations from the sub-local to the trans-national scales of the state. Critiquing the ôNew Anthropology of the Stateô with its strong focus on representation, its weaker focus on practices of the state and with difficulties to explain the mediating link between both, it develops four interdependent axes of research: (1) the embeddedness of actors; (2) the negotiation of the boundaries between the state and society/kin; (3) the relational modalities of state practices, and (4) the strategic selectivity of the state.

I concentrate on the state activities regulation, organisation, and distribution, in the political fields of local politics, infrastructure work, and welfare. The local state underwent several political transformations ï early socialism (1944-56), late socialism (since the mid-1970s), early post-socialism, advanced liberalism after 2000, and authoritarian liberalism since 2012. My findings suggest that the socialist history has been a source of material and discursive building blocks from which elements are tactically and strategically selected by social actors, constructing a larger variety of state forms and practices than corruption (and other auto-Balkanist discourses) suggest. I argue that each major historical moment in the development of state institutions ï the Local Council (*mesna zajednica*), the Centre for Social Work (*centar za socijalni rad*), and the Municipality (*opġtina*) ï have sedimented in strategically selective ways, influencing future state transformations. This leads to present-day state modalities like voluntarist governing of infrastructure and sport activism, employment through social relations, professional humanism, and over- and underimplementation of social policies and laws in social work, but also a longing for supposedly more rational Western bureaucratic procedures.

The social life of late socialist self-organisation sometimes serves as ôbeachheads of translationô in the neo-liberalizing state. Thus, the practices of social workers that I call inclusive distribution can be read as a tacit, redistributive ñnew left art of governmentò. Similarly, the senior care innovated by carers and social workers suggests a feminist ethics of care. Of special interest were flexible space-times conducive of a responsive care of the elderly.

In sum, my relational approach to the local state along the four axes of embeddedness, boundary work, relational modalities, and strategic selectivity opens a critical vista on the concrete-complex processes of state construction, reproduction and transformation.

Zusammenfassung

In dieser Dissertation entwickle ich eine komparative anthropologische Analyse des Lokalstaates, auf der Basis meiner 18-monatigen ethnographischen Feldforschung im rural-urbanen Raum Zentralserbiens zwischen 2009 und 2013. Die Frage, was der Lokalstaat war, ist, und sein könnte, ist dabei weit über den serbischen Kontext hinaus relevant. Die partizipativen, vermeintlich demokratischen Möglichkeiten des Lokalstaates dienen weltweit seit Jahrzehnten als Argumente für den Staatsumbau ï wobei durchaus auch Gegenbewegungen staatlicher Rezentralisierung zu verzeichnen sind. Während es liberal-sozialistische und auch anarchistische Vorbilder für die Stärkung lokalstaatlicher Arrangements gibt, werden in jüngerer Zeit vermehrt neoliberale Ideen bemüht, denen zufolge durch Dezentralisierung mit weniger Geld mehr positive Effekte für die Bevölkerung erreicht werden können. Doch wie sieht es in der Praxis aus, wenn verschiedene historische Erfahrungen der De- und Rezentralisierung Ăsedimentierenñ und zu zahlreichen normativen Zwickmühlen gerinnen (Bierschenk 2014)?

Während meiner Forschung spitzte sich die Unzufriedenheit sowohl zentralstaatlicher Politiker wie einfacher Bürger mit ihrem Staat zu, was sowohl zeithistorische wie zeitgenössische Ursachen hatte. Zeitgleich mit der als katastrophal empfundenen Erfahrung des Staatszerfalls der Sozialistischen Föderativen Republik Jugoslawien seit Ende der 1980er Jahre hatte die post-sozialistische serbische Führung unter Miloġeviĺ während der 1990er Jahre die weitgehende Liberalisierung und lokalstaatliche Autonomie der spätsozialistischen Periode (seit 1974) teilweise aufgehoben. Mit der Ăliberalen Revolutionñ gegen das Establishment Miloġeviĺs im Jahre 2000 (Greenberg 2014) wurde dann unter neoliberalem Vorzeichen die staatliche Organisation und Regulierung der Wirtschaft privatisiert. Der Prozess führte zu endemischer Massenarbeitslosigkeit und zu zahlreichen gesellschaftlichen Verwerfungen. Als nun 2009-10 im Zusammenhang mit dem bevorstehenden Antrag Serbiens auf Beitrittskandidatenstatus für die Europäische Union die Frage der Dezentralisierung als Teil der Angleichungsprozesse akut wurde, weckte dies Erinnerungen an die oben genannten territorialen wie wirtschaftlichen ĂDezentralisierungsprozesseñ. Es waren gerade weniger beliebte Politiker wie der Vorsitzende der liberal-wirtschaftlichen G17plus, Mlaďan Dinkiĺ, welche sich am stärksten die internationale Agenda zu eigen machten ï allerdings nicht ohne diese dahingehend zu übersetzten, dass sich die Bevölkerung durch lokalstaatliche

Dezentralisierungen besseres Gehör für ihre berechtigten Forderungen nach sozialer Sicherung und wirtschaftlicher Teilhabe verschaffen könne.

Da die Debatten um die Dezentralisierung des Staates breit in den serbischen Medien geführt worden waren, konnte sich die Unzufriedenheit trotz unterschiedlicher gesellschaftlicher Positionen und Interessen diskursiv auf ähnliche Weise Ausdruck verschaffen. Mitunter war es nicht leicht sich des Gefühls zu erwehren, eine geschlossen anarchistische Gesellschaft Ägegen den Staatñ vor sich zu haben (Clastres 1989; Scott 1998) ï wobei paradoxerweise auch Politiker gegen den Staat eingestellt schienen. Bei genauerem Hinsehen jedoch erwies es sich, dass die Bevölkerung eher eine Rückkehr zu den imaginierten Änormalenñ Bedingungen wünschte, in welchen der Staat ein geordnetes, überschaubares, und vor allem sozial gesichertes und relativ friedliches Zusammenleben ermöglichte (Greenberg 2011; Jansen 2014). Dieses genauere Hinsehen vollziehe ich in meiner Dissertation anhand von fünf ethnographischen Fallstudien (in den Kapiteln 2 bis 6). Ich beginne mit dem Aufstieg eines lokalen Politikers in der Stadtgemeinde (*grad*) auf der Basis seiner Verdienste um den Fußballklub von Lower Village, und verfolge dann wie seine Sportfreunde im Ortsrat des Dorfes (*savet mesne zajednice*) die Infrastrukturpolitik zu revolutionieren suchen. In einem weiteren Kapitel stelle ich ihre Übersetzungen des Flüchtlingsbegriffs in lokale Sozialpolitik dar. Anschließend zeichne ich die Verhandlung zweier sozialstaatlicher Handlungsweisen ï inklusive Verteilung und exklusiver Schutz ï im städtischen Zentrum für Sozialarbeit in River City nach. Abschließend beschreibe ich, wie im benachbarten Zentrum für Sozialarbeit in Creek Town, ausgehend von inklusiver Verteilung, ein neues ambulantes Altenpflegeprogramm aufgebaut wird.

Die hier bereits angedeutete Komplexität des Lokalstaates erforderte es, ein relationales Instrumentarium zu seiner anthropologischen Analyse zu entwickeln. Einleitend schlage ich deshalb zunächst eine prozessuale und multiskalare Arbeitshypothese vor, der zufolge der Lokalstaat das örtliche Geflecht aller staatlichen Effekte umfasst, welche in transnationalen, zentralstaatlichen, regionalen, lokalen und mikro-lokalen (Ăsub-lokalenñ) staatlichen Verhältnissen und Beziehungen entstehen. Dieses lokalstaatliche Geflecht verstehe ich dabei in Anlehnung an kritische Geographen wie Neil Brenner (1999; 2008; Brenner & Elden 2009) und den Soziologen und Philosophen Henri Lefebvre (1977; 1991; 2009b) als asymmetrisch und machtgeladen, wobei die lokale Perspektive nahelegt, keine statisch-strukturellen Machtgefälle zu essentialisieren, sondern die spezifischen Machtverhältnisse zu untersuchen.

In einem zweiten Schritt schlage ich dann im theoretischen Teil der Arbeit in Anlehnung an Thelen, Vetters und von Benda-Beckmann (2014) vor, das lokalstaatliche Netzwerk anhand von vier ĂForschungsachsenñ zu erforschen. Diese vier relationalen Momente sind ï

aufsteigend von der individuellen zur systemischen Abstraktionsebene ï die sich wandelnde Einbettung staatlicher Akteure; die wiederkehrenden Verhandlungen der Grenze von Staat und Gesellschaft (sowie Verwandtschaft und Markt), längerfristige staatliche Modalitäten (Staats-Weisen), und schließlich die strategische Selektivität staatlicher Praktiken durch diskursive und institutionelle Kräfteverhältnisse. Im Theoriekapitel argumentiere ich dabei ausführlich, dass meine vorgeschlagene vierteilige Analyse wesentliche Aspekte der staatsanthropologischen Debatten in einer vergleichbaren und kohärenten Methodik aufhebt. Die vorgeschlagene Perspektive ist besonders geeignet, hinter den Fassaden von makro-soziologischen Staatsdebatten die konkreten Prozesse der Aushandlung von Staatlichkeit und der Emergenz politischer Formationen zu beobachten ï die Offenheit des politischen Prozesses betonend.

Ich möchte nun einige der wesentlichen Forschungsergebnisse zusammentragen. Den Anfang mache ich mit meiner ersten relationalen Forschungsachse ï der Analyse der Einbettung von lokalstaatlichen Akteuren, in der Manchester School zunächst als ā*intercalary role*ó (Gluckman, Mitchell, and Barnes 1949) und später als ā*interface positionality*ó (Position an der Schnittstelle) (Long 2001) bezeichnet. Im ersten ethnographischen Kapitel untersuche ich, wie Politik in Serbien in die seit der sozialistischen Phase auf dem Dorf übliche Sportbegeisterung eingebettet ist. In Lower Village führte ehrenamtliches Engagement im Fußballklub zur Formierung solidarischer Netzwerke, welche als ā*cross-cutting ties*ó (Gluckman 1956) zwischen Dorffraktionen fungierten und Kooperationsbeziehungen anregten ï etwa wenn Fußballfreunde für bedürftige Dorfbewohner wie den Flüchtling Pero Arbeitsplätze anboten. Die Hilfe bei der Arbeitsplatzbeschaffung hat eine jahrzehntelange lokale Tradition gespeist aus Ăproduktivistischenñ moralökonomischen Annahmen von Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe, weshalb ich sie in der Dissertation als den Ăsozialistischen Ethos der Sorgeñ bezeichne. Die Selbstorganisation im Klub wurde lokal als erfolgreich erachtet, und auf Grundlage dieser Einschätzung basierte auch die Karriere eines lokalen Politikers ins Gemeindeparlament (*gradska skupština*). Der politische Aufstieg des Fußballfunktionärs und Veterinärs Mladen seit 2008 war zudem begleitet von dem seiner Mitstreiter, des kleinen Bauunternehmers Miro ā*Supervizor*ó, und des Obstschnapsproduzenten Bane in den Ortsrat im Jahr 2009. Andererseits kam es im Verein aber auch zu regelmäßigen Konflikten und zum periodischen Ausscheiden von Fraktionen, welche ihren Streit auch außerhalb des Klubs weitertrugen (vgl. Frankenberg 1990).

Die politische Karriere des Sportaktivisten und Veterinärmediziners Mladen funktionierte dabei nicht wegen, sondern trotz seiner Zugehörigkeit zu der lokal unpopulären, liberal-ökonomischen Partei G17plus von Mlaĺan Dinkiĺ. Während Mladen erfolgreich die doppelte

Spannung des politischen Amtes zwischen Vertretung und Regieren der Bevölkerung meisterte, machten ihm doch mehrere Dilemma zu schaffen ï vor allem Streit zwischen verschiedenen Dorffraktionen, welche von ihm unparteiische und gerechte Entscheidungen *zu ihren Gunsten* erwarteten. Ich habe dieses klassische Dilemma lokaler Staatspersonen als Konflikt im Schnittstellen-Typ I (mit beispielsweise der Wählerschaft oder den Nutzern staatlicher Dienste) genannt. Andererseits war Mladen auch Widersprüchen im Schnittstellen-Typ III, d.h. seinen politischen Beziehungen gegenüber Vorgesetzten in seiner Partei einerseits, sowie im Gemeindeparlament gegenüber dem Präsidenten des Parlamentes (aus der Sozialistischen Partei Serbiens) andererseits, ausgesetzt. Gleichrangige Beziehungen zu weiteren Lokalpolitikern etwa innerhalb der Arbeitsausschüsse des Parlamentes stellten die (ethnographisch hier nicht näher untersuchten) Schnittstellen- Beziehungen des Typs II dar.

Mladenôs Aufstieg innerhalb seiner multiplen politischen Beziehungen stellte nur einen der theoretisch möglichen vier Grundaspekte politischen Handelns dar, wie ich sie aus der Analyse der einschlägigen Literatur entwickelte. In der klassischen Debatte war vor allem auf die Gefahren des Resignierens bzw. Aufgebens einerseits, sowie des konformen Nachgebens gegenüber gesellschaftlichen Ansprüchen andererseits hingewiesen worden (Fallers 1955; Mars 1976). Neuere Ansätze betonten dann eher den rebellischen, eigennützigen Aspekt lokaler Machtausübung (Kuper 1970; Verdery 2002; Dorondel and Popa 2014). Demgegenüber entwickelte ich anhand Mladenôs transversalen (diagonalen) Aufstiegs, bei welchem er seine Dorfbeziehungen keineswegs vergaß, sondern im Sinne sozialistischer Sorgeethik förderte, den vierten Grundaspekt der ãsozialen Rebellionô.

Wenden wir uns nun der bereits angedeuteten Fußballopposition zu, die sich insbesondere in der unmittelbaren Nachbarschaft von Mladenôs Eltern entwickelte. Die Nachbarn ï gute Familienfreunde seit Jahrzehnten ï projizierten ihre persönliche Sorge um ihre Tochter, welche keinen ihrer Ausbildung angemessenen Arbeitsplatz erhielt, mithilfe der weit verbreiteten Gerüchte und Diskurse um staatliche Misswirtschaft und Korruption auf Mladen, weil jener seine sozialistische Sorge um die Arbeitsplätze seiner Schwester und seines Schwagers erfolgreicher umsetzte. Die Korruptionsvorwürfe der Nachbarn waren dabei durchaus nicht trivial, sondern stellten, ähnlich wie im post-kolonialen Indien, eine potentielle Waffe im Kampf gegen lokale politische Widersacher dar (Gupta 2012, 170ï 4). Mladen jedoch gelang es, die Intrigen und Angriffe in der Nachbarschaft einigermaßen unbeschadet zu überstehen, weil er den Aspekt der Sozialrebellion verkörperte und sich nicht direkt auf die Anwürfe einließ, sondern im Rahmen des Möglichen weiter an freundschaftlich-nachbarschaftlichem Austausch interessiert zeigte. Damit verhinderte er auch recht effektiv ein Überspringen der

Vorwürfe von dieser zu einer anderen Schnittstelle des Typs I, etwa im Sportverein. Hier zeigte Mladen eine vergleichsweise ungewöhnliche Fähigkeit, welche seinen Kollegen Bane und Miro nicht eigen war. Während Bane in unterschiedlichen Schnittstellen die Kritik an seinem vermeintlichen Eigennutz abprallen ließ, wurde Miro öfters zur Konformität gegenüber Forderungen z.B. der Vereinsfreunde oder im Dorfrat genötigt.

Die beiden letztgenannten Offiziellen, Bane und Miro, waren auch Hauptakteure in den folgenden zwei Kapiteln. Im Kapitel ĂDer Ortsrat bei der Arbeitñ beschäftige ich mich mit dem Politikfeld Infrastrukturpolitik, und mit der zweiten theoretischen Achse der ĂGrenzziehungsarbeitñ zwischen Staat und Gesellschaft. Anhand von alltäglichen Praktiken und eher außeralltäglichen Ereignissen im Ortsrat vollziehe ich hier die Konstruktion und Veränderung eines Staat-Gesellschaft Schnittstellen-Typs I nach. Die alle vier Jahre stattfindenden Wahlen des Ortsrates machen die Grenzziehung zwischen Dorfbewohnern und Vertretern des Ortsrates periodisch nötig. Im Jahr 2009 hatte sich, nicht unüblich, der Verdacht bei den Dorfbewohnern eingeschlichen, dass der alte Dorfrat nichts tauge. Die in Selbstorganisation geübten Fußballfreunde fühlten sich berufen, gegenüber dem alten, schwach wirkenden Dorfpräsidenten und seiner Mannschaft eine Rebellion anzuzetteln, ein Prozess, den Gluckman treffend mit Ăthe frailty of authorityñ umschrieb ï werden Amtsinhaber an ihrem Ideal gemessen, werden sie unweigerlich für minder wert befunden und sind vor Absetzungsversuchen (einer Rebellion) nicht sicher (Gluckman 1956, 38). Nachdem die Rebellion der Fußballfreunde von 2009 erfolgreich war, wurden sie bald selbst zur Zielscheibe strategisch und ernst gemeinter Vorwürfe der Korruption und Misswirtschaft.

Solcherart Grenzziehungskonflikte zwischen staatlichem Innen und Außen, so argumentiere ich, stellen die Kontinuität einer selbst-regierten staatlichen Institution dar. Sie machen übrigens auch den agonistischen Charakter von Demokratien aus, wie Mouffe (2013) aus der Theorie der sozialen Bewegungen kommend festhielt ï und wie Lefebvre (1977, III:341ï 3; vgl. 2009a, 135) in Bezug auf Jugoslawiens sozialistische Selbstverwaltung formulierte. Im Jahr 2009-10 nahm die Grenzziehungsarbeit u.a. die Form eines zwar nicht materiell vorliegenden, aber gleichsam unumstößlichen allgemeinen Finanzplans des Ortsrates an. Die neuen Ortsratsmitglieder versuchten den von ihnen aufgestellten konkreten Finanzplan anhand des allgemeinen Modells zu verteidigen, was ihnen zwar innere Kohäsion, aber auch mangelnde äußere Flexibilität einbrachte, und die Kritik an ihren Infrastruktur-Entscheidungen zu einem regelrechten Streit ausweitete.

Die Dialektik zwischen Verdichtung und Verflüssigung von Grenzen bzw. Schnittstellen konnte auch im Kapitel 4 registriert werden. Flüchtlinge aus den kroatischen und bosnischen

Kriegsschauplätzen, welche 1995 in Lower Village eintrafen, erschienen den Ansässigen zunächst drastisch Ăandersñ. So besaßen sie zwar eine Gemeinsamkeit in einem angenommenen heteronormativen Verständnis als Familienmitglieder, andererseits jedoch waren sie (zunächst) ohne lokalen Land- und Hausbesitz, Beschäftigung, Zukunftsperspektive (und serbische Staatsbürgerschaft). Acht Jahre lang legitimierte der vorgestellte Unterschied-in-der-Gemeinsamkeit, dass sich der Ortsrat um die Flüchtlinge kümmerte, bevor ein neuer Präsident des Ortsrates das lokale Flüchtlingslager 2002 räumen ließ. In den Folgejahren verflüssigten sich die Grenzen zwischen serbischer Gemeinde und kroatischen bzw. bosnischen Flüchtlingen zusehends, weil ehemalige Flüchtlinge z.B. neue Familien gründeten, Häuser und Land im Dorf kauften, ein geregelteres Einkommen fanden und die serbische Staatsbürgerschaft beantragten. Doch die Grenze konnte auch wieder verhärten, wie der erweiterte Fall von Pero zeigte, der 2008-10 in einer dermaßen prekären Lage war, dass sein Nachbar Miro *Supervizor*, Ortsratsmitglied seit 2009, den Flüchtlingsdiskurs ï und mit diesem die humanitäre Ratio des āHelfen-Müssensóï wieder auf Pero anwendete. Zwei Jahre später wurde die Grenze erneut gezogen, als Pero begann Sozialhilfe zu beziehen. Von seinen Mitbürgern als ĂSozialfallñ betrachtet lief er nun verstärkt Gefahr, als selbstverschuldet an seiner Misere angeprangert zu werden und Nachbarschaftshilfe versagt zu bekommen. Die Verflüssigung und Verdichtung der Grenze kann somit zwar durch individuelles und Gruppenhandeln beeinflusst werden ï jedoch nicht beliebig.

Eine einmal gezogene Grenze konnte die āstaatlichen Handlungsweisenóï die dritte Achse meiner relationalen Anthropologie des Lokalstaates ï gegenüber einmal Ăgerahmtenñ Personen oder Gruppen nachhaltig beeinflussen. Unter staatlicher Handlungsweise verstehe ich, dem Protagonisten der Neuen Staatsanthropologie Akhil Gupta folgend, einen ñfocus on the modalities that enable the state (and, simultaneously that which is not the state) to be discursively constructed in a particular cultural and historical conjuncture [é] looking at everyday practices, including practices of representation, and the representations of state practice in public culture [é]ò (Gupta 2012, 106ï 7).

Während jedoch in der Neuen Staatsanthropologie seit Anfang der 2000er Jahre eine Vielfalt an sich recht einförmiger Staatsweisen aufgedeckt wurde, ist es m.E. inzwischen an der Zeit, die komplexen Interaktionen von mehreren Modalitäten in einem Politikfeld oder in einem institutionellen Rahmen zu untersuchen. Betrachten wir z.B. Peros Lebensweg im sozialpolitischen Feld, so fällt auf, dass er mindestens vier widersprüchliche Staatsweisen durchlief ï indem er als ĂAlkoholkrankerñ, Ăverlassener Ehemannñ, ĂFlüchtlingñ und ĂSozialfallñ firmierte. Ich möchte hier noch einmal darauf hinweisen, das örtliche Sozialpolitik

in dem Sinne relational zu verstehen ist, dass auch Bürger die keine staatlichen Offiziellen sind, die Sozialpolitik und die Soziale Sicherung ihrer Mitbürger nachhaltig beeinflussen können.

Die erste staatliche Modalität, die gegenüber einem Alkoholkranken zum Tragen kam, war eine gesundheitliche, der zufolge die psychiatrische Abteilung des Gemeindekrankenhauses eine Entziehungskur mit beschränkter Vor- und Nachsorge anbot. Im Dorf war eine Prävention weitgehend undenkbar und die dauerhafte Gesundheit, ja das Überleben eines alkoholkranken Alleinstehenden nicht gesichert, wie sowohl die Aussagen eines ehemaligen Ortsratspräsidenten als auch einer Sozialarbeiterin nahelegen. Ganz anders war die Sachlage in Bezug auf den betrogenen Ehemann ï eine (fast) rein private Angelegenheit, die allerdings das Mitleid mehrerer Frauen weckte, die sich um die Verpflegung Peros kümmerten. Das Bild des Flüchtlings ermöglichte eine mehrere Jahre dauernde Ähumanitäre Aktionñ, in welcher der Ortsrat unter anderem eine kostenlose Wohnung, aber auch regelmäßige bezahlte Arbeitsbeschaffungsmaßnahmen und mitunter sogar Feuerholz und Strom bereitstellte. Die Modalität des Sozialfalles schließlich erschien den Nachbarn als weniger der Hilfe wert, hatte sich hier doch das Zentrum für Sozialhilfe zu engagieren. Plötzlich war Pero unterschwellig Vorwürfen eines Ækorruptenñ Charakters ausgesetzt, wonach er selbst verschuldet die Nation um knappe Ressourcen brächte.

Für die involvierten Sozialarbeiter stellte sich dieselbe Situation hingegen anders dar. Innerhalb des Zentrums für Sozialarbeit hatte sich unter den Beschäftigten eine professionelle Lesart ï und staatliche Handlungsweise ï etabliert, welche die restriktive Sozialpolitik der 2000er Jahre anprangerte und davon ausging, dass die Mehrheit der ÆSozialfälleñ nichts für ihre Verarmung konnten, und mehr noch, mit der Sozialhilfe nicht aus dem Elend befreit wurden. Mit der Zeit bildete sich aber auch eine zweite, nicht vollständig kompatible Lesart heraus. So standen sich um 2011 eine inklusiv-umverteilende und die exklusiv-schützende staatliche Modalität gegenüber. Deren Konfrontation lässt sich besonders gut anhand der vergleichsweise gut ausgebauten Kinderschutzpolitik des Zentrums für Sozialarbeit untersuchen. Während die ältere staatliche Modalität der inklusiven Verteilung die Familien befähigen sollte, ihre Kinder besser zu erziehen und auszustatten, legte die jüngere Modalität des exklusiven Schutzes das Hauptaugenmerk auf das Wohl des Kindes ï wenn dieses in einer Familie nicht zu sichern war, sollte das Kind in einer besser geeigneten Familie aufwachsen. Der Wert der familiären Sorge an sich blieb aber in beiden Staatsweisen unangetastet. Familiensorge hatte im postsozialistischen Zeitraum eine Aufwertung erfahren ï teils als Folge nationalistisch-pronataler Diskurse, teils aus Gründen kostensparender, Æffizienterñ Kinderversorgung jenseits neoliberal-ideologisch abgewerteter staatlicher Heimplätze.

Was beide Modalitäten ebenso einigte war, dass sie im ursprünglichen Sinne des Gesetzes lokal durch Versuchs- und Irrtumsprozesse entstanden. Es war gerade nicht Misswirtschaft, die zu solchen Innovationen führten, wie Korruptionsklischees in der Staatsanthropologie (Gupta 2012; Smith 2008) vermuten lassen, sondern professioneller Eigensinn der Sozialarbeiter, der in Widerspruch zu bürokratischen Vorgaben stand (vgl. Lipsky 1980; Evans 2010).

Das Sozialrecht von 1991, noch im Sinne einer im Spätsozialismus propagierten humanistischen Grundausrichtung des Sozialarbeitsberufs geschrieben, hatte zum Ziel, den Umbau der sozialistischen zur kapitalistischen Gesellschaft durch Abfederung der erwarteten sozialen Härten zu begleiten. Verschärfungen der Anspruchsvoraussetzungen und Verringerungen der Unterstützungsleistung seit 2001 wurden als diesem Ziel entgegenstehende Neuerungen interpretiert, welche dementsprechend lax umgesetzt (Äunterimplementiertñ) wurden. Einige dem professionellen Eigensinn der Sozialarbeiter geschuldete Verbesserungen der Armenvorsorge schlugen sich sogar im neuen Gesetz von 2011 nieder. Gleichzeitig aber wurde 2011 der Sinn des Gesetzes bedeutend defensiver auf Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe zusammengedampft, Bezüge auf einen professionellen Humanismus gestrichen, und die Entfernung von Kindern aus der Familie und ihre Betreuung in Pflegefamilien vereinfacht. Einige jüngere Sozialarbeiter griffen diese Neuerungen auf und entwickelten eine eher individuell denn gruppenorientierte, liberal-humanistische Modalität, den exklusiven Schutz. Sie übererfüllten (überimplementierten) die neuen rechtlichen Möglichkeiten, wie ich anhand des Fallbeispiels einer verarmten Familie aus Upper Village schildere. Sie erklärten einen Notfall, um die Kinder aus einer Familie zu entfernen, bevor tatsächlich ein Notfall geschehen konnte. Zum Ende meiner Forschung (2013) erschien keine dieser beiden staatlichen (Handlungs-)weisen hegemonial, sie begegneten sich vielmehr in Interferenzen (gegenseitigem Auslöschen oder Verstärken).

Im abschließenden empirischen Kapitel 6 beschäftige ich mich schließlich mit einer Form der relationalen Staatstheorie, wie sie der Neo-Marxist Nicos Poulantzas (2000 [1978], 129, 132) skizzierte, als er bemerkte, dass der Staat ein Verhältnis sei (ÄThe State is a Relationñ). Damit spielte er auf die wirtschaftlichen, politischen und ideologischen Machtverhältnisse (sowie zunehmend die Macht sozialer Bewegungen) an, welche sich im Staat materiell verdichteten, wobei unterschiedliche staatliche Institutionen, Ministerien oder bürokratische Ränge durchaus Brückenköpfe für subalterne Interessen darstellen können. Seine relationale Perspektive hat jüngst eine diskursive Wende erfahren, der zufolge Institutionen strategisch-selektiv und Diskurse sprachlich-selektiv die Möglichkeitsräume des staatlichen wie gesellschaftlichen Handelns formen (vgl. DemiroviĹ 2007; Esser 2008; Jessop 2008).

Mit dem strategisch-selektiven Ansatz, meiner vierten Achse der relationalen Anthropologie des Staates, lassen sich einige frappant klar konturierte Diskurse in Serbien, welche einen schlechten bzw. ungenügenden Staat einer potentiell guten Familie gegenüberstellen, genauer analysieren. Die Dichotomie war so verbreitet, dass etwa Sozialarbeiter in Creek Town ihr neues Programm der staatlichen ambulanten Altenpflege mit deren Gegenteil ï dem Wert familiärer, häuslicher Sorge ï legitimierten. Die diskursiven Selektivitäten hingen einerseits mit den Verhandlungen des Nationalstaates mit internationalen Finanzakteuren wie dem Internationalen Währungsfonds zusammen. Die zunehmend semiperiphere Stellung Serbiens im transnationalen Wirtschafts- und Staatensystem ließ den Staat als zugleich relativ schwach und dennoch reformierbar erscheinen. Im Kontext von Privatisierungen, Deindustrialisierung und Retraditionalisierung von Geschlechterrollen war die Forderung nach einem schlankeren, effizienteren Staat aber problematisch, da die gesellschaftlichen Ressourcen zu einem Abfedern weiter eingeschränkter staatlicher Steuerungsfunktionen zunehmend aufgebraucht scheinen. Zudem bringt die Postulierung des serbischen Staates als ñoffenes Terrainò mit sich, dass der Staat per definitionem als schwach im Sinne von unempfänglich gegenüber gesellschaftlichen Impulsen dargestellt wird. Die eingeschlagene Verschlankung dürfte in einem Rückkopplungsprozess die postulierten Unfähigkeit des Staates eher verschärfen, wenn nicht hervorbringen. Sozialarbeiter wehrten sich, wie gesehen, gegen einige der problematischeren Folgen des Staatsrückbaus. Die oben beschriebene sozialistisch-humanistisch inspirierte Form der inklusiven Umverteilung entstand vor dem Hintergrund eines zunehmenden Arbeitsvolumens der Sozialarbeiter, welche mit eingefrorenem (und unterbesetztem) Personalschlüssel eine wachsende Anzahl an Sozialhilfeanträgen bearbeiteten. Sie regierten im Modus der inklusiven Distribution weniger durch Einengung der Hilfsbedürftigkeit der Antragstellenden (wie es das Gesetz vorsah), sondern durch eine zunehmend laxere Kontrolle der Vorschriften, wodurch sie tendenziell den Umfang der Hilfe für die Bedürftigen ausweiteten und gleichzeitig mehr Zeit für ihre eigene professionelle Sozialarbeit freisetzten.

Im abschließenden empirischen Kapitel wurde ein ähnlicher Übersetzungsvorgang zentralstaatlicher und transnationaler Vorgaben auch in der Konzeption und Umsetzung eines Altenpflegeprojektes deutlich. Im Rahmen der kostengünstigen, effizienten ambulanten Altenpflege wurden lokale Elemente āsozialer Tochterschaftó und āKaffee-Geselligkeitó eingebaut, welche die zeitaufspaltenden wie zeitsparenden Gedanken des Neuen Öffentlichen Managements unterlaufen (underimplement) und einen intimeren Zeit-Raum etablieren. Letzterer wird allerdings von den Nutzern weniger als staatliches denn als familiäres Moment wahrgenommen ï nur wenn die Pflegeprozesse als weniger erfolgreich oder

bereichernd empfunden wurden, betonten die Beteiligten den staatlichen Aspekt ihrer Interaktion.

Im Fazit der Dissertation führe ich die Diskussionsstränge noch einmal zusammen. Dabei argumentiere ich, dass meine Forschung einen Beitrag zu den regionalen Debatten europäischer und postsozialistischer Anthropologie leistet. Darüber hinaus erweist sich meine Methode einer kreuzperspektivischen Überlagerung von vier Analyseebenen aber zugleich als relationale Weiterentwicklung der staatsanthropologischen Diskussion. In einer zunehmend als weniger planbar erfahrenen Welt sollte eine gebündelte sozialwissenschaftliche Methode, welche es komparativ erleichtert die Einbettung der staatlichen Akteure, interne Grenzziehungen an der Schnittstelle zwischen Staat und Gesellschaft und die Aushandlungen staatlicher Handlungsweisen im Rahmen strategischer (diskursiver wie institutioneller) Selektivitäten des Lokalstaats zu analysieren, auf gesteigertes Interesse stoßen.

Contents

List of figures

Notes on orthography and language

In the process of field research, my proficiency of the Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian (BCMS) language improved. While in the field, I used the English-Serbian/Serbian-English dictionary by the Institute for Foreign Languages (*Institute za strane jezike*), Belgrade (Ignjatic 2008). I kept my diary notes predominantly in German. They reflect the respective level of language proficiency when noted down.

The translations of notes and interviews into English are mine. When preparing these, I oriented myself on the Standard Englishï SerboCroatian, SerboCroatianï English Dictionary by Morton Benson (1998).

Where BCMS terms are given in original, I use italics. Widely known geographical terms are rendered in their English version and without italics (Belgrade instead of *Beograd*). BCMS are phonetic languages, i.e. a letter roughly equals a phoneme. A phonemeôs pronunciation is typically similar to German, and only exceptionally similar to English usage, as in:

v	vine [vajn]
z	zoo [zu:]

Consonants with diacritical signs are pronounced as follows:

Í	ciao [Í ao]
ļ	cheese [ļ ijz]
Ľ	George [Ľo:Ľ]
dģ	June [dģun]
ģ	show [ģou]
ģ	regime [riôģijm]

Selected abbreviations

AFŽ	*Antifašistički Front Žena* (Antifascist Women's Front). A socialist Women's organisation since WWII, discontinued after 1991
AGROKOMERC	Fikret Abdić's West-Bosnian agricultural and food processing combine, (PIK), insolvent in 1987 (see APBW, PIK)
APWB	Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia (1993-5)
B92	Belgrade based TV station with a Pro-EU profile (formerly an oppositional radio station during Milošević's rule)
CRDA	Community Revitalization through Democratic Action program,
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSW	Centre for Social Work (*Centar za Socijalni Rad*)
D	Diary notes
DFID	Department for International Development, the UK Agency for Development Cooperation
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DS	*Demokratska Stranka* (Democratic Party), re-founded in 1989, in opposition to Milošević's SPS. Part of DOS 2000-3. Party leader, and President 2004-12 was Boris Tadić.
DOS	*Demokratska Opozicija Srbije* (Democratic Opposition of Serbia) Alliance of initially 18 parties which won the 2000 elections against Milošević. Dissolved in 2003.
DSS	*Demokratska Stranka Srbije* (Democratic Party of Serbia), conservative party founded in 1992. Fraction of DOS. Broke away from the coalition government in 2001. Leader: Vojislav Koštunica.
EU	European Union
FK	*Fudbalski Klub* (Football Club) of Lower Village
G17plus	economic-liberal party founded in 2002, renamed URS in 2013. Part of most coalition governments. Leader since 2006 was Mlađan Dinkić.
GIZ	*Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (German Agency for Development Cooperation)
GRADAC	Communal authority for planning and constructing local roads
GDR	German Democratic Republic
I	Interview
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons, category of refugeeness used for people fleeing the Bosnian and Crotian wars within their respective republics
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International NGO
JEN	Japan Emergency NGOs
JNA	*Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija* (Yugoslav People's Army), formed out of the *Partizan* Army in 1944
JUL	*Jugoslovenska Udružena Levica* (United Left), party of Mira Marković, the wife of Slobodan Milošević. In coalition with his SPS in the 1990s.
KfW	*Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*, German development bank
KOMUNALAC	Communal Works authority for pipe construction
KWNS	Keynesian Welfare National State
MWSP	*Ministarstvo za rad, zapošljavanje i socijalnu politiku* (Ministry of Work, Employment and Social Policy)
MOP	*Materijalno Obezbeđenje Porodice i Pojedinca* (material securitization

	of the family and the individual), the major means-tested social benefit
MZ	*Mesna Zajednica* (Local Community), sub-unit of a Municipality
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NO	*Narodni Odbor* (Peopleôs Committee), local self-government after 1943
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PIK	*Poljoprivredni Industrijski Kombinat* (Agro-Industrial combine), vertically integrated agricultural and food processing industry
PQ	Preliminary Questionnaire, administered in January 2010
PUPS	*Partija ujedinjenih penzionera Srbije* (Party of the United Pensioners of Serbia), regular coalition partner with the SPS
RLI	Rhodes-Livingstone Institute for Social Research, present-day Zambia
RTS1	*Radio-Televizija Srbije 1* (First Public Broadcasting Station of the Republic of Serbia)
RZS	*Republ*ǐ*ki Zavod za Statistiku,* Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia
SDA	*Stranka Demokratske Akcije* (Party of Democratic Action), Bosnian-Muslim Party
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, (*Socialisti*ǐ*ka Federativna Republika Jugoslavija*), 1945/63-1991
SIF	Social Innovation Fund, financed social work projects 2002-10
SMZ	*Savet Mesne Zajednice* (Council of the Local Community), short: Local Council; an elected, volunteer-based regular subunit of self-government (Municipalities and *gradovi*) since 1974
SNS	*Srpska Napredna Stranka* (Serbian Progressive Party), populist-conservative party founded in 2008 as a splinter party of the SRS, in a coalition government with the SPS since 2012. Led by Tomislav NikoliĆ and Aleksandar VuǰiĆ.
SPS	S*ocijalisti*ǐ*ka Partija Srbije* (Socialist Party of Serbia) successor to the Communist party, led by Slobodan Miloġeviđ between 1986/90-2006, by Iviva DaǰiĆ since then.
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRS	*Srpska Radikalna Stranka* (Serbian Radical Party), a nationalist-extremist party founded in 1991 by Vojislav Ġeġelj.
SWPR	Schumpeterian Workfare Postnational Regime
TDP	Temporarily Displaced Persons, category for displacement used for persons that were displaced during/after the Kosovo-conflict
tI	transcribed Interview
TNP	*Tu*ǈ*a Nega i Pomoć* (care money for another person), obtained by persons attested above 90 percent disability by a medical commission
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
URS	*Ujedinjeni Regioni Srbije* (United Regions of Serbia), successor party of G17plus (2013-4), dissolved.
USAID	United States Agency of International Development
WB	World Bank

Introduction

> [G]overnmental policy is continually constructed out of accelerations and breakings, about-turns, hesitations, and changes of course. This is not due to a native incapacity of bourgeois representatives and top-level personnel, but is the necessary expression of the structure of the State (Poulantzas 2000 [1978], 136).

On 29 March 2010, the two-day Serbian decentralization conference started, sponsored by international donors such as the OSCE. It took place in the prestigious ófFormer Parliament of the Republicô building in Belgrade. In the morning, the plenary room was packed with an audience of some 200, a third of which were journalists. Microphones dotted the high table that was overshadowed by the óSerbian eagle,ôthe national coat of arms. The solid wooden panelled wall behind was draped with red-blue-white ensigns. Of the numerous welcoming speeches, the biggest stir was caused by the address of Boris TadiĆ, the charismatic president of Serbia and leader of the social-liberal Democratic Party (DS). The President assessed that decentralisation was one of the greatest challenges for the Serbian society that was haunted by depopulation in rural areas and a lack of resources even in the capital. The process should not be ñpoliticised,ò but should include all institutions and involve all citizens economically, concerning infrastructure, and ñin all other aspects.ò It would take decades to accomplish decentralisation, as Serbia could neither hark back to Yugoslav approaches nor adopt ready-made EU solutions. Following this address, TadiĆ posed for the cameras, and then he and most journalists left the room.

A short time later MlaĽan DinkiĆ, the burly, energetic, but not-so-popular Minister of Economics and Regional Development, and leader of the economic-liberal party G17plus, took the microphone. DinkiĆ presented a vision in which a pro-European, democratic, and ñwholeò Serbia handed over ever more power to its local self-governments. Thus, he argued, the state could ñcome closerò to its people and answer their needs directly, without too much bureaucracy. He went even further and announced the upcoming relocation of national ministries to regional centres of the country. His Ministry of Economy and Regional Development would take the lead by moving to the city of Kragujevac.

This provoked reactions of mild disbelief in the audience. I was sitting next to the young Serbian OSCE staff that had helped to prepare the conference. Early in the morning they had expressed their delight that President TadiĆ had found time to attend, even though he had only

cautiously embraced the agenda. By now, they quietly worried whether Dinkiĺ ôs overly flamboyant endorsement of decentralization might mean the premature end of it. During the following hours, jam-packed with expert presentations, I wondered about the startling parallels between how the highest echelons of the government and the ordinary citizens complained about the finance strapped state, unresponsive bureaucracy, and its distance to the population. Throughout my fieldwork in Central Serbia, I had repeatedly heard my interlocutors talking about similar issues, albeit from a local perspective.

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Four months earlier, on the cold evening of 6 December 2009, my friend Tomo (b. 1986) had fetched me in his second-hand Audi limousine for a short ride up my village neighbourhood.[1] Tomo quickly exchanged some greetings with my landlords, to whom he was related on the paternal line, then we left. 300 metres uphill, where the asphalted section of the road ended, we parked in front of the compound where our common friend Darko (b. 1982) lived with his family. We were invited into the main house and sat with Darko, his father Mirko (b. 1954), and his mother Bilja (b. 1952) around the living room table. Darkoôs paternal grandfather Ivan (b. 1932), and his disabled aunt Ceca (b. 1962) (the old manôs daughter) sat on the couch, watched TV, and listened in. Over homemade plum brandy (*rakija*) and slices of smoked ham (*pr***ġ***uta*) my friends passed the time by sharing stories about the unwillingness of the state to care for the population. While Mirko, the bus driver of Lower Village, regaled us with anecdotes about local health officials ripping of their patients, Tomo regularly interjected popular expressions like ñThis country is decaying!ò or ñThis country totally fell apart!ò[2]

When it was Tomoôs turn, he related the story of one of his grandfathers, who had gone with some problem to the hospital in River City, where the surgeons decided to operate on his prostate. Although the medical system was in principle free, he paid ú 100 for the surgery, but the ailment did not subside. So he returned, was cut up again for ú 100, only to be told that there had actually been no problem with the prostate, but with the bladder. This time he was taken to Belgrade and soundly operated, paying ú 500 on the side. Without batting an eye, Mirko commented: ñWell, what does an old man need a prostate for, he can pee sitting.ò Mirkoôs wife and father looked slightly consternated, although they were used to his dark humour. We younger ones smiled ï the joke could also be understood as being at Mirkoôs expense. Already close to retirement as a bus driver, and the father of two working sons who were expected to

[1] Toponyms and individual names have been anonymized to guarantee the confidentiality of my informants.
[2] ñ*Ova zemlja propada*/*Ova zemlja je propala skroz*ò For a reading of these metaphors see Rajkoviĺ (2015, 71).

marry and give him grandchildren, Mirko was overdue to succeed his old father as head of the household. Mirko therefore hardly counted as a óyoung man.ô In order to make good on the derisory quip on Ivan, Mirko began to praise the immense patience and slyness with which *his* óold manô always got something out of the bureaucracy. Mirko recounted how Ivan had made it a habit every time he went to town to stop by at the various state agencies. He annoyed them (*dosaĐuje*) until they helped ï if Ivan had a request and was told to return in two weeks, he went back in three days, lest they told him the next time to come in four weeks. Ivan smiled and countered: Mirko, you are annoying (*ti si dosadan*).[3]

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These two vignettes offer two perspectives of the same issue ï how to make the apparently uncaring state bureaucracy responsive. The Minister and party leader MlaĐan DinkiĆ embraced decentralisation as a novel form of democratisation that facilitated the contact with and support of the citizens, startling his public in the conference hall. The aged farmer Ivan JankoviĆ, at the other end of the political pecking order, enervated local state officials hoping to overcome their red tape, indifference, and lack of care. Neither of them stopped at the invocation of a ñsecular theodicyò that some Greek citizens used to explain a ótimelessô bureaucratic disinterestedness (Herzfeld 1998, 3ï10, chap.5). The upper and the lower end of the political spectrum were wrestling with the same problem of the Local State.

The problem of the local state

Combining the two seemingly contradictory terms ólocalô and óstate,ô the critical community researcher Cynthia Cockburn (1977, 363) drew attention to the class reproductive character of participatory and community management approaches in local government and ñthe local presence of central state agenciesò (see Mowbray 2016). Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan recently provided an anthropological take on it: ñAmong interface bureaucrats [é], those who work outside the capital and who make up what might be called *the ólocal stateô* or the óstate at the local levelô are even more of an unknown quality. They are the state agents installed in the local arenaò (Olivier de Sardan 2014, 403, emphasis added). While the state operates at the local level both in the capital and beyond, as Cockburnôs case study from London showed, I concur

[3] Ivan repeatedly received subsidies for his agricultural family business (from the Municipal Department for Economic Development), care allowance (from the Centre for Social Work), and since his wifeôs death a family pension for his disabled daughter (by the Municipal branch of the Serbian Pension Fund). Indeed, a municipal agricultural advisor remembered the grandfather well, but she had no nice words to spare on the subject.

with Olivier de Sardan that ñ[i]n a local arena, institutions and actors, bound by ómultiplexô relationships (Gluckman 1955), confront one another almost óphysicallyôò (ibid).

During my field research the discursive emphasis on strengthening the local state as a means to democratize the country opened up several ambiguities. Calls for decentralisation tended to obscure, rather than elucidate the local stateôs actual workings. Was it really as weak and needy of reform as the conference speakers in the first entry vignette stated? Or, was it generally as corrupt, incompetent, and disinterested as Tomo, Mirko, and Ivan assumed? As both vignettes suggest, the current emphasis on decentralization was related to international policy advice as much as to the social fact that the population felt disenfranchised from ñpoliticsò and demanded an end to social insecurity. What that means is that, despite the importance of all the arguments about the pros and cons of decentralisation, accountability, and democratisation of the state, what interested citizens most was their own social security. This needs to be kept in mind when we ask how the local councils and municipalities related to DinkiĆôs plans for democratization and his cautious disavowal of a renewed wave of marketization (see below). Social security questions shadowed how the interface bureaucrats of ministerial branches interacted with the citizenry over years of spending cuts and hiring freezes. Social security issues informed what the citizens, and the state agents, wished, demanded from, criticised, praised, and did about the workings of the local state. So, were there other modalities than Ivanôs nagging and the bureaucratôs annoyance? In this thesis I will focus on these seemingly mundane but relevant political issues that are too often ignored by political science and political sociology.

The politics of decentralisation

While the recent political emphasis on decentralization in Serbia has resulted in an upsurge of publications on the topics of ñstate accountabilityò and ñstate responsibility,ò the authors tended to legitimise liberal democratization discourses (cf. Péteri 2008; PavloviĆ KrizaniĆ 2008; VukeliĆ 2009). To develop a practice based analysis of the local state, I took note of but distanced myself from this literature. To query how the calls for more decentralization met with other practices of the state, I collected case studies from two areas of local state responsibility. The provision of infrastructure, and welfare, which I investigated, lay at the heart of what Serb citizens considered important state activity. My ethnographic focus on these showed that the local state was influenced but not determined by current decentralization discourse. Where connected terms like ñtransparency,ò ñresponsibility,ò ñeffectivenessò etc. were indeed negotiated by strategic groups (Evers and Schiel 1988), they could be used both to reproduce

and to alter existing local state relations. I also asked, however, which less mediatised discourses and moral economies were relevant.

I will argue that the relational and often agonistic aspects of local politics shaped the state. They sometimes contradicted even the most powerful political mode, ñmarket making as state makingò (Bruszt 2002). As anthropologists, we are in a good position to observe how everyday relational modalities of local politics shape societal processes and often engender unexpected outcomes (Thelen, Vetters, and von Benda-Beckmann 2014). We can unearth how everyday spaces, subjectivities, institutions, moralities, and practices sometimes even generate counter trends to neoliberal state disinvestment, e.g. welfare state expansion under post-socialism (see Thelen and Read 2007). Where such ótransversalô moments were precisely located and how they were produced depended on the societal context. Arguably, even in countries in which state formation had been very scarce, fragmented and dispersed, like in the rural Central African Republic, the local state had tangible effects on societal change (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan 1997). Where the web of state relations was denser (though no less fragmented), as in Serbia, the contradictions of society were frequently mediated precisely by what has been called the óstreet level bureaucracyô (Lipsky 1980; Evans 2010). The outcomes of such mediations in local state relations were underdetermined ï wherever multiple contradictions are being waged between different forces, outcomes are uncertain (see Clarke et al. 2015, 53ï 4). One possible trend was the reproduction or aggravation of inequalities through local state mediation.[4] The contrasting possibility was that the neo-capitalist, liberal revolution would be ñdomesticated,ò as happened with its socialist precursor (Creed 1998).

Scales of the state

This study inquires how diverse local state relations informed and were transformed by underdetermined situations.[5] In short, it asks what the local state is (and is not). How is the local state produced, challenged, reproduced, and changed? How does it affect the population, and how does the population affect it? I argue that the local state encompasses all those instances of the state ï state actors, state institutions, state projects, state infrastructures, and state practices ï whose effects are tangible in the locality being researched. My perspective bears on the radical geography approach to scales of the state developed by Neil Brenner (1999) and fed

[4] In Francoist Spain, the local state performed, reproduced and deepened prevailing local power asymmetries (see Narotzky and Smith 2006, 56ï 74). On the reproduction of hierarchies by the local state in post-socialist Eastern Europe, see Thelen et al. (2011).

[5] By emphasizing the openness of the political process, I respond to the desideratum of an ñanthropology of hope and the stateò (Jansen 2009b). I provide a detailed discussion of my relational approach in Chapter One.

into broader anthropological debates, e.g. by Michel-Rolphe Trouillot (2001). Looking at the relationships among the diverse scales of the state from the perspective of the locale, however, allows me to complicate the assumed hierarchies.

According to the paradigm Brenner derived from Henri Lefebvre (2009b), a scale of the state is a level of abstraction of state responsibility over a certain territory. These ñterritorialitiesò are imagined to be hierarchically ordered, with typically four levels of the state being legally delimited ï the trans-national, national, regional and local scale. In the Serbian case it is paramount to look also at a fifth, supra-local scale of the state made up of the Local Councils. Each scale differs from the others in scope of activity and relevance: the higher the scale the more all-encompassing its flows and powers are imagined. Approaching these scales from the bottom-up perspective, I focus on their inter-relation and inter-causality. A bottom up perspective reveals that lower scales may generate more intensive and effective local infra-activities than higher scales. Besides, it elucidates that the scales of the state do not exist in their ideal form of concentric circles nesting one in the other ï scales overlap differently in each locality (see Ferguson and Gupta 2002). For instance, in central localities we find intense interaction of tightly overlapping state scales.

Conversely, in peripheral locations state scales often overlap much more patchily, with certain effects like decreased intra-scale interactions or ï conversely ï social mobilization to heighten interactions.[6] Social actors may attempt to jump up scales, e.g. grass roots activists,[7] or down to lower scales, e.g. trans-national corporations. If successful, their political and economic projects connect state scales that would be kept mediated, or even distinct, in a more static-hierarchical paradigm (Ferguson and Gupta 2002, 998, fn. 4). Moreover, local scales from disparate state spaces can be directly linked horizontally without engaging with ñhigher upò state scales, a phenomenon called ñwormholesò by Kaneff (2013) following Sheppard (2002).[8]

Therefore, state projects are not simply descending the hierarchy from top to bottom. Rather, state projects can be understood as ñtravelling modelsò which move along chains of translations up, down and sideways until both model and reality have changed each other (Behrends, Rottenburg, and Park 2014). Put succinctly, the local state is a flexible and open social space

[6] Centre and periphery are relational categories. Thus, what may be deemed peripheral from the transnational perspective, may be deemed central from a regional perspective. Borderlands can be ñperipheralò from the perspective of the capital, but the overlap with scales from a distinct nation state can have curious effects (Obeid 2010). Recent debate on ñmarginal hubsò seeks to address some of the issues (Marsden and Reeves 2015).
[7] Grassroots activism is not necessarily couched in a liberal political idiom, e.g. ñcivil society,ò and is therefore too easily dismissed, as Creed (2011) argued in his analysis of post-socialist mumming rituals in Bulgaria.
[8] One wormhole connecting parallel local scales may be trans-national rural-to-rural home ownership. Thus, the country folk of the English Midlands own property in a north-Bulgarian rural backwater (Kaneff 2013).

which incorporates the concrete-complex, contradictory and often asymmetrical assembly of all the state scales present in a specific locale

Inhabiting decentralization

Throughout my 2009-10 fieldwork in Central Serbia, the Minister of Economics and Regional Development, MlaĐan DinkiĆ, was one of the most travelled and media-present, but also most loathed national politicians. In the decade following the ousting of MiloġeviĆ in 2000 by the liberal órevolutionô (Greenberg 2014), DinkiĆ had propagated and organised the privatization of social property as a means to bring economic recovery. His strategy, however, led to rising inequality and insecurity of the population. It caused the dismantling of most big industrial complexes,[9] and made productive growth unlikely, thereby contributing to what has provocatively been called the ñdesert of post-socialismò (S. Horvat and Ġtiks 2015).

Such an intellectual-activist description was mild in comparison to how members of the working classes remembered DinkiĆôs privatisation. My host, the pensioned bus driver and part-time farmer Slavo JankoviĆ (born 1947) referred to DinkiĆ often simply as the ñthiefò (*lopov*).[10] He also called DinkiĆ a ñbig liarò (*laġovġina*) for the broken promise from the 2008 election campaign that óheô would pay ú 1000 to every citizen from privatization proceedings. Some observers were convinced by 2010 that DinkiĆ was fighting for his political survival.[11] Therefore, on a first level of interpretation DinkiĆôs recent endorsement of the decentralization discourse can be interpreted as an attempt to legitimate his fledgling party.

Furthermore, in River City the local branch of DinkiĆôs G17plus also controlled the municipal health sector, so that the circulating stories about mistreatment and corruption in óHealthô lowered the local esteem of his party, too. For Tomo and Mirko, the practices they had discussed in the second entry vignette seemed almost directly tied to DinkiĆôs strategy of state dis-investment. As I followed the fortunes of the local branch of G17plus, I observed how it also fought to maintain political support (see Chapter Two). In fact, I argue that the fluctuating fortunes of G17plus can provide us with an illuminating case of the political struggles in Serbia since the end of socialism.

For the Socialist Republic of Serbia, the beginning of the end had come by the second half of the 1980s, when Slobodan MiloġeviĆ consecutively usurped all power centres by

[9] The official privatization policy of the 2000s can be understood as a ñsecond wave of privatizationò after a first, semi-official privatization wave during the 1990s. Ironically, what was presented as a clean break with the past was rather its continuation with other means (Vetta 2011, 45ï 51). Today, except for strategically important military production and rare prestige industries like Zastava/Fiat, industrial production in Serbia has waned.
[10] Savo was probably oblivious of the fact that he echoed Proudhonôs dictum that ñ[private] property is theft!ò
[11] I thank Slobodan NaumoviĆ for sharing this observation.

orchestrating mass protests against the ôbureaucratisationô and self-interestedness of his own League of Communistsô old nomenclature (VladisavljeviÍ 2008). Serbiaôs strongman throughout the 1990s, MiloġeviÍ presided over and pushed for the dissolution of Yugoslavia, involving several wars, an economic embargo, hyper-inflation, and the introduction of wild capitalism (Sundhaussen 2012, 244ï 66). The majority of the bewildered population was deeply impoverished in the process (BajiÍ-HajdukoviÍ 2014), and the 1990s appeared to them as a ôSerbian Dreamtime,ô in which obscure elite machinations left them stuck in space and time (M. ÇivkoviÍ 2011).

On 5 October 2000, a ôliberal revolutionô overturned MiloġeviÍ. A heterogeneous group of political leaders from 15 parties took power and raised hopes for a ñnormalizationò of the situation.[12] However, within two and a half years these hopes were squashed by the results of the application of neoliberal economic wisdom, political compromise with parts of the old regime, and the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran ņinĽiÍ in 2003.[13] In a recent monograph, Jessica Greenberg (2014) detailed how former revolutionary student activists struggled to develop a ñpolitics of disillusionmentò in the post-revolutionary moment. While some of their attempts succeeded, the students did not manage to turn their social movement *Otpor* (resistance), into a political party.[14]

G17plus was another liberal revolutionary fraction, but it pupated more successfully. Until 2002 it had been a club of initially 17 Belgrade based economists and historians who had worked for some time abroad (in ñthe Westò). After 2000, several club members made careers in the DS, others ascended to the highest state and international positions while staying ñpolitically independent.ò[15] In 2002 a subgroup succeeded in founding the G17plus-party, which passed the five percent threshold to form an electoral list of representation. Launched as an ostensibly apolitical expert party, the G17plus participated as a junior partner in most subsequent coalitions. In 2006, the new leader of G17plus became the already familiar economist MlaĽan DinkiÍ, a former Director of the Serbian Central Bank (2000-03), then Finance Minister (2004-07, 2012-13), and Minister of Economics and Regional Development (2008-11, 2012-13). DinkiÍ, whose hobby was playing and composing rock music, positioned

[12] The main political options were social-liberal, liberal conservative, nationalist conservative and social fascist. The three nominally social-democratic parties, including TadiÍôs DS, were neither very social nor particularly democratic. No New Left or democratic-socialist party existed prior to 2015.
[13] ņinĽiÍ was executed by criminals aligned to fractions of the armed forces.
[14] While the studentsô larger hopes for an emancipatory societal transformation diminished, they acquired ñdemocratic expertiseò and adopted procedural democracy e.g. within student politics and civil society activism (Greenberg 2014, 1ï 12).
[15] Their portfolios included the Ministries of Trade, of Health, the Prime Minister, jobs in IMF missions, etc.

himself as a man ñin tuneò with his middle-aged, pro-Western urban electorate, and as a *maher* (agent of progress) by aligning with international political trends.

During G17plusô years in shared power, tropes of ñdemocracyò and ñmarket reformò were central to the political agenda. In seven coalition governments after 2000, all available political options were combined in often short-lived combinations, without fundamentally altering the central dual coordinates. Market reforms ï sometimes more so than democracy ï stood high on the agenda of international donors (like the WB, the IMF, or the EU) and were translated through ñtrans-identitiesò of economic experts allied to these international organizations and to domestic parties like G17plus.[16] However, market reforms quickly proved immensely unpopular, as they fuelled a second round of social dispossessions. In early 2010, DinkiĆ grasped the new agenda of decentralization, hoping to displace the resulting political grievances. During the months following the OSCEôs National Decentralization Conference, DinkiĆ put his full political acumen behind it. Already by May 2010 he turned G17plus into the core of a new political coalition with the programmatic title ñUnited Regions of Serbiaò (URS). In effect he started campaigning two years before the next scheduled elections. Wherever possible DinkiĆ began to publicly embrace the cause of the regions against an allegedly too powerful city of Belgrade. He argued that the decentralization of the state would bring proper democratization. For instance, in one TV interview DinkiĆ maintained that ñdecentralization really is democratization,ò because

> not one person decides ï whether president of the state, prime minister, or the president of a big party ï about the fate of millions of people, but the people themselves choose their representatives directly at the elections, and these [the locally elected politicians] have to answer to them [the people] for the condition of their local community (*u njihovoj mesnoj zajednici*) [and] municipality (*opštini*) [é] (ôTajna MlaĎana DinkiĆ aô 2011).

While still aligning Serbia with European trends, DinkiĆ discursively dissociated his politics from privatisation and realigned it with democratization. But the new project of decentralisation could not engender profound structural change. Thus, instead of moving the Ministry of Economics and Regional Development to Kragujevac, as he had initially promised, only the Agency of Unemployment ï one of a dozen branches of the ministry ï moved its headquarters there in 2011. The Agency was placed in the same office building in Kragujevac where previously its branch (*filijala*) had been located. Not a single new job was created, as a news report (approvingly) emphasized (*Večernje Novosti* 2011).

[16] ñTrans-actorsò in international relations between Western donors and East European countries come into being when ña very few pivotal people on both donor and recipient sidesò have formed ñone group, that, working as a unit, played a decisive role in making and executing policyò (Wedel 1998, 191). In developing this social type, Wedel cited examples of neo-capitalist policy making in Russia in the early 1990s dominated by the Chubais-clan-Harvard-boys-group, in contrast to Poland where relations of influence and mutual adaption predominated.

However, though Dinkiĺ ôs decentralization reform had little impact on the local job market, at least this meant that no jobs had been shed. Dinkiĺ had changed his economic vision. He had once fully embraced successive waves of marketization of state prerogatives, but now he leaned towards a more Keynesian economics. For instance, while in the years of relative financial abundance after 2000 his party had initiated public employment moratoriums which burdened the health and social workers (see Chapters Two and Five), Dinkiĺ now steadfastly resisted the reduction of public jobs in his negotiations with the IMF. What political purchase had Dinkiĺ from this *volte-face*? Because he increasingly attacked the internationally promulgated austerity measures also favoured by his coalition partner DS, Tadiĺ dismissed him from office in February 2011.[17] In the regular elections of May 2012, however, the DS lost its relative majority in the cabinet to the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), which had campaigned on a conservative-populist critique of liberal state transformation.[18] As Tadiĺ ôs DS went into opposition and began to fall apart, Dinkiĺ and his URS/G17plus were invited to join the new coalition. Dinkiĺ thus had a most splendid comeback as minister of both Finance and of Economy and Regional Development. He pledged to curb inflation and to initiate a new IMF Standby Agreement (which had been frozen since January 2012) without reducing government spending.

In 2013, just as Dinkiĺ announced the amalgamation of G17plus into URS, the ruling coalition revoked their cooperation. URS started as an opposition party, and the streamlined coalition of SNS and SPS announced public sector cuts of pensions and public salaries by 15 per cent, in compliance with EU policies (Fuster 2014). After only lukewarm protest against these austerity measures by the syndicates, snap elections were surprisingly called for 16 March 2014, which strengthened the ruling coalition. This time, URS could not even overcome the election threshold. Before Dinkiĺ retired from politics, he recommended once again that the government desisted from a policy of ñtightening oneôs beltò (*Politika* 2014).[19]

Towards the end of his political carrier, MlaĐan Dinkiĺ, ñthe best musician among politicians and the best politician among musiciansò according to a popular TV satirist (Kesiĺ 2014), began to cater to the popular interest in a living wage.[20] His (and his partyôs) repositioning exemplified how democratic representatives sometimes change their politics to accommodate public

[17] However, G17plus stayed in the government until the next national elections, and continued campaigning.
[18] President Tadiĺ also lost his presidency to the conservative incumbent.
[19] This advice was not heeded; the new coalition seems set to enforce austerity measurements. Meanwhile, URS has been dismantling.
[20] In Central Serbia it was seen as a great advantage for the social security if a family member worked in permanent local state employment. The local state offered higher salaries, and better regulated working hours and social security benefits than the private sector. Acquiring local state jobs involved whole networks of family, friends and other acquaintances ñon and off state.ò State employment, clearly, needed to be understood as the outcome of actions of local state officials embedded in wider relations (see Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann 1998).

opinion against trans-national counter pressure. The impact of mundane, locally circumscribed recalcitrance on national politics cannot be overestimated. My point is akin to the argument of the agonistic theory of democracy, according to which struggle, more than procedure, is a sine qua non for democratic outcomes (Mouffe 2013). While agonistic democracy theory valorises the spectacular visibility of social movements in shaping democracy, I add that the everyday, local forms of political engagement, recalcitrance and waywardness also transform the local state. Before I can go into an in-depth study, I will first outline the research field in the following pages.

The research field

I represent my research field by zooming down from the trans-national to the supra-local scale of the state. I will show how each scale was made up of diverse flows that combined internal negotiations and external interventions. I do not attempt to enumerate the complexity of interactions but provide for each scale a glimpse of those organizations with immediate effects on the local state relations that I investigate in the empirical chapters.

Trans-national organizations and movements

In 2006 Serbia became the sole legal successor of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). The SFRY (1945-1991) had enjoyed international prestige for straddling the East-West divide, i.e. for being a founding member of the post-colonial Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). NAM (like Yugoslavia) lost its constructive transnational role in the wake of the Cold War (see Gupta 1992). Many people still vividly remember the days when their ñred passportò had ñput Yugoslavia on the map,ò when they could travel freely to wherever they wanted and consume as they pleased (Jansen 2009a).

This freedom of movement came to an end with the beginning of the Yugoslav wars (1991ï 1995, 1999), when sanctions were imposed on Yugoslavia by the United Nations. The ensuing travel limitations for Serb citizens by the EU remained in force until 2009. The EU also more directly influenced political relations in Serbia. As a precondition for future EU membership, it imposed its ñharmonization of legislationò towards the *aquis communautaire*: ñTo become a [EU] member, each country must meet four EU-defined political conditions (establishing a rule of law, supporting democracy, recognizing human rights, and protecting minorities), and one economic condition: the creation of an internationally viable market economyò (Wedel 1998, 195). This conditionality went hand in hand with public EU accession metaphors of the

ñjourneyò into the common ñhouseò and the reunion with the European ñfamilyò (PetroviĆ 2015).

Other organisations like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have also long been active in the region. The UNôs Bretton-Woods organizations like the WB and the IMF had especially significant influence on liberal economic policy formulation since the 1960s and the creeping semi-peripheral debt dependency since the 1970s (A. ĢivkoviĆ 2015). Since the 1990s, a locally active UN organization has been the refugee agency UNHCR, which in collaboration with international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) like the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) ran refugee camps for families displaced after the Yugoslav secession wars, working in cooperation with the Serbian Centres for Social Work (*Centri za Socijalni Rad*, CSW). UNHCR and DRC also aided former refugees in building family homes and provided micro-credits for prospective small entrepreneurs.

Other active INGOs in Serbia were the American USAID, British DFID, German KfW, or Norwegian NORAD. Their support of municipal infrastructure projects enticed the head of the Department for Local Economic Development of River City to lump them under the umbrella term ñforeign donorsò (I, 17 August 2010). DFID and NORAD also significantly restructured the national organization of social work, making it more bureaucratic and less proactive (see Chapter Five), while putting a premium on creative short-term project development to the detriment of long-term service funding (see Chapter Six). In the entry vignette from the National Decentralization conference I showed how the OSCE influenced the national discourse.

National Government and Ministries

Serbia is today a semi-peripheral Southeast European state, outside of international organizations like the EU or NATO, and surrounded by eight nation states that are similarly weak economically.[21] The Parliamentary election cycle is every four years by general, direct, free and secret ballot, but the duration of Serbian governments has been two years on average.

In 2014 Serbia had 16 national ministries, several of which had branches in the Local Self-government territories. Importantly for my discussion in the Chapters Four to Six, the Ministry of Work, Employment, and Social Policy (MWSP)[22] regulated, supervised and co-financed the

[21] The Republic of Serbiaôs territory is indicated with 77,000 km², excluding Kosovo (11,000 km²). The population consists of 7.15 million, of which more than one million live in the capital city Belgrade (RZS 2010, 46ï 66).
[22] In 2014, the Ministry was renamed into ñMinistry for Work, Employment, Disabled Ex-service Men and Social Questions.ò For reasons of simplicity, and because my field research was finished in September 2013, I retain the erstwhile title of the ministry throughout the thesis.

CSW at the local state level. The Ministry also managed the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) between 2002 and 2010. SIF was an UNDP ñinspiredò and internationally funded programme which sponsored local social work projects in public-private partnerships (Vetta 2009, 37ï 8). It was unclear whose interests the SIF represented ï the social workers complained about ñchanging donor preferences,ò which often misidentified local needs (see also Chapter Five).

Figure 1: Position of the research area in the wider field

Local Self-Government

My research area lay 120 kilometres south of the capital in Central Serbia (see figure 1), at the southern fringes of the ***Ġumadija*** region, the core of Serbian statehood since the early 19th century secession wars against the Ottoman Empire (Pavlowitch 2002, 26ï 40).[23] The shape and

[23] My interlocutors perceived the ***Ġumadija*** as developed relative to southern Serbia and underdeveloped relative to the North. The research area experienced northward in and out-migration, e.g. since the 1970s economic migrations and since the 1990s war-related dislocations of ñrefugeesò and ñtemporally displaced persons.ò

size of local self-government changed throughout the 19th and 20th century. But while most post-socialist East European countries had promoted decentralisation in the 1990s, and had increased the number of local government areas, Serbia maintained its local self-government (*lokalna samouprava*) from the mid-1970s. Some responsibilities of the local level had even revolved to the central scale in the constitution of 1990 (Ġeviĺ 2001).[24] According to the Law on the Territorial Organization of the Republic of Serbia of 2007, valid during my field research, Serbia was divided into Central Serbia and two provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo. There were two types of local self-government, municipalities (*opġtine*) and cities (*gradovi*), which made up the local scale of the state. Municipalities were seen as the basic units of local government, they ñrepresent a natural and geographic entity, an economically connected area and having well-established communication within inhabited areas with a city centre as a gravitational centreò (Toġiĺ 2009, 73). *Gradovi* were more complex municipalities and received a higher share of the central budget per inhabitant. There were 150 municipalities, with approx. 10,000 ï 100,000 inhabitants, and 24 *gradovi* with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Belgrade alone was made up of several *gradovi* (Toġiĺ 2009, 76). Three of my research sites lay in *grad* River City ï the urban locale River City (70,000 inhabitants), Lower Village (1000 inhabitants) and Upper Village (600 inhabitants) (see figure 2). *Grad* River City covered an area of 600 km² and was relatively densely populated, with 120,000 inhabitants. Creek Town (25,000 inhabitants) lay in Creek Town Municipality (45,000 inhabitants) 20 kilometres north of River City. Creek Town municipality was average sized, with a low population density of less than 100 inhabitants/ km².

The four organs of the *grad*[25] were the Parliament (*skupġtina*), the Mayor (*gradonaļelnik*), the Council (*gradsko veĺe*) and the Administration (*gradska uprava*).[26] The Parliament, which was elected every four years, designated the Mayor, who presided over the Council. The latter controlled the administration (see *Zakon O Lokalnoj Samoupravi* 2014, Article 65). I interacted mostly with the administration for social activities (*uprava za druġtvene delatnosti*), which locally supervised the working of the CSW. Indeed, of the 17 municipal institutions (*ustanove*) half provided (urban based) social security relevant services. Among these besides the CSW

[24] Petéri (2008) provided measures of the divergence of local government sizes in south-eastern Europe. Serbian local governments, with an average of 52,000 inhabitants, were largest. Hungaryôs were rather small with 3200 inhabitants, while in Romania they approximated the statistical means with 7600 inhabitants (Petéri 2008, 8).
[25] If not indicated otherwise, the information given refers to *grad* River City.
[26] There were nine administrative entities: finance, urbanism, local taxes, inspections, common and collective works, social activities, and professional support for the Parliament, the Mayor, and the Council.

were the urban House of Culture, the library, two kindergartens, and the polyclinic. The administrative entities also controlled nine public enterprises.[27]

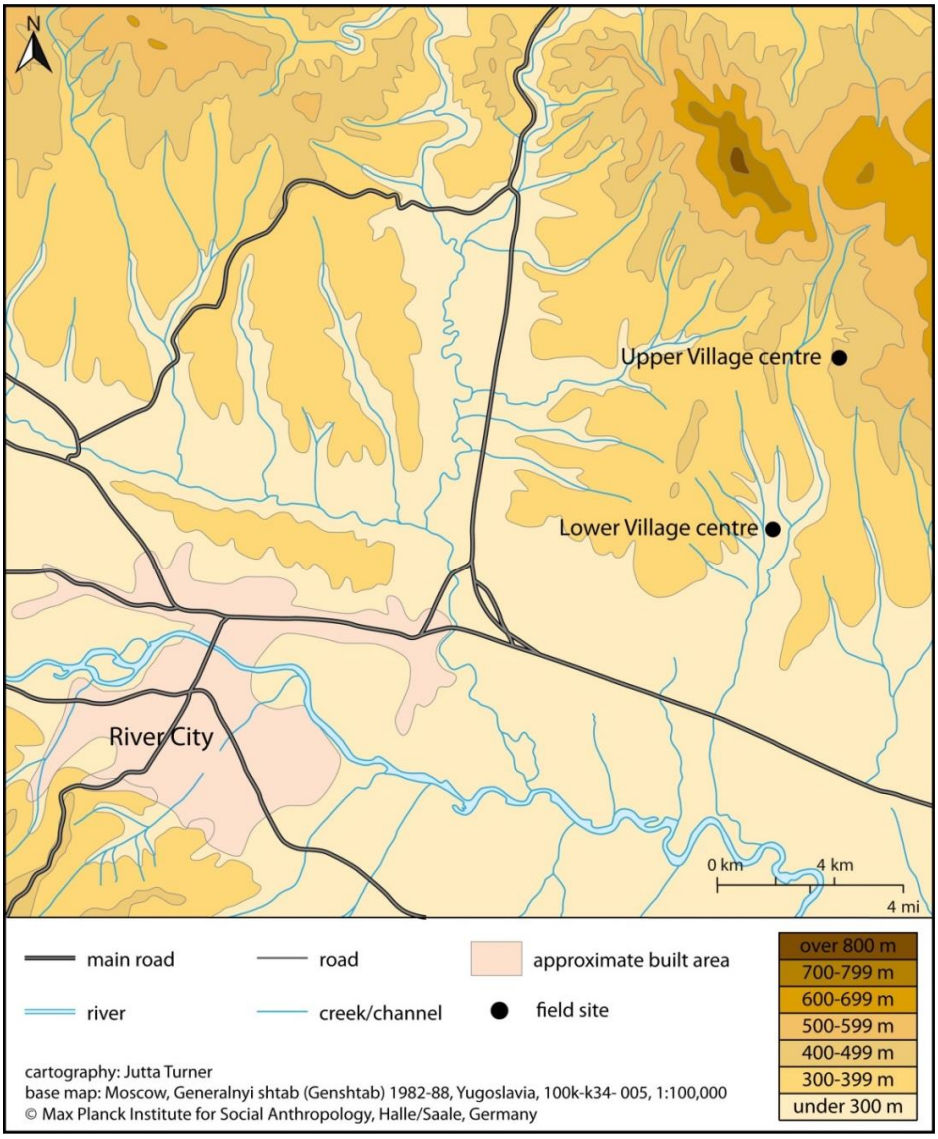

Figure 2: The *grad* (city municipality) River City

I chose the CSWs of River City and Creek Town as my primary urban field sites, because CSWs provided a wide variety of welfare services and catered to town and villages. Social workers from the CSW River City covered Lower and Upper Village on irregular field trips (I was based in Lower Village), and I sought to capture the interactions between social workers and the population both in their institution and outside ñin the fieldò (*na terenu*). Although CSWs had

[27] For example, the communal enterprise Green Spaces (*Gradsko Zelenilo*) managed the parks and cemeteries, while the Communal Works authority (KOMUNALAC) planned, built, and reconstructed municipal roads. These enterprises provided public services and infrastructure, and were expected to work profitably in accordance with New Public Management principles.

been founded by the local governments during self-managed socialism (Zavirgek 2008) and were still co-supervised by the municipal administration for social activities, their main finance and regulation was provided by the national Ministry of Work, Employment and Social Policy (MWSP) (I, mayorôs protocol officer River City, 9.10.2009). The shared responsibilities were evident in the contributions to the budgets. In Creek Town, for instance, the municipality bore one quarter of the overall yearly budget of ú 150,000 ï the expenses for the infrastructure (offices, archive, car), running costs (electricity, heating, fuel, office supplies), and the payments of municipally granted social benefits as well as the social workers hired to administer them. The bulk of the budget ï the salaries for most of its 15 workers, the social benefits (MOP) and the disability benefits for the needy population (TNP) ï derived from the MWSP (CSW 2008a; CSW 2008b).

Local Council

The Local Self-governments (municipalities and *gradovi*) were typically subdivided into dozens of Local Communities (*Mesna Zajednica*, pl. ~*e*, MZ) in order to ñsatisfy the needs of the community membersò (*Zakon o Lokalnoj Samoupravi*, Article 72). A MZ was run by the Council of the Local Community (*Savet Mesne Zajednice*, SMZ). These SMZs were stipulated in the last Yugoslav constitution of 1974 as subunits of Municipalities, and represented the ñsupra-localò scale of the state. The SMZs were my other, rural local state field site. Their analysis in Chapters Two to Four highlights the always-already decentralized and therefore ódemocraticô legacy of the socialist local state. An SMZ can encompass one or more village territories (MZ). Thus, in *grad* River City there were about 50 MZ administered in 30 SMZs. From the Constitution of 1990 until the Law on Local Government of 2002, SMZs enjoyed only ñcustomaryò status. Their gradual revival started in 2002, and by 2007 they had become a mandatory form of sub-municipal local governance in rural areas again (PavloviÍ Krizanovi Í 2008, 138-9). Councillors were elected every four years. The constituencies of rural Local Communities (MZ) could not pay high taxes, and because the redistribution of state finance was skewed towards urban population centres, rural MZ members received few services locally, and often had to resort to self-help to meet their needs: ñvillages have to take care of their own infrastructure and other needs (waterworks, roads, graveyards, culture, sports, etc.)ò (PavloviÍ KrizaniÍ 2008, 154). Tasks of the ñright hand of the stateò like economic governance were perceived as SMZ priorities', while from the perspective of the local government and the central state the tasks of the ñleft hand of the stateò like schooling, social aid, medical help or

psychological counselling (see Bourdieu 2005; Wacquant 2009) were regarded as urban responsibilities.[28]

A tour of Lower Village

More than half of the ethnographic material in this thesis stems from participant observation conducted in Lower Village, where I lived during most of my field research. The village territory began at the northern edge of River Cityôs fertile plains and rose gradually from 200 metres to 500 metres above sea level.[29] Approximately 1000 registered villagers lived in a dozen scattered neighbourhoods along both sides of a small creek valley, predominantly on the top of hill ridges divided by mountain streams discharging into the creek. A popular way to reach Lower Village was by public transport. The bus left five times a day from the formerly heavily industrialized River City. After leaving the city environs, it drove eastwards along the national highway on the left bank of the river. On its way the bus passed intensively tended vegetable fields that were interspersed with family homes, scrap yards, and privately owned canteens and hotels. After a 20 minute ride, the bus reached the first stop in Lower Village, at the junction where the only restaurant in Lower Village catered for its customers. The bus turned left here and followed the village road, winding northwards past fields, orchards, and forests along the narrow creek valley. After a further 10 minute ride uphill, the passengers passed a football pitch to the right and a church and graveyard to the left. To reach the village centre (*centar sela*), they got off at the ñSchool Lower Villageò Stop. The bus stop was in front of a white washed monument commemorating the fallen *partizan* fighters of World War II (see figure 3, item 1).

This memorial had been inaugurated in the 1970s by the late *partizan*-general JankoviĆ. It was tended by his remote relative Zoran JankoviĆ, for a remuneration from *grad* River City. Zoran JankoviĆ and his extended family inhabited the two adjacent households. Their grocery shop (see figure 3, item 2) was a focal point of male sociability and provided goods for half the village.[30] The village centre, also known as JankoviĆ neighbourhood (*zaseok Jankovi*ć*i*) consisted of 45 households dotted along the left and right of the street. Walking uphill from the bus stop one first reached the House of Culture (figure 3, item 3). This was built during socialism by collaborative village labour and was managed by the SMZ. In 1995 it had provided housing for one third of the 55 refugees from Bosnia and Croatia. Today, it was renovated, but hardly ever open. Behind it, several houses formed a semi-circle. From left to right these were

[28] Even ñright-hand of the stateò activities like policing were organized at the municipal and national scale, and the police unit responsible for Lower Village was stationed in River City.
[29] The territory of the MZ Lower Village slightly exceeded the Central Serbian average of 15 km².
[30] There was only one other shop in the village, three kilometres down the road in the direction of River City.

a private home,[31] the SMZ building, the former ñVoļarò shop[32], and the óOld *Srezô* building[33] (figure 3, items 4-7).

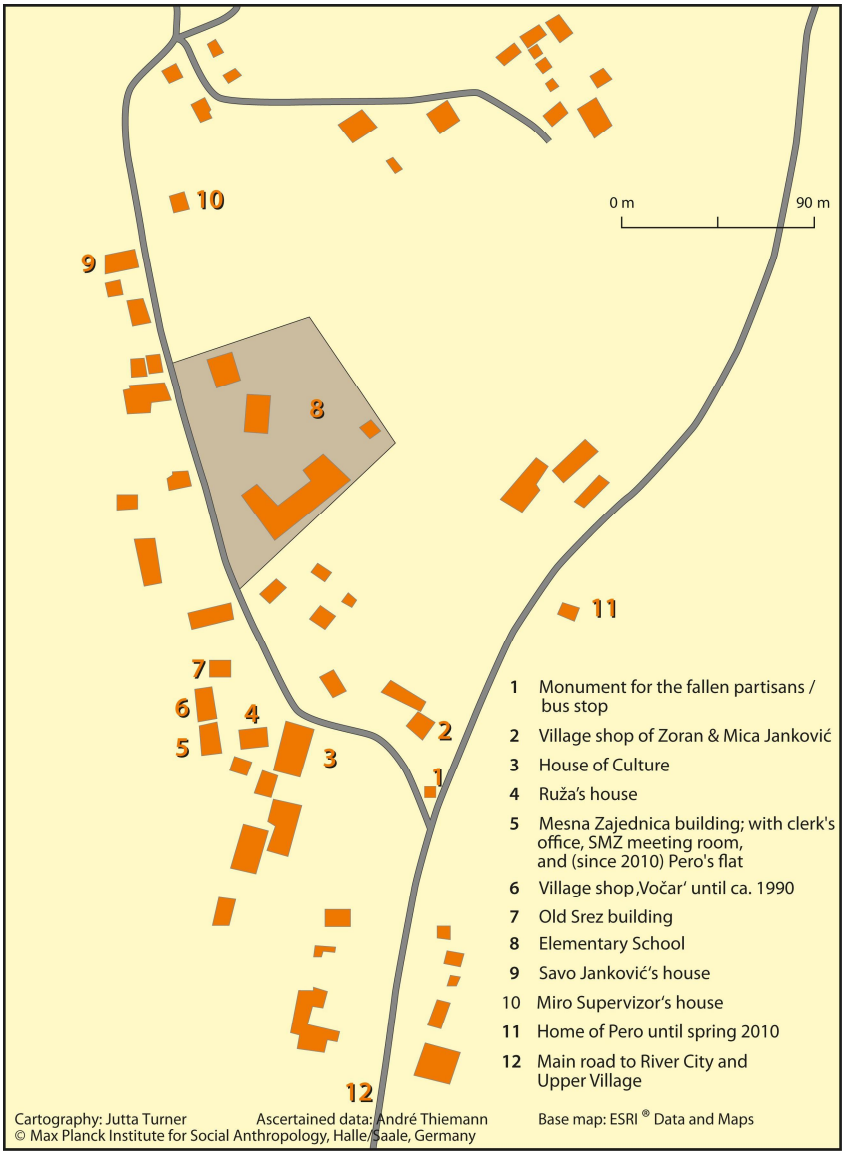

Figure 3: The Centre of Lower Village

Three of these houses had been built in the 1950/60s by the villagers as teachersô homes, while the óOld *Srezô* had been used back then as a school class room. During the 1980s the newer

[31] This house was bought by Rada, a former agricultural cooperative worker, and her daughter Ruģa, in 1991.
[32] Today it sheltered a telephone junction box.
[33] óOld *Srezô* was the oldest communal building of the village, built in the late 19th century, when the Local Government Authority was the *Srez*. After the liberation from fascism in 1944, it housed the *Narodni Odbor* (NO), the communist-led village administration which had its own policemen, a jail in the cellar, and intimidated villagers it identified as *kulaks* and other ñenemies of the people.ò It had been unused since the early 2000s. The SMZ tried in vain to obtain funding for its renovation as a historical monument. It was demolished in 2013.

buildings were jointly used by the agricultural cooperative and by the SMZ, and in the 1990s refugees were housed in them.

The SMZ building (figure 4) was renovated in 2002, after the local refugee centre had been dissolved (see Chapter Four). Near the main entrance hung a wrapped, frayed Serbian flag. The central office room was the everyday workspace of the MZ clerk (*ğef mesne kancelarije*), who since the 1970s had been employed by the ñ*grad* administration for common and cooperative workò (*gradska uprava za opğte i zajednič ke poslove*). The MZ clerk, a native of the village, provided decentralized bureaucratic services to his fellow citizens. He issued birth, marriage, death and citizenship certificates, and, if required, informed the urban CSW about villagers in need. Furthermore, the MZ clerk assisted the SMZ, providing it with a telephone and writing its minutes. He used a smallish second room as storage space for his files. A third room was reserved for the Local Council meetings and hosted some trophies of the village football club.

Figure 4: The Local Council building

The second entrance to the left of the building led to a one-room flat which was used free of charge by a villager. The SMZ building was therefore a local state space par excellence. It blended the everyday interactions between the supra-local scale of the state in the shape of the

SMZ, the local scale of the state embodied by the clerk, and the citizens represented by the man living there and other co-villagers regularly dropping by to get paperwork done.

Thirty metres up the village road from the SMZ building lay the primary school (grades 1-8) (figure 3, item 8), the last local state space on the ñtour,ò and a good example for a state institution that was highly valued locally and encompassed interactions of several state scales from the national to the supra-local. The school drew approx. 100 pupils from the village and two smaller neighbouring rural communities including Upper Village. The director was responsible to the national Ministry of Education and to the *grad* administration for social activities in River City. However, she was married in town to the brother of the bus driver Mirko (whom we know from the entry vignette), and felt an intense moral-economic pressure to collaborate closely with the Local Community at large and the SMZ in particular. The SMZ supported school renovations and school events and activities through finance, materials, and works. In return, the Village Football Club held its annual meeting in a class room, as I observed in 2010. The school building had a small school library, as well as several classrooms, a teachersô and a directorôs room, and a preschool. In 2009, twice weekly an ambulant dentist operated in its renovated basement. The basement was also used for special occasions like a ñHealthy Foodò showcase organised by teachers, pupils, and parents; or it was used as a polling centre by the national election commission. Next to the school building was a concrete sports field, where the village youths played basketball in the evenings and secretly shared a joint. On one side of the sports field was the toilet/heating block, and on the other side the gym (the latter could be used for recreational activities by villagers in the evenings, too). Finally, there was an old former schoolhouse, which until recently had housed a refugee family, but was in such a bad shape that it was only used as a storage space.

These were the major nodes of the meshwork of local state institutions and local state spaces accessible to all village inhabitants: the House of Culture, the MZ clerkôs office, the SMZ meeting room, the school, preschool, dentist, and the schoolôs sport facilities. The local state was connected by the personal, material and discursive movement facilitated by infrastructures (roads, electricity, public transport, communication networks), which in turn were produced, reproduced and transformed by several locally intersecting scales of the state.[34]

[34] On the tour we also passed the important community institutions ï football club, church, and village shop.

Method

Anthropologists of the State typically follow two opposing impulses: they either travel to the ñmargins of the stateò (Das and Poole 2004), or conversely try to escape the ñsavage slotò by doing research in ñsuper-diverseò central spaces (Vertovec 2007). Mindful of the relativity of the centre-margin-continuum, I positioned my research at the middle ground. I analysed diverse, partly overlapping local state spaces in small to medium sized communities in Central Serbia. My methodology challenged conventional top-down approaches to state making by emphasizing the importance of local state relations, understood as the shuffling together of all locally present state scales. The locally most important state-society relations could be ñanchoredò in any scale effective on the ground, including the supra-local scale.

I first came to my field site in May 2009 on a three day reconnaissance trip. At a time when my own linguistic abilities were limited, Dr Slobodan NaumoviÍ from the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology at the University of Belgrade mentored and accompanied me. We established contacts in Lower Village via the recommendation of an acquaintance of his, an old Professor of Anthropology who was related to the ņokoviÍi, a family of village entrepreneurs and dignitaries. Both Dr NaumoviÍ ós ñero-epicò interview style (Girtler 2004) and the good advice of his friend Dr Biljana SikimiÍ[35] were decisive in mediating the initial relations to the villagers. One basic rule of conduct Mrs. SimiÍ taught me was to emphasize that I was *not* interested in politics, which lowered reservations of my interlocutors against a potentially divisive óstranger-trouble makerô and opened up a treasure trove of political opinion and debate. Through Mrs. SikimiÍ I was also made aware of the need of customary gift-giving when calling on villagers. Thus armed with a token pack of coffee we convinced the president of the SMZ, Bane EriÍ, that out of 5000 Serbian villages ñhis villageò was chosen because of its representativeness and ï as he surmised ï its gentle beauty. With his support we convinced the SMZ to condone my stay and provide me with information for my PhD project, which we vaguely specified as ñon village life and customs.ò

The main period of fieldwork began in July 2009, accompanied in the crucial first weeks by my research assistant, the student of anthropology Aleksandar RepedģiÍ. This research period lasted ï with several short breaks ï for 16 months and ended in November 2010. I was stationed in two households in Lower Village and experienced the whole annual cycle in this moderate continental climate.[36] The first four months I spent in the northernmost hill fringe of the village,

[35] Dr Biljana SikimiÍ is a linguistic anthropologist and work group leader at the Balkanological Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences.

[36] Temperatures ranged from -21 degrees Celsius to 40 degrees Celsius. Heating was provided through a range fuelled with firewood cut in my hostsô mountain patches.

adjacent to Upper Village, in the household of Pantelija ọkovi (97 years of age). Staying in his single and remote household I developed an intimate understanding of the effects of relative isolation, which can be especially difficult to bear for frail, single elderly people, increasing their personal quirks. At the same time, I also experienced the dedicated and not always easy care for the elderly man performed by Pantelijaôs adult, urban children and grandchildren, as well as by an informally paid female caregiver residing with him day-in day-out. Their combined care efforts significantly raised the life quality of Pantelija, and brought some diversion to the monotony of his homestead. However, as the months wore on and my linguistic abilities improved, I found I made no significant headway in widening my network of acquaintances beyond the caregivers and a few visiting neighbours connected to the household. So I began to look for new accommodation in a more populous village quarter.

I subsequently lived for over a year in the village centre, in the extended household of Milan and Rajka Jankovi. This household was engaged in intensive cross-visiting and mutual aid networks, which I explored according to the ethnographic snowball method. I came to know different groups of villagers with a more modest lifestyle, characterized by semi-subsistence provisioning from their tiny fields, the scraping together of their limited monetary resources including salaries and pensions, and more cramped living conditions.

ñHad it been worth all the fighting?ò I was rhetorically asked one summer day in 2010 by the brother of my landlady. He had been born in 1950 in Upper Village, and, although he had served for three years in the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) as a young man and had worked for the last thirty years in a munitions factory in River City, he had never actually been to war. ñWe should have fought only for a larger Serbia and made peace with the Germans [in World War II], then we would have an ordered and strong country now,ò he continued, sighing in the shadow of the linden tree in the yard of the Jankovi i. ñBut this is our Serbian bravado, which has brought us nothing,ò he concluded. I dodged the answer as best I could. The politics of remembrance, which tended to blur the ñlast ten wars against the *ġvabe* [German-speaking people]ò from the early 19th century to the last year of the 20th century, was a hot potato during my field research. As a German, I was repeatedly being drawn into such discussions by my interlocutors and learned it was better to avoid them. Indeed, the remembrance of World War II oscillated between socialist narratives of *partizan*-resistance against Nazism and right-revisionist ñQuislingò myths (Kuljić 2010) Sometimes such politicking with public remembrance affected the population ï had they not chosen themselves to remain too long outside the Western, European welfare states and now had to face the austere consequences? Such thoughts, however, never completely silenced the local reclaiming of the relatively

comprehensive social security net that had been knit in the late SFRY, but had become partly unravelled since (Stambolieva and Dehnert 2011).

In late November 2010 I left the field. I returned for three small restudy projects between 2011 and 2013, when I lived for a (combined) six weeks with the JankoviĆi in the centre of Lower Village and for another (combined) five weeks in Creek Town, in the household of a local rap and metal musician and his mother. Accordingly, my most intimate knowledge of social relations refers to village life, while I draw on asymmetrical comparisons with several urban milieus. Following the local state along its different relations, I practiced multi-local field research (Horáková 2014) within a rural-urban, fluid, and administratively unbounded continuum. I typically moved in a radius of dozens of kilometres, limited by the scarcity of public transport, and the potential of the Slovenian moped which I was gracefully lent free of charge by a cousin and close neighbour of my landlord. Occasional bus trips led me further afield to regional centres within hundreds of kilometres.

In order to capture the complexity of the production and change of the local state, I combined qualitative, historic-narrative, and quantitative research strategies to a ñcross-perspectival method bundleò (see Elwert 2003). The most time-intensive fieldwork technique was participant observation in domestic life, public life, and work activities (farm work, house work, public work, social work). I took inspiration from the situational analysis and extended case study methods pioneered by the Manchester School of Anthropology, in which theoretical discovery was based on the meticulous analysis of the ethnographic material, representing the ñmoments of social life in the very process of formationò (Kapferer 2005b, 92; see Epstein 1967). Classic Manchester Anthropology interweaved structural data into the analysis of observed patterns of behaviour in order to combine topical relevance with statistical representativeness and cross-case comparability (C. Mitchell 1983). This stimulus led me to endorse the idea of developing and administering a joint questionnaire with my colleagues from the Local State and Social Security group (on this more below). Furthermore, in the wake of Manchesterôs qualitative network analysis (Kapferer and Mitchell 1969; especially Epstein 1969a; Epstein 1969b), I keenly shadowed individual ego networks.

Participant observation went hand in hand with un-structured and semi-structured interviews. Moreover, in order to delve into the oral history of the field, I also relied on more complex interview techniques known as the narrative-biographic interview method (Rosenthal et al. 2002; Rosenthal 2009; Kötter 2008), which I employed intensively during five weeks of return fieldwork in spring 2012. Narrative-biographical interviews and semi-structured interviews with individuals selected according to ñtopical sampling,ò e.g. ñagriculturalists,ò

ñrefugees,ò ñexperts on historyò and ñlocal state officialsò provided valuable data, and additionally helped me to temporarily leave those networks which, for their specific reasons, most willingly embraced me. Only in 2013 was I finally allowed relatively free access to the files of the CSW River City, so that I managed to deepen my knowledge of several case studies (see Chapters Four and Five). In addition, I collected grey literature, documents, and amateur-historical monographs in the field.

Descriptive statistics of our questionnaire data calculated with the software SPSS provided some information used in the description of Lower Village above. The source material was 61 questionnaires, which each contained 17 batteries of questions spanning political participation, availability of information, receipt of social benefits, possession of land and machines, density of social networks, and so forth.[37] My later field assistant Tomo (introduced in the second entry vignette) and I administered the questionnaires in Lower Village in March and April of 2010. We applied the next-birthday method[38] to counter the societal bias which sees male senior household members as the most appropriate respondents to outsiderôs questions. The sampling proved an excellent method to move in different networks than those usually frequented.

I also noted and later used the openly worded answers that I collected during the questionnaire interviews. Pre-testing the questionnaire with people with whom I had closer relations allowed me ï because of the formalized interview situation ï to ask different questions and gain new insights. It also gave me a justification to interview acquaintances who were otherwise shy to reveal much about themselves. Besides the room we had given for openly worded answers, I additionally jotted notes in the margins when a ñclosed questionò elicited a non-standardized response. Much of the qualitative information on Pero Krajiġnik in chapter four was collected in this way. My mixed-method design facilitated the interaction with literally hundreds of individuals, and resulted in 90 recorded interviews, cited when transcribed as ćI.ô

In the remainder of the chapter I provide a roadmap to the thesis, accenting the diverse perspectives from which I approached the local state. Roughly following Henri Lefebvreôs regressive-progressive method (Lefebvre 1970, 18ï 40),[39] after my preliminarily outline of the research problematic in this introduction, I will proceed by outlining the theoretical terrain in

[37] The questionnaire was jointly developed in 2009-10 by the Research Group ñLocal State and Social Security in rural Hungary, Romania and Serbiaò of which I was a member. I gratefully acknowledge the funding from the Volkswagen Foundation and the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (MPI). Mihai Popa, Alexandra Szöke and I pre-tested the questionnaire in our fields. Interviews took no less than half an hour each. The questionnaire was redrafted in a joint mid-term field workshop in Budapest in January 2010.

[38] The respondent was the household member above age 18 whose birthday was next. This assured a random sample of male and female adult respondents (see Bernard 2002, 141ï 62).

[39] According to Jean-Paul Sartre: ñ*Cêst un marxiste, Henri Lefebvre, qui a donné une méthode à mon avis simple et irréprochable pour intégrer la sociologie et l'histoire dans la perspective de la dialectique matérialiste. Cette méthode, nous la croyons valable dans tous les domaines de l'anthropologie*ò (Sartre 1960, 40ï 1).

Chapter One. In each subsequent chapter I track back from the ethnographic present to the past, and from there forward to the possible future of the research problem: what is the local state, and how it is produced, reproduced and changed?

Roadmap

In Chapter One I theoretically ground the relational approach to studying the local state advocated in this thesis. As part of the research group Local State and Social Security at the MPI Halle, I draw on the ideas of our team that were recently outlined in a special issue of *Social Analysis* (see Thelen, Vetters, and von Benda-Beckmann 2014). Yet, while Thelen, Vetters and Benda-Beckmann have engaged the contemporary New Anthropology of the State along three axes ï relational modalities, boundary work, and embeddedness of actors, I add as a fourth axis strategic selectivity. I develop my approach by drawing on four strands of literature: the Manchester School of Social Anthropology, the Marxist relational theory of the state, research on state images and modalities, and studies of bureaucracy and government. These considerations lead me to modify Poulantzasô theory of the State as a Relation and conceive of the local state as a set of concrete, complex and contradictory relations. In my theoretical framing, the local state is co-produced by all citizens in asymmetrical fields of power.

Chapter Two turns to the question of the embeddedness of local state actors. I follow the making of a local politician, the veterinarian of Lower Village, against the background of the historical transformations of male sociability. The village is understood as always already enmeshed in wider social relations with near and far villages, towns, regions, nations, and trans-national spaces. But it is instructive to focus on the tensions between the supra-local and the local scale of the state from the perspectives of two neighbouring village families ï the vet-politicianôs parents, and their neighbours, who embraced the role of opposition. In order to accentuate the narrative, I recount their household histories with a focus on how they have been ï increasingly antagonistically ï involved in co-producing the local state.

I tackle boundary work in Chapter Three. The ñLocal State at Workò was run both by village entrepreneurs and members from the working classes in the SMZ. Local Councillors as well as their critics understood this local state institution as a field of power in which individual and group contributions were enmeshed with personal associations of kinship, friendship, neighbourhood, employment, patronage, and gender. At the same time, the SMZ provided an institutional infrastructure which was expected to govern in response to local demands for just distribution. In this tension, societal cleavages repeatedly broke up which were mediated by, in,

and through the SMZ. Drawing on studies of social worlds, I show how a mythical document became a reified ñboundary objectò that spatially and temporally united the SMZ in its political pursuits. I analyse this and other boundary drawing processes through the case study of a conflict about road building. The analytical question is how local notions of distribution and centrality were being negotiated.

I continue my ethnography of the SMZ in Chapter Four, but in the very different context of dealing with a villager in need who was initially invisible to local social policy. Drawing on the extended case of Pero Krajiġnik, seen in the village as a refugee (*izbeglica*), I consider how international human security discourses were adopted locally in negotiations of neediness and deservingness. Pero repeatedly became a concern for his neighbours, and in several moments of crisis the SMZ and others took action to reorganize his threatened social security arrangements. The case study shows how social security can be provided as a hybrid product of several local state relations and their different relational modalities. The case also illuminates supra-local scale efforts at bridging relations with the CSW from the local scale.

In Chapter Five I switch to the other side of the hybrid relation between the SMZ and the CSW. I analyse the history of two post-Yugoslav relational modalities of the welfare state, inclusive distribution and exclusive protection. In my case study of a needy family, the MiloviĆ i of Upper Village, I proceed from simple deliberations of this ñsocial (case)ò from the perspective of social workers, to more nuanced, complex and contradictory negotiations of the appropriate relational modality. I also show that where paperwork becomes ubiquitous, like in the CSW, its value for many local state actors can decrease, especially in relation to increasing social issues and diminishing social policy responsiveness.

In the last ethnographic chapter, Chapter Six, local state help did not have to be elicited by citizens ï rather it came as a surprise to them. In the local state service ôElderly care at home in Creek Town,ô old people were visited and ñactivatedò via material, knowledge, and social exchange with state employed care-givers. I shadow the movement of carer Ljilja through the multiplex relations ensuing from her interactions with the elderly and their kin. They passed on information and gossip, presents, food, and shared life cycle rituals. The elderly retained the conventional discursive separation between the domains of the state and the family, while allowing the intimate intertwining of both domains across multiple social spaces. The emerging caring relations were thus appreciated but little acknowledged as a local state service. In the context of the strategic selectivity of the Serbian stateôs narrowed down social policy objectives, more powerful support was needed if the service was not to remain small and fragile.

In the Conclusion I draw together the results of my research. Integrating the history and

positionality of diverse state scales into the analysis of local state relations means scrutinizing the contradictory, concrete-complex interactions of the trans-national, national, local and sub-local scales of the state. The socialist self-managed history of the Serbian state, projecting a conscious alternative to Soviet state socialist and state capitalist societies alike, still affects the commitment of citizens to the local state. In the context of a social transformation to a semi-peripheral capitalist society, this constellation suggests why people may want to ñbecome the stateò even while cursing it heartily. My research reinforces the perspective that the local state is at once the result, the terrain, and the goal of multiple social struggles. I argue that citizens and street-level bureaucrats put the state to task to enhance its enabling activities, sometimes against, at other times in alliance with policies pursued by the state technocracy and national parties. It is hoped that this finding stimulates research into local state strategies for distributive politics that citizens have recently unlearned to expect.

1. Theory:
Seeing the state as a meshwork of relations

> [T]he State [é] usually is being represented as an entity over and above the human individuals who make up a society, having as one of its attributes something called ósovereigntyô, and sometimes spoken of as having a will (law being often defined as the will of the State) or as issuing commands. The State, in this sense, does not exist in the phenomenal world; it is a fiction of the philosophers. What does exist is an organization, i.e. a collection of individual human beings connected by a complex system of relations [é] and some are in possession of special power or authority, as chiefs or elders [é], as legislators or judges [é] (Radcliffe-Brown 1940, xiii).

Classical social anthropology almost completely dismissed the modern state as a research subject. This neglect has often been attributed to a half-sentence taken from the above-quoted statement by A.R. Radcliffe-Brown: ñ[t]he State, in this sense, does not exist in the phenomenal world; it is a fiction of the philosophersò (Radcliffe-Brown 1940, xxiii). Coming from a founding father of modern anthropology, and posited in the preface to the influential volume óAfrican Political Systemsô (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940), this was received as a damning verdict. Only 50 years on, a nascent New Anthropology of the State took óAnarchy Brownôsô proclamation, via Abramsô (1988, 77) actualisation that the state was an ña-historical mask of legitimating illusion,ò and began to investigate the State as an imagination, a fantasy, a ñfetishò (Taussig 1992b, 112). But, in fact Radcliffe-Brown had gone on to argue that what did exist was ñan organization, i.e. a collection of individual human beings connected by a complex system of relationsò (Radcliffe-Brown 1940, xxiii). Between the 1940s and 1970s, a tightly knit network of maverick anthropologists known as the Manchester School of Social Anthropology developed this brief comment into a nascent theory of the embeddedness of local state actors, caught up in complex and contradictory social relations.

Research on the state has expanded and increasingly diversified since the 1980s as political anthropology incrementally sublated the structural-functionalist and Marxist processual paradigms that informed the Manchester School, among others (Vincent 1990; 2002; Vincent and Nugent 2005). In fact, a sudden proliferation of perspectives ï for and against, from without, within and at the boundaries of the state ï has made it increasingly difficult to construct an encompassing anthropological theory of the state. In the first decade of the 2000s, the anthropologists of state imaginations established a near-hegemonic position and in 2006 one of

their main protagonists, Akhil Gupta, co-edited ôThe Anthropology of the State: A Readerô together with Aradhana Sharma. In their attempt to define the New Anthropology of the State, these authors argued that the state was ñproduced through everyday practices and encounters and through public representations and performancesò (Sharma and Gupta 2006, 27).

Their approach was variously criticized for ignoring the history of anthropological theory and for being empirically superficial (Bierschenk 2009), for a ñneo-pluralist orthodoxyò that was evaluated as politically conservative (Marcus 2008), and last but not least for the analytical gap between images and practices of the state (Thelen, Vetters & von Benda-Beckmann 2014). In line with European anthropological traditions of analysing the state through ñdetailed investigations of power relationships, everyday practices, and meaningsò (Krohn-Hansen and Nustad 2005, 14), Tatjana Thelen, Larissa Vetters, and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann outlined the contours of a relational anthropology of the state. Their aim was to explain via detailed ethnography how images and practices of the state were linked by relational work. Only a relational perspective, they argued, could address how the ñstability and the apparent coherence of images and the solidity of the organizational entity called óstateôò were reproduced (Thelen, Vetters & von Benda-Beckmann 2014, 6). They also proposed a methodological-theoretical tool kit to study the state along three axes: relational modalities, boundary work, and embeddedness (ibid, 10ï 2). Integrating my readings of strategic-relational analyses of class power and the state (see Jessop 2008), I expand their suggestion by adding a fourth parameter: the strategic selectivity of the state.

The chapter is organised as follows. First, I present some inspirations that classic Manchester Anthropology offers for a relational anthropology of the state. In particular, I will take up the ñdilemma of the village headmanò to formulate the first axis of research on the óembeddedness of actors.ô Second, I will engage with later state-theoretical developments to round out my method. Here, I start with heterodox Marxist analyses of the state, central in the 1970s, and develop the axis óstrategic selectivity.ô The ideology-critical, culturalist anthropology of state images provides the axis órelational modalities.ô In parallel, a strand concerned with the ódisciplinesô of government and bureaucracy is developed. This provides me with the axis ónegotiation of the boundary.ô Finally, third, I look at recent anthropological work on the two strategic fields of state activity that are the ómatters of concernô in my empirical chapters. These are the production of infrastructure ï especially roads ï and the care and social security work of the welfare state.

1.1 Made in Manchester

> The final speech was by the Regent Mshiyeni [é]. Mshiyeni [é] said the bridge would enable them to cross the river in floodtime and would make it possible for their wives to go freely to the Ceza Hospital to have their children. He appealed to the Government, however, not to forget the main road where the river had often held him up and to build a bridge there (Gluckman 1958, 6).

Much of social anthropologyôs classical work on local state relations is owed to a dense network of scholars that became known as the Manchester School of Social Anthropology. The ñMancuniansò can still inspire state anthropology with their methods, their insights into the spatial practices and the embeddedness of local state actors in interface positions, and their ethnographies of welfare. I will attend to their contributions in this order.

Methods and practices

As Clyde Mitchell, one of the Manchester Schoolsô most senior members, once declared, Max Gluckman (1911 ï 1975) was the ñpoint source of our networkò (C. Mitchell 1969).[40] Between 1939 and 1947, Gluckman had worked at the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute for Social Research (RLI) in what is now Zambia. When he became head of the new-founded Manchester Department of Social Anthropology in 1949, he maintained his close links with the RLI, which now served as a research laboratory and extended arm of his department. Later, Gluckman expanded his research interests to the new anthropology of the Israeli state, in the ñBernstein Projectò (Werbner 1984; Shokeid 2004). Many Manchester researchers were radicals influenced by Marxist or anarchist theory. They understood African workers primarily as workers, and studied recent political-economic phenomena like colonialism, migration, industrialization, ethnic and religious movements, and the (im)probability of revolution, when most anthropologists still aestheticized structures as ña normative order, a set of values, or an arrangement of jural principlesò (Werbner 1984, 162). What characterised Manchester anthropology were its problem-driven, ethnographically thick and abductive methods. Indeed, ñ(t)he theoretical is emergent from the ethnography. Ethnography should not be treated as mere illustration of theories already agreed upon ï usually by those at the metropoles,ò as Bruce Kapferer, a member of the second generation, described its legacy (Kapferer and Bertelsen

[40] Max Gluckman was, as a South-African Jew, somewhat marginal to the óvery Britishô anthropology of Oxford where he had held a research stipend in 1934-6. He conducted his first field work in political anthropology on Zululand between 1936-8, and later he worked on legal anthropology in Barotseland.

2010). In this vein, the practitioners of the Manchester School methodologically pioneered situational analysis, extended case studies, and network analysis (see Epstein 1967).

In his seminal paper ôAnalysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand,ô first published in 1940/42, Gluckman (1958) pioneered the situational analysis as method. In the piece, which is colloquially referred to as ôThe Bridge,ôGluckman explained the multi-scalar spatial as well as the multiple historical dimensions of the contemporary South African segregationist political economy, opening out from the perceptive ethnography of the opening of a road bridge. He detailed, for instance, spatial practices (like modes of travelling on and ñcelebratingò infrastructure) and bodily practices (walking, dressing, saluting, talking, translating, eating and drinking together or apart) to represent the power relations between colonial state officials, royal Zulu, Zulu commoners, and the Anthropologist.[41] Arguing against the study of ethnic groups as discretely bounded entities, he investigated how the infrastructures were appropriated by diverse social subgroups, emphasising their overlapping, multiple, and asymmetrical social ties in one ñAfrican-White communityò (Gluckman 1958, 1). By paying nuanced attention to the construction, social usages, and symbolisms of roads and bridges, Gluckman became a founding figure of the anthropology of the road (see 1.3 below). In another situational analysis, Mitchell (1956) captured the emerging African ethno-nationalisms by focusing on spatial appropriations of urbanity in popular dance competitions, analysing dress style, song texts, and dance steps.

Situational analysis informs my method, as I move beyond ñapt descriptionsò of state theories and provide contextualized descriptions of socio-spatial processes from the vantage point of the experiences of a small set of actors, in order to establish their positionality within, through or against several scales of state relations.

Situational analysis was further advanced and morphed in Victor Turnerôs classic óSchism and Continuity in an African Societyô first published in 1957 (Turner 1996). In a rare ethnographic achievement, Turner closely shadowed an unlikely pretender to village headmanship, Sandombu, and his village group over four years. On this material, gained through participant observation and enriched by interview material reaching back another couple of years, Turner developed the ñsocial drama,ò a milestone of what later became known as the extended case study method (Gluckman 1961; van Velsen 1967; C. Mitchell 1983; Burawoy 2009). In his monograph, Turner represented several related events first descriptively, then interpretatively, to tease out local structures of action. Thus, Turner detailed and explained the strategies and tactics of one social actor, within but also challenging the social institution of

[41] At the dayôs end Gluckman joined a political meeting of Zulu leaders with the white District Officer.

matrilineal male succession to local state office. When Sandombuôs ambitions for village headmanship were forestalled by his adversaries, this led to breaches in their kin relations. The ensuing social drama was temporarily attenuated by what Turner came to call ñrituals of afflictionò (Turner 1996, 93; Turner 1968).

The extended case method was later refined into social network analysis, conceptualised as the analysis of social practices reinforcing or subverting structures. Arnold Epstein, for instance, followed an urban Zambian interlocutor into beer parlours, road junctions, and housing quarters in order to understand how his social networks emerged through interactions (Epstein 1969b). The researcher also reconstructed the paths gossip took through such networks and highlighted the relation-producing qualities of shared gossip/discourses (Epstein 1969a). This methodological innovation ï qualitative network analysis ï is an important heuristic for a relational anthropology of the state: it makes it possible to capture incipient and transforming social relations, the ñrealò stuff of the imagined State, as Radcliffe-Brown argued in the epigraph.

However, in the political circumstances of Southern Africa and Great Britain in the 1940s to 1960s, Manchester Anthropologists could not openly declare their radical politics without reprisals and prosecutions, as they learned the hard way (see Frankenberg 1990b). Furthermore, the concepts of emergence and agency were not familiar in the Manchester heyday. Therefore, Gluckman drew on ótas if equilibrium analysisô to develop models of the reproduction of political formations and of profound social change (órevolutionô) (Gluckman 1968).[42] This reinforced his reputation as a ótimelessôstructural-functionalist, even though he and his network prefigured process theories by a generation (Vincent 1978; Vincent 1986).[43]

In sum, the Manchester School investigated relational power asymmetries on several socio-spatial scales, and they were keen on historical contextualisation and interested in the

[42] Gluckman developed his analysis ï which always factored in change ï as a critical response to the ahistorical equilibrium models of neo-classical economics. However, from todayôs vantage point, the problem arises how equilibrium (as an idea or as a state) can be achieved amidst constant flux.

[43] In the 1970s, structuralist Marxist anthropologists distanced themselves from Manchesterôs perceived lack of radicalism. Their structuralism came under attack in the 1980s by Post-Marxists who re-emphasized the (albeit limited) agency of actors in constructing their social fields (Bourdieu 1984) and in structuring their structures (Giddens 1984). The materialist critique of Post-Marxism by Latour and others then imbued technological change with the power of agency. However, the new ñsymmetricalò or ñflatò approach (Latour 1993; 2005) deemphasised questions of asymmetrical power relations. Marxists answered by accentuating historical depth, spatial breadth and comparison (Mintz 1986; Roseberry 1997a; Wolf 1982; 1999), or they embraced the new materialism arguing that it was ñdifficult to think about materiality, or to think materially about the social, without thinking about Marxismò (Maurer 2006, 13). In any case agency and relational research now appeared as post-Marxist inventions. The confusion reached its apogee when one influential anthropologist working on Zambia misrepresented Mancunians as ñliberalsò and offered his perspective as a theoretically and politically radical innovation (Ferguson 1999, 32; for a critique, see Kapferer 2005b, 97, 117ï 18). Only since the 2000s has the Manchester approach been rehabilitated from overdrawn misreading (Schumaker 2001; Evens and Handelman 2006; Burawoy 2009).

emergence, reproduction and passing of relations through discursive and material practices. The schoolôs fruitful methods and theoretical interests are thus translatable into new avenues for researching emerging state relations. Importantly, the Manchester discussions on the ñintercalary positionò of the village headman, which I will turn to next, prefigured a focus on the conflictive embeddedness of local state actors in the interface with multiple social spaces.

Embeddedness: from intercalary role to interface positionality

In his ñSocial Analysis in Modern Zululandò (introduced above), Max Gluckman casually represented the criticism of colonial rule immanent in local state relations, citing for instance the perspective of his host Matolana, a representative and advisor of the Zulu king. Gluckman set out to drive Matolana to the bridge, when they were greeted by a government policeman (a Zulu) who had just caught an accused thief with the help of Matolanaôs private police:

> Matolana upbraided the prisoner, saying he would have no *izigebengu* (scoundrels) in his district; then he turned to the policeman and criticized Government which expected him and his private police to assist it in arresting dangerous people, but paid them nothing for this work and would not compensate their dependants if they were killed. He then pointed out that he, who worked many hours administering the law for Government, had no salary; he had a good mind to stop doing this work and go back to the mines where he used to earn ten pounds a month as a ôboss-boyô (Gluckman 1958, 3).

In footnotes, Gluckman alluded that Matolanaôs criticism might be taken with a grain of salt, because he presumably profited from his entitlement to try civil cases, like his private police which ñget a small part of courtfeesò (Gluckman 1958, 2 fn.2, 3 fn.1). In this scene we already see the relational dilemmas of the famous ñvillage headman of central Africaò developed later by Gluckman, Mitchell and Barnes (1949). Village headmanship was a local government position filled by a local actor who was often appointed by ï and always also responsible to ï the colonial administration. As I will develop next, a headman navigated between conforming, resigning, self-interested action, and social rebellion, much like local state actors today.

Conforming. The village headman, ñin his personal and in his dual corporate links [é] interlocks two distinct systems of social relations and therefore the attitudes of his followers to him are fundamentally ambivalentò (Gluckman, Mitchell, and Barnes 1949, 93). The contradictory demands on village headmen from the population they governed and from the colonial authorities they were responsible to rendered their ñintercalary roleò strenuous.[44] They could not maintain their position without at least partly conforming to the contradictory demands of one relation (e.g. from outside the village), but by this very act of conforming they

[44] The term intercalary role was used only later. Gluckman (2013, ix) claimed he borrowed it from Meyer Fortes.

might already compromise the interests of another relation (e.g. from within the village kin-group).

Resigning. Lloyd Fallers developed this dilemma of the village headman into a role analysis of a conflict between bureaucratic and personalised demands. Fallers showed how line officers (social protection workers) in the colonial Ugandan office felt frustrated by the policies and bureaucratic demands formulated in policy centres far removed from their point of duty (Fallers 1956, 209). Further down the line, the Ugandan chiefs had also fully internalised ñthe civil service norm of disinterestedness and the personal ties of kinship and clientshipò (Fallers 1955, 302). Social conflicts between subordinate chiefs and their superiors (who had themselves internalised both value sets and situationally stressed the norms that worked in their interest), resulted in a high rate of resignation of chiefs. Those who managed to remain in office ñachieved [it] at considerable psychic costò (Fallers 1955, 303). Beyond that, in the Welsh village Pendriwaithe studied by Ronald Frankenberg, community organisers juggled five conflicting relations. Their initiatives to advance the community spirit through football faltered as they wore themselves out between football organising, two parish churches, their families, neighbourhoods, and occupations (Frankenberg 1990 [1957]). To concentrate Fallers point, we might say option two for intercalary position holders was resigning.[45]

Self-interestedness. Adam Kuper (1970) reformulated the argument to differentiate between two sets of relational dilemma. First, the óintercalary dilemmaô portrayed the state official as in a mediating position within vertical relations: ñ[A]s a servant of the government [he] must respond to the demands of his superiors. However, his people expect him to represent their interests as against the often uncomprehending and unpopular alien regime.ò Second, the ódomestic dilemmaôwas that ñsubjects want their leader to be unbiased and to act in the interests of the community as a whole. However, in particular cases members of his faction or special interest groups also expect him to favor them. The values invoked [é] are [é] kinship, friendship, and neighborliness [é] and objectivity and judicious leadershipò (Kuper 1970, 356). Based on his Kalahari material, Kuper argued we ñshould be aware of [how] the balance of obligations and demandsò created room for manoeuver (Kuper 1970, 357). In this vein Romanian mayors, for instance, subverted central restitution policies and enriched themselves (Verdery 2002) or reproduced local social hierarchies (see Dorondel and Popa 2014). The third option of local state actors was therefore self-interested action.

[45] The resignation option was further problematized by Leonard Mars (1976) who found that Israeli co-operative administrators had to deal with three sets of *political* relations ï with the cooperative villagers, the administrative hierarchy, and party politics, so that many quit before their end of term.

Social rebellion. However, the possibilities of navigating intercalary and domestic dilemmas were not exhausted by self-interested action, as the second generation Manchester anthropologist Norman Long showed more recently (Long 2001, 81ï 3, chapter 9). In Longôs account, an agricultural extension officer, *técnico* Roberto, tried to establish himself by innovating agricultural services for Mexican villagers. The initially sceptical villagers (might) find these unrequested services useful. Instead of self-interestedness, Roberto discursively practiced what I call ósocial rebellion,ô a newly emergent form of organisation at the ñinterfaceò between rebellion and revolution.[46] The term social rebellion is my own, but it harks back to Max Gluckmanôs analyses of rebellion and revolution in African states.[47]

As became obvious, the influences on a local state actor cannot be determined a priori but have to be empirically explored. Consequently, Long translated the idea of the ñintercalary positionò into a more open-ended ñinterfaceò approach to the state. An interface was defined as ñcritical points of intersection between different social fields, domains or lifeworlds, where social discontinuities based upon differences in values, social interests and power are foundò (Long 2001, 177). Referencing especially James Scott (1985),[48] Long stressed four modalities operative in the state interface: power, resistance, accommodation and strategic compliance, resulting in ñnewly emergent forms of organization and understandingò (Long 2001, 71, 177).

Combining the interface paradigm with the intercalary role perspective, we can think of local state actors as engaging these modalities in three interface types.

Interface Type 1 denotes the front line work between local state actors and the diverse fractions of the population outside state employment.

Interface Type 2 relates to local state work in collaboration or collision with other local state actors in similar positions.

Interface Type 3 means ties of local state actors to superiors and managers on the same or higher scales of the state.

The positionality of a local state actor can thus become very complicated. A local politician for instance may be a Vice President of the Municipal Parliament, an advisor to the President of the Municipality, a member of two Parliamentary committees, a party member, a

[46] Roberto in the end failed to deliver the promised services because he was quickly transferred by his alert unit manager. As a result the villagers resumed their temporarily suspended critical state discourse.

[47] According to Gluckman (1956, 28) rebellion happened if ñsubordinates turn against a leader [é] to turn him out of that office and to install another in it. [é] A revolution aims to alter the nature of political offices and of the social structure in which they function, and not merely to change the incumbents in persisting offices.ò

[48] James Scott has been an influential figure in peasant studies. Inspired by cultural Marxism (Moral Economy) as well as by the Manchester School, Scott developed an anarchist approach to the state. Thus, he tended to see the state as an all-seeing, self-interested and potentially violent force (Scott 1998), tending to treat it as a powerful Subject. Society was portrayed as resistant to the stateôs hierarchical logics, e.g. through rebellion (Scott 1976), acts of sabotage (Scott 1985), hidden transcripts (Scott 1990) or avoidance (Scott 2009).

veterinarian, a local football club organiser, a school friend, a son, a husband, a father, a neighbour, a friend, an enemy, and a patron (see Chapter Two). It is impossible to act on all multiple social identities with the same intensity all the time. The switching between social identities (Elwert 2002; Rottenburg 2005) therefore becomes a situational necessity which can be studied at the interface. Sometimes, spatial and temporal markers suggest the switching and highlighting/shading of certain identities. Thus, after office closing time, or on a holiday in their home region, government officials tend to feel ñoff-state,ò although their relations may often try to activate their state identity (Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann 1998). The way the local state actors navigate their complex relational identities in multiple social fields ï by conforming, resigning, acting self-interestedly or socially rebelling ï has to do with their ability to occupy productive positions in their network. To study the embeddedness of local state actors is therefore the first axis in my relational anthropology of the state.

I will now turn to one example of Manchesterôs analysis on local state actorsô embeddedness ï the urban welfare officer. The complexity of the welfare apparatus suggested an analysis of the interface construction of knowledge and power in relations with welfare recipients.

Manchester and welfare

Local welfare state relations have been analysed by the Mancunian Don Handelman as forming in a triad of ñbureaucratic world views,ò bureaucratic practices, and ñemerging welfare relationsò (Handelman 1976; 1978; 1980; 2004). As part of the Bernstein project in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Handelman had conducted an urban ethnography of a Jerusalem old age home and a municipal welfare department. His postdoctoral studies led him to research welfare bureaucrats in Newfoundland. In his articles on welfare work, Handelman retrospectively analysed welfare state relations using case documentation and interviews. Case files were analysed both as ñactuarialò evidence of actions of social workers, and ñcontractualò recordings of opinions and sentiments by social workers to back up their administrative decisions (Handelman 1976, 235). Changes in the representation of a welfare client were dialectically linked to the emergent form of the welfare relation (see Handelman 1980, 2004). As the social workerôs assessment of a man in a complex, 19 year-long ñwelfare careerò deteriorated, for example, the urgency and worth of cancelling the welfare state relationship changed; influencing modalities like degrees of supportiveness and degrees of coerciveness (Handelman 1976). In subsequent research, Handelman (2004) constructed the ñprospective historyò of a case, observing the emerging and unstable knowledge of social workers on a presumed case of child abuse in Newfoundland. Observing the process of knowledge production, Handelman

shadowed the social workersô interactions in several interfaces ï with colleagues, the police, neighbours, a child, its parents, and its siblings (Handelman 1978).

Thus, the negotiated nature of welfare state relations emerged at (1) the interface contacts between social workers and other social fields constituted by networks of actors, mediated by the emerging ñwelfare relationò; (2) in discussions between colleagues within the bureaucratic social field; and (3) in report writing. Handelmanôs research demonstrated how, as his Africanist contemporaries formulated, the ñmanagement of meaning is an expression of power, and the meanings so managed [are] a crucial aspect of social relationsò (Cohen and Comaroff 1976, 102). I will take up ñprospective historyò by representing the emerging relations between an elder care worker, elders, and social workers in Chapter Six. I will also do retrospective history and reconstruct a 10-year-long ñextended welfare state relationò in Chapter Five.

In sum, from the Manchester Schoolôs work on state relations I have gleaned my first crucial axis of analysis, the embeddedness of local state actors. I now turn to the transformations in the anthropology and the sociology of the state since the 1970s.

1.2 Strategic selectivity, modalities, and boundaries of power

> And the task of studying the state would thus seem to be primarily a matter of lifting the ideological mask so as to perceive the reality of state power ï class power ï in terms of which the structuring is achieved: and secondly, a matter of identifying the apparatuses ï functions and personnel ï in and through which state power is located and exercised (Abrams 1988 [1977], 74).

In the 1970s, state theory became more intensely debated than before or since (Jessop 2001). Weberian, Durkheimian, and Marxian conceptions overlapped. Abrams, whose ideology critique of State theory was aimed especially at Marxist theorists like Poulantzas, contended that, in the (capitalist) state, power lay ultimately with the capitalist classes. However, the conclusions Abrams drew inspired different research streams from those of the Marxists. Abrams,ô republished in 1988, became a common reference point for a culturalist New Anthropology of the State. The adjective ñcapitalistò was dropped, and the image of the state tended to be reified (see below). Marxists following in the footsteps of Poulantzas, on the other hand, continued to work on ever more concrete-complex analyses of state power. In the process they took shifting positions towards a third thinker on the micro-relations of power, Foucault.

Strategic selectivity

Relational thinking about the state has a long tradition in critical political economy, where the term órelationô took on very specific meanings. One analyst of the narrative strategy in Karl Marxôs óCapitalô (K. Marx 1988) has argued that capital was represented as a ñrelation [é], mapping the connections between apparently disconnected practices that must operate in tandem to produce a particular aggregate pattern of social behaviourò (Pepperell 2010, 102). Marxôs underlying ñphilosophy of internal relationsò

> treats the relations in which anything stands as essential parts of what it is, so that a significant change in any of these relations registers as a qualitative change in the system of which it is a part (Ollman 2003, 5).

Some translation difficulties have to be born in mind. First, a Relation (*Verhältnis*), i.e. a large social process of reproduction and transformation, has often been translated as a condition, system or structure (Ollman 2003, 73). A Relation is produced by many internal relations (*Beziehungen*). An internal relation, in turn, is what common sense perceives as a thing with a history, a context and a condition of possibility. Yet from the relational perspective it is a conflictive process which includes its own process of becoming (Ollman 2003, 13).

What does this mean for a relational state theory? On the one hand, what appear as domains outside the state, like civil society or the family, are also integral parts of the stateôs becoming, as Gramsci argued (on the óintegral state,ô see Becker et al. 2013, 68ï 89). Second, the inherent processuality of the state needs to be understood as a double movement between a concrete history (past, present, and future), and an organic (ideal-typical) development.[49] Since historical and organic movement are typically in friction, they open the state towards transformation. Based on these processual considerations, one of Marxôs strategic questions concerned the possibility ñfor the emergence of a form of state that embodies communal control over social powerò (Ollman 2003, 138).[50]

Since the mid-1960s, the Greek-French thinker Nicos Poulantzas worked through the problems of Marxist state theory. Starting from Sartrean intellectualism, Poulantzas read Gramsci, went through a phase of Althusserian structuralism, and ended by converging with Foucauldian analyses of power before his untimely death in 1979. In the introduction to Poulantzasô now modern classic óState, Power, Socialismò (2000 [1978]), Stuart Hall observed that the way it dealt ñwith the State and democracy in the context of the ótransition to socialism,ô

[49] Marx understood the capitalist mode of production as a Relation with an internal ñdouble movement (organic and historical) [which] can only be fully understood by breaking it down into a number of sub-movements, the most important of which are quantity/quality, metamorphosis, and contradictionò (Ollman 2003, 82).
[50] The question was posed by Marx in his analyses of the Paris Commune of 1870. The Yugoslav Marxists tried to answer it with their experiments in self-management and self-government (see Chapter Three).

indicates a shift in perspective, a new agenda and strikes a new note of political urgencyò (Poulantzas 2000, ix). By declaring that the state was a Relation, Poulantzas had hoped to have solved the enigma of the capitalist state, which was neither a neutral instrument to be ñconquered,ò nor a Subject to be defeated. The state was not just any Relation, though, but

> rather a relationship of forces, or more precisely the material condensation of such a relationship among classes and class fractions, such as this is expressed within the State in a necessarily specific form (Poulantzas 2000, 128ï 9 emphasis removed).

This specific ñrelationship of forcesò meant that the *economic* division of labour and the relations of production were materially condensed within the state apparatus ï because the state dialectically reproduced these economic relations. Similarly, *political* struggles between different classes were also condensed within the state form (ibid, 140ï 45). Because economic and political condensations were in tension, they opened up the state to emergence (similarly to the formulation of Ollman above). Moreover, state power was intersected by ideological relations, producing very complex positionalities for state actors (Poulantzas 2000, 147). The combined political, economic and ideological tensions within the state spanned a ñstrategic field and process of intersecting power networks, which both articulate and exhibit mutual contradictions and displacementsò (ibid, 136). In the strategic field, diverse tactics and micro-policies were superimposed on each other. Poulantzas showed that the political consequences were the fragmentation of the state apparatus, in words reminiscent of classic social anthropology:

> Rather than facing a corps of state functionaries and personnel united and cemented around a univocal political will, we are dealing with fiefs, clans, and factions: a multiplicity of diversified micro-policies [é] and the policy of the State essentially consists in the outcome of their collision (Poulantzas 2000, 135).

Only the emerging outcomes of this infighting edged towards coherence, as ñstate policies and global projects [condensed] in the interests of the hegemonic class or fractionò (ibid, 136).[51]

However, it remained somewhat unclear how certain strategic groups could be much more powerful/effective than others in influencing the apparently chaotic policy formation process. Josef Esser (2008, 215ï 6) argued that materialist state theory needed to take into account the discursive processing of ócapitalismô as the interest of the state. This would lead to a better appreciation of the organising as well as the dis-organising potentials of different classes and groups as they were materially condensed in the state (see Offe 2006). Alex DemiroviĆ argued that the economic processes determined, but did not dominate the social and political processes in the state. In effect social power relations were relatively free to form, but not beyond the

[51] In Poulantzasôday, the hegemonic faction was monopoly capitalism, today it is arguably financial capital.

borders of the main relations of production, i.e. capitalist relations (Demirović 2007, 64). This introduced a fourth dimension – social movements – in an intersectional analysis prefigured by Poulantzas himself, who had argued in one of his last interviews that the struggles of feminist, environmental and other social movements were equally important for the transformation of the state as economic, political, and ideological relations (Poulantzas, Hall, and Hunt 1979, 201).

Incidentally, this late interview was transcribed by the young sociologist Bob Jessop, who subsequently became a leading Poulantzas scholar in the English-speaking world. Jessop would later address genderôs centrality to state power, for instance (Jessop 2008, chap. 7).[52] Since the late 1980s, the racial, religious, ethnic, and other power relations were taken up in intersectional power analyses as well (see Massey 2012, 63, 133, 155). Poulantzasô followers found it increasingly difficult to ódetermineô how capitalist exploitation and bourgeois domination reproduced state power. For instance, Bob Jessop, who understood the state as ña social relation which can indeed be analysed as the site, the generator and the product of strategiesò (Jessop 1990, 260) discontinued a ñsearch for determination in the first, last, or intermediate instance. There is only [é] determination in the structurally coupled, strategically mediated, óinteractiveô instanceò (ibid, 103). This lack of an *ex-ante* necessity of outcomes of struggles led Jessop to formulate the concept of ñstrategic selectivity,ò arguing that the field of power that was materially and discursively condensed in the state relation skewed (but did not determine) the outcomes of social struggles (Jessop 2008, 45– 9).

Jessop also developed Poulantzasôone-way dialogue with Foucault (see Jessop 2008, chap. 6) further. Thus, Jessop argued that ógovernmentôis ña strategic codification of power relations [that] provides a bridge between micro-diversity and macro-necessity, and, as Foucault argues, a focus on micro-powers is determined by scale but applies across all scalesò (Jessop 2008, 153).

I break this insight down to the micro-transformations of local infrastructural and welfare state relations in Central Serbia and argue that ethnographic research can elucidate the everyday agency and ñself-affirmationò (ñ*Eigen-Sinn*ò) (Lüdtke 1995) of social actors within, through and against multiple scales of strategically selective state relations. Such a processual micro-ethnography can be a good diagnostic for the powerful relations that influence (but under-determine) the work of local state actors (see Eckert, Behrends, & Dafinger 2012). In this sense I take up strategic selectivity as axis two of my relational approach to the state.

[52] The question of gender relations was politicised in Serbia on the local state level (see Chapter Three).

In the next subsection I return to the ideology-critical challenge to structuralist state theory by Phillip Abrams, and discuss its permutations in the New Anthropology of the State.

Relational modalities

In the late 1980s, Marxist and Weberian structural class analyses of the state had largely run their course. Inspired by Gramsci, Althusser, Foucault and others, ñin the search for conceptual alternatives to overcome this theoretical stalemate, notions of ideology [é] and culture [é] took center stageò (Thelen, Vetters & von Benda-Beckmann 2014, 3, 16 fn.3). Following Abramsôclaim that the state was the mask of political practice, he had continued to argue

> [t]here *is*, too, a state-idea, projected, purveyed and variously believed in in different societies at different times. And its modes, effects and variations are also susceptible to research (Abrams 1988, 82).

Michael Taussig was one of the first anthropologists to explicitly develop this part of Abramsô discussion. Taussig was fascinated by and critical of the ñfetishò of the state, which he saw as a highly ambivalent ñcoming together of reason-and-violence in the Stateò that created its ñauratic and quasi-sacred qualityò (Taussig 1992b, 116). Taussigôs own historical-anthropological research on violence and reason in the capitalist plantation regimes of Guatemala had, of course, shown that terror and spaces of death were not the reserve of the state alone (Taussig 1992a). Some years before Taussig, Bruce Kapferer had also studied (without recourse to Abrams) the coming together of reason and violence in two otherwise remarkably different nation-state ideologies ï Australian egalitarian and Sri Lankan hierarchical nationalism (Kapferer 1988). A decade after Taussig, the violence in the state and its terrorist effects provided the *leitmotif* for an influential overview article on ómaddening statesô(Aretxaga 2003). Since then we have had a continuous stream of research on armed state activity and its social and affective consequences (see Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004; Navaro-Yashin 2012).[53]

In the same vein of studying the material force of ruling ideas, but broadening the picture even more, the renowned Marxist anthropologist Eric Wolf drew in his last book on his early teacher Elias and on other sociological classics to ñdistinguish among four modalities in how power is [é] woven into relationsò (Wolf 1999, 7). The four inter-related modalities Wolf identified were individual, interactional, tactical/organisational, and structural power. He was especially interested in structural power, in which he combined Marxian relations of production

[53] Regarding former post-Yugoslavia, there is much ethnographic research on violent state building and state destruction (see Ļoloviĺ 2011; Galijaġ 2011; Jansen and Löffving 2009; Schlichte 2010).

and Foucauldian relations of governance (Wolf 1999, 7ï 8).[54] The thrust of Wolfôs argument was that ñ[s]tructural power shapes the social field of action in such a way as to render some kinds of behaviour possible, while making others less possible or impossibleò (Wolf 2001, 385). The similarities between structural power and strategic selectivity are plain. Yet, Wolfôs theoretical-methodological suggestion still tend to be ignored, as is his injunction to realise a historical, comparative, and cumulative anthropology of power (Wolf 2001, 387, 397).

On the contrary, in a review article on narrative analysis in recent anthropology, Wolfôs contemporary William Roseberry complained about the

> now-standard misreading of Philip Abramsôs essay on sociological understandings of the state (1988) as arguing that states do not exist. But Abrams argued instead that sociologists had been lulled by the obvious ontological reality of the state into treating it as a false concrete, ignoring the complex process of ópolitically organized subjectionôthat lay behind its ómaskô (Roseberry 1997b, 931).

Roseberry referenced here the proliferating analyses that attempted to lift the state ñmaskò by deconstructing the bounded image of the state-as-subject. These analyses found rather chaotic sets of institutions, actors, policies and interests beneath it. While many studies of discursive power tended to ignore the state, this plethora of powers could as well be understood as diverse state effects (see Trouillot 2001). And indeed, the stark constructivist version of the narrative de-fetishisation of the state had it that these effects were experienced by everyday people, who in turn themselves produced the imagined, bounded state in opposition to society (Gupta 1995, 378; Taussig 1992b, 132; Yang 2005, 487). The more de-constructivist bend to this argument posited the almost complete dissolution of the state into floating signifiers, multiple ñfaces of the stateò constantly made, unmade and remade in ñthe habits of everyday life.ò Did the real space of the state, one influential study asked, lie in its everyday ideological constructions, ñrather than in the hallways of public institutions or the postures of official personalitiesò (Navaro-Yashin 2002, 122)?

The most prominent (re-)constructivist anthropologist of the state-as-popular-imagination is arguably Akhil Gupta. He wrote an oft-cited article about a loosely related set of local state practices in northern rural India bound together by popular and media images of the ñcorruptò state. Gupta claimed that corruption was the ñmechanism through which óthe stateô itself is discursively constitutedò (Gupta 1995, 376). He proceeded to argue that ña chain of corrupt practices [é] extends to the apex of state organizationò (Gupta 1995, 384). In the long-awaited ethnographic monograph drawing on this fieldwork, Gupta however used (and reified) the evocative image of óRed Tapeô in the title (Gupta 2012). Despite the time that had lapsed since

[54] Eric Wolf proceeded by masterfully comparing power in non-state, early state, and modern state societies, on the example of the 19th century Kwakiutl, the historical Aztecs, and Nazi Germany.

the original article, Gupta still had difficulties to historically or organically explain how a chain of corruption to the apex of the state came about or was reproduced. To pin down the social fact of corruption, Gupta now argued that corruption constituted ñstructural violenceò against the poor that ñdiscriminates against all those who do not have the monetary resources to obtain goods and services that are supposed to be free or at subsidized prices but that in fact contain a market priceò (Gupta 2012, 76). His argument about the adverse effects of venality on social security appears intuitively right, but is only loosely linked to his equally logical afterthought that ñ[c]orruption may also be such a fecund signifier because it serves as a site for debates prompted by conflicting systems of moral and ethic behaviorò (ibid, 80).[55]

According to the strategic selectivity approach discussed earlier, these corruption discourses would be the strategically selective outcomes of conjunctions of concrete political, economic and ideological processes, and social movements. One study has offered just such a conjunctural explanation of the strong re-emergence of corruption discourses after the South-East Asian financial crisis of 1998. Corruption discourse was explained as a successful strategy of the World Bank to legitimise neoliberal state restructuring in the face of neoliberal policy failure. The strategy was effective partly because it dovetailed with older corruption critiques initially developed by left-wing social movements with political goals opposed to those of the World Bank (Bedirhanoğlu 2007).

What is fruitful in Guptaôs work for my argument is that it highlights the multi-faceted nature of corruption discourses. Moreover, Gupta admits that while ñ[p]opular knowledge about the state was intimately tied to discourses of corruption [é] one could theoretically separate knowledge about the state from narratives of corruption [é]ò (Gupta 2012, 77). This opens up (again) the possibility of studying the constructedness of the state by several simultaneous, interfering or amplifying relational modalities. In the context of the near-hegemonic constructivist approach, anthropologists analysing processes of power and the state had already produced many rather monomorphic images like the ñstates of contentionò in Eastern Europe (Gledhill 2005), the ñcunning stateò in India (Randeria and Grunder 2011), or the ñbulldozer stateò in Chinaôs borderlands (Bellér-Hann 2014). Meanwhile, others had begun to construct more pluri-morphic imagery, like the ñoligarchic-corporate stateò (Kapferer 2005a) or the ñstates at workò in Africa (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan 2014a). While the former

[55] Guptaôs (2012, 125ï 35) reading of 1960s Indian ñrealist fictions, anthropological representations,ò including a village ethnography by F.G. Bailey is a well-crafted, informative account about development brokers and dishonest politicians, but has not much to say about corruption discourses.

emphasised the convergence of oligarchic corporatist and state forms on the trans-national scale, the latter pointed to interacting relational modalities within a nation state.[56]

Several research networks have started to publish studies of the diversity of state modalities in one location. Thus, Ole Therkildsen has recently argued that the Neo-Patrimonialism paradigm, when used to monomorphically explain African bureaucracies, ñignores other sources of staff motivation commonly recognised in studies of bureaucracies (Peters 1995, 102ï 7) such as conviction (i.e. ódoing good for my countryô), professionalism (ódoing things rightô); or involvement in decision-making (i.e. as an employee in running the organization; as a politically active citizen)ò (Therkildsen 2014, 124). Similarly, Larissa Vetters (2014) has shown how two opposed relational modalities ï enacting personalistic ties and public claiming of humanitarian reason ï were employed by Bosnian citizens in relations with Mostarôs city administration.

Drawing on these insights, I propose to look at the recombination and situational prevalence of two or more modalities within a state relation to nuance our understanding of the stateôs constructedness. Therefore I take up the study of órelational modalitiesô as a third axis of my anthropology of the state. Relational modalities impact on relations inside, outside, and across the imagined boundaries of the state, as analyses of bureaucracy and government highlight.

Boundary work: the anthropology of government and bureaucracy

The question of what constituted the inside and the outside of state power was posed indirectly by Michel Foucault, although he professed no interest in state theory as such. In the lectures on óSecurity, Territory and Populationô (Foucault 2009 [1977-8]), considered as his turning point towards questions of the modern state, Foucault claimed ñI do, I want to, and I must pass up on state theory ï just as one would with an undigestable mealò (cited in Jessop 2008, 147). For a long time Foucault had studied the capillary diffusion of power throughout society, ranging from kingly power (sovereignty) to the discipline in city poor houses and early capitalist manufactories (Foucault 1995). Yet, as much as he was fascinated by micro-power (and resistance), the later Foucault studied the emergence of the large-scale ñart of government,ò or ñgovernmentality,ò since the 17th and 18th century France (Foucault 2008).

The later Foucault inspired the grandiose, if one-sided critique of the modern nation state as so many attempts to better the human condition that failed (Scott 1998, 360 fn.8). James Scott somewhat romanticised the ó*metis*,ô or mutuality and resistance of the people against the

[56] The potently visual metaphor of ñstates at workò assembling diverse ómaterialsô is derived from road signs warning of ñmen at workò (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan 2014b, 5ï 6).

multiple encroachments of a state (mis)understood as an entity above society that tried to impose a ógridôon society through which ñit could be centrally recorded and monitoredò (Scott 2009, 2, 101, chapter 9). The resistance studies that Scottôs work both exemplified and inspired have been criticized for ñover-looking the [é] phenomenon of public participation in reproducing systems of powerò (Navaro-Yashin 2002, 158ï 9). This point is well taken, but there are more options than the dichotomy resistance/reproduction of power. In Serbia I found that the citizens indeed vigorously criticized the state for its malpractices, representing themselves sometimes as a ñsociety against the stateò (see Clastres 1989 [1974]). As Navaro-Yashin might have argued, and *pace* Scott, my interlocutors felt that they had been *abandoned* by the state, and they only reciprocated when they acted as if it was not there.[57] However, I was especially intrigued to find ñhidden transcripts of resistanceò (Scott 1990) *by government agents* inside state relations ï against one relational modality, but in favour of another (see Chapter Five).

How can we avoid stateï people or powerï resistance dichotomies as an analytical standpoint? Foucault argued for a triangle of movements: ñgovernment, population, political economyò (Foucault 2009, 108). Indeed, he thought that government had saved the (medieval) state and later both limited the modern state and made it possible in tactics vis-a-vis society:

> [T]his governmentality that is at the same time both external and internal to the state [é] is the tactics of government that allow the continual definition of what should or should not fall within the stateôs domain, what is public and what private, what is and is not within the stateôs competence (Foucault 2009, 109).

Timothy Mitchell (1991, 90) developed Foucaultôs relational insights into governmental tactics further and argued that we need to study the boundary work of the state, because ñthe state-society divide is not a simple border between two free-standing objects or domains, but a complex distinction internal to these realms of practice.ò Indeed, Mitchell argued, the effect of the state as appearing distinct from society was the result of mundane social practices of discipline (T. Mitchell 1991, 95). This implied that the boundary work could (and should) be studied micro-ethnographically, looking at how people enact the boundary, as well as how they resist or manoeuvre it. From here it is only a small step to see how the state can be differently constructed depending on the situationally switching positionality of a person. The state may be one among a host of significant emic categories, strategically employed by actors to further their goals (ñstrategic essentialismò). In the face of the óoutsiderôsô critique the state could be

[57] In fact, people held government discursively accountable for its responsibilities. In post-Yugoslav Bosnia-Herzegovina, for instance, the widespread critique of the state could be read as óa yearning for the grid,ô and people tried to become the state in order to reproduce it by ógrid-makingô (Jansen 2014).

imagined and defended as oneôs dwelling place (Herzfeld 2005, 32, 65). That is, if an observer was included in a relation with a state person, he defended against outsiders the ñcultural intimacyò with a friend who happened to be a state official. Yet, if the same person felt excluded he could criticise the difference between official images of bureaucratic detachment and actual friendly practices as the ñcorruptionò of state power (Herzfeld 2005, 54-5).

Manchester Anthropology insights into personalised and bureaucratic demands on interface bureaucrats prefigured such analyses. As already partly discussed above, Norman Long for instance had developed such insights in his work on a Mexican *ejido* (village), where the state was predominantly perceived as disinterested, cunning and thieving. Nonetheless, the evaluation situationally depended on the negotiated relations between state agents and villagers, too. Thus, when an agricultural extension officer expressed the villagersô state critique himself in order to gain their *confianza* (trust), the villagers overcame their scepticism and hoped for state help (Long 2001, chapter 9). The local state actor had discursively stepped outside his state role, appropriated the villagerôs point of view, and established a more collaborative state relation. Recent research on Mozambique showed the opposite move. In the absence of disciplining state practice, settlers produced their own construction plans for their new housing scheme, a process of ñmimesis of the state (Nielsen 2010). But how is such discursive and material state posturing/concealment embedded into everyday local state practices? Two strands of literature, the bureaucratic and the governmental analyses of the state, approach this question.[58]

Bureaucratic analyses have focused since the 1980s on the deconstruction of common sense Western notions of ñformal organisation,ò drawing inspiration, for example, from Foucauldian disciplines (Handelman 1981, 4ï5).[59] One important issue was the dilemma of frontline social policy experts in the ñstreet-level bureaucracy,ò explored by the political scientist Michael Lipsky (1980). Lipsky showed that street-level bureaucrats, torn between professional convictions of what was right to do, and formal or managerial demands for bureaucratic containment, ñimplicitly mediate aspects of the constitutional relationship of citizens to the stateò (Lipsky 1980, 4). In direct contact with ñclients,ò the relation with their managers was riveted with conflict, compounded where there was a lack of resources and a high case load. Negotiating these social interfaces, street-level bureaucrats ñexercise a wide discretion in decisions about citizens with whom they interact,ò which ñregularly permits them to make

[58] I cannot do justice to the sprawling literature, but only highlight some developments. Nor will I reference cross-sectional anthropological approaches on governance, legal pluralism, and policy formation.
[59] More recently, Matthew Hull (2012b, 8) traced the genealogy of ñWesternò bureaucracy to the private economic government of the early colonial ôEast India Company.ô

policyò (Lipsky 1980, 13). The argument was revisited 30 years later by Tony Evans. Based on research in British welfare services, Evans suggested that the perspective of the street-level bureaucraciesô bottom up policy-making was diametrically opposed to top-down ñdomination managerialism.ò Both poles were mediated by the ñdiscursive managementò perspective that ña continuing professional discourse, in different ways at different management levelsò shaped ñpractitioner discretionò (Evans 2010, 167).

Professional ñpractitioner discretionò was complemented by relations to ñservice usersò and, as Fallers argued long ago, central state-scale policy proposals. The second generation of Manchester anthropologists, including Don Handelman, Norman Long, and Bruce Kapferer, passed these insights on to a next generation of anthropologists, including Michael Herzfeld, Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Akhil Gupta, Georg Elwert, Thomas Bierschenk, and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan (for German anthropology, see Long 1993; Bierschenk 2008). The latter developed the already introduced ñstates at workò paradigm, asking

> how public servants spend their time, how teachers are being trained and socialized into their jobs, how judges, policemen and teachers define their role in society, how they see their future and how they negotiate all the conflicting demands made of them, by their clients, their relatives and superiors, and the outside agencies (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan 2014a, 4).

The ñstate at workò view of bureaucracy has turned full circle to the question of the ñembeddednessò of public servants. The practices of interface bureaucrats, however, are also seen as cutting through the internal state-society divide, both materially and discursively. I adapt the óstates at workô perspective in Chapter Three named óThe Local Council at Work,ô where I consider the contributions of Serbian local councillors and the population to road building projects.

While many anthropological analyses of the state still tend to rediscover classical topics in ónewô environments like bureaucratic beliefs, rituals, and informal relations, a new materialism has begun to look ñ*at* [documents] rather than through themò and to treat them as ñmediators, things that ótransform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning of the elements they are supposed to carryò (Latour 2005, 39; cited in Hull 2012b, 13). Amalgamating micro-agency in social and material relations, a new focus has become how government is mediated by what I call ñpaperwork,ò the handling and enacting of documents (Hull 2012a). Such Latourian óanthumanismô (Pyyhtinen and Tamminen 2011) has inspired Hoagós (2011, 89) anti-Taussigian view that, rather than deconstructing bureaucracy as a violent fetish, we might better reconstruct it as ñas gatherings that require care and careful assembly.ò Less hopefully, Bear and Mathur (2015, 20) have urged us to look at how the reconfiguring of the public good in terms of New Public Management (NPM) creates new lines of conflict within and beyond bureaucracies. In

this context I develop two analyses of paperwork. In the Local Council, the voluntary council members used documents scantily and seldom kept minutes of sessions for long. One imaginary document, the budget of the Local Council, became a reified ñboundary objectò which served to spatially and temporally unite peopleôs diverse pursuits (Star and Griesemer 1989) (see Chapter Three). Conversely, the street level bureaucrats in the CSW spent half their work time administering files according to new NPM techniques, which most saw as wasted time that they could better use caring for the needy. Sometimes, however, these documents provided actuarial and evidentiary clues to social workers how a ñwelfare relationò changed over time, and how it could be changed in the future (see Chapter Five).

Governmental analyses, while sometimes highlighting violent sovereignty (Mbembe 2001), have more recently also turned towards materialism. Concretely, we have a growing body of investigations into the infrastructural, society enabling processes organised by the state (Collier 2011; Ferguson 2010; Harvey and Knox 2012). In a programmatic statement, governmental anthropologists argued that we should study how ñcontemporary changes in the forms of *oikos* [economy] and *anthropos* [human society]ò are valued and what new political possibilities they entail (Collier and Ong 2003, 426). This research programme, reminiscent of Wolfôs anthropology of power, enabled analyses at ñthe intersection of governmental programs with the world they would transformò (Li 2007, 27). If government leads to the collusion between local state people and the working classes, it signifies less the ñdamaging effects of improvement programsò (Li 2007, 2) than the ómoral re-appreciationô of state policies (Thiemann 2014). In extreme cases, claims on government voiced by ñeverydayò people can even be couched as ñcare for the stateò (RajkoviĆ 2015, 162ï 8). We thus begin to see how the strategic selectivity, relational modalities, and bureaucratic-governmental boundary work enable and condition one another in the processes of state formation.

In the final section I focus on (road) infrastructures and social security, the two governmental tasks that make up the subject matter of my empirical chapters. This is because, as I have argued in the Introduction, their production largely determined (but did not dominate) what Serbian citizens regarded as valuable state activity.

1.3 The government of infrastructure and social security

> What will carry it [the state] away and already is sweeping it away? Worldness. The State has not lost its links with the óreal,ô notably with the spatial. It runs the risk, precisely in this way, of becoming the instrument of multinational firms, or of collapsing under their blows and manipulations. The least of these risks: to

> consolidate, enrich and become more oppressive and repressive. This state will not let itself wither away or be overcome without resistance (Lefebvre 2009 [1978], 278ï 9).

In 1978, Henri Lefebvre tackled the relationship between the state and neoliberal globalization threatening lived spaces. In a process he called ñbecoming-worldò or ñworldnessò (*mondialité*), Lefebvre projected the danger of an incipient, non-emancipatory ñsweeping awayò of the state. His dystopian vision that the withering away of the state (desired by libertarians) might give rise to an ñoligarchic-corporatistò amalgam of transnational fractions of capital, government, and the military, has been embraced by some (Kapferer 2005a; Kapferer and Bertelsen 2009). But history and space being open (Lefebvre 1991; Massey 2012), there are other tendencies, too.[60] If the state was a materially condensed Relation incorporating social antagonisms, how were these dangers negotiated outside, within, and through local state relations? The production of road infrastructure presents one field where this question can be considered.

Anthropologies of the road

Max Gluckmanôs article ôThe Bridgeô ñinaugurated an ethnographic interest in this kind of space [the road] where diverse social and cultural groups move, meet and interactò (Dalakoglou and Harvey 2012, 461). In line with this (invented) tradition, anthropologists have studied road spaces in relation to time, (im)mobility and modernity (ibid). A relatively early intervention paid special attention to conflicting historical narratives concerning the building of rural roads in Galicia, Spain in the 1960s (Roseman 1996). While village interlocutors stressed that they had built ñtheir roadò through communal labour, a local power broker and the Municipal state staff remembered how it had been a top-down procedure, in which they had ñtaxedò the villagers by using their traditionally free labour. While both perspectives contradicted but also fed on each other, Roseman highlighted also the local appropriation of the village road building for purposes of revaluing communal solidarity 30 years later.

More violently than in rural Galicia, Nigerôs ôRoad number 1ô had been built in the late 19th century through colonial forced *corvé* labour that killed many workers and littered the landscape with destroyed magical spaces (Masquelier 2002). The destructive processes were re-lived by elder Nigerien travellers as the fear of ghosts haunting their journey. Masquelier concluded that

[60] Small places negotiate large issues, as not only anthropologists argue: ñThe everyday protests; it revolts in the name of innumerable particular cases and unforeseen situations. Outside the zone affected by bureaucracy, or in its margins, the formless and the spontaneous subsist. Within the organized or over-organized sphere a stubborn resistance persists, so that form has to adapt, modify, and adjustò (Lefebvre 1961, 2:69; in Sheringham 2010, 149ï 50).

the colonial-capitalist infrastructure produced ñnon-placesò (Augé 1995) ñwhich are discursively mapped onto southern Nigerôs highway [. They] would not exist without their connections to earlier material and mythical placesñ (Masquelier 2002, 846). I take up from Rosemanôs and Masquelierôs investigations a focus on the sedimented materiality of roads and their qualities to induce desire, affect, and claims. Incidentally, the first asphalt road in my rural field site was built like in the Galician case in the 1960s, and road construction has ever since been a highly charged and contested process (see Chapter Three).

Sedimenting meanings of roads are linked to generational belonging and imaginations, as Klaegerôs (2013) research implies. Doing fieldwork with the younger African generations that could not remember the horrors of colonial road building, Klaeger analysed their appropriation of the road as an everyday perceived and lived space of driving, walking and dwelling on (or next to) the roadside. Sitting under a shade, relaxing and fantasizing about the status of passers-by, Klaegerôs informants were people ñtravelling, while sittingò (Archambault 2012; cited in Klaeger 2013, 457).[61] The men in my field site similarly spent much of their leisure time at the roadside shop, watching the world go by (see Chapter Four). More overtly political appropriations of the road were triggered by the recurrent dangers of speed. Road dwellers sometimes blocked the road to demonstrate their anger over lethal accidents, and ritual killings. Thus, the road dwellers ñtransform[ed] the road into a space of and stage for power, protest and vigilante effortsò (Klaeger 2013, 464). In my field, similar political protests have been especially directed at local state representatives (see Chapter Three).

Geographically closer to my field site, Dalakoglouôs ethnographic and archival research on the road traversing the Albanian-Greek border area has distinguished between early socialist ñvoluntaristic,ò late socialist institutionalised, and capitalist intensified road production and use. In the 1940s and 1950s, state organized road building involved the younger generation in ña de-alienating process through which people aspired to create a novel, socialist and modern futureò (Dalakoglou 2012, 573). Later, as socialist charisma turned routine, state building devolved into a ñmonolithic state-run projectò that failed on ñits basic materialistic conception, namely the creation of certain social relationships and human subjectsò (ibid). Finally, capitalist roads with their promise of increased auto-mobility created new asymmetries, ópeeding upô the upwardly mobile and óbrakingô the rest. As the post-socialist state dis-invested from infrastructure responsibilities, the rapid decay of the roadôs asphalt was partly countered by increased foreign donor-investment. Similar differentiations in social, spatial and temporal mobility were also

[61] Klaeger highlighted as further affective forms of road appropriation romances and parties unfolding on them.

painfully felt by my Serbian post-socialist interlocutors. Indeed, the local road building projects I studied had to make do with ever scarcer resources.[62]

Two governmentalities (we might also call them relational modalities) operated in Peruvian road building, the ñmachinicò and the ñemergent,ò as Hannah Knox and Penny Harvey (2011) have argued. ñMachinic governmentalityò tried to minimize harm through a rigid codification of safety rules and regulations. ñEmergent governmentality,ò in contrast, was a bricolage that produced an adequate, but unstable engagement with the dangers of space-time compression. The road builders who were engaged in the emergent governmentality felt the ñenchantments of [modern] infrastructureò linked to promises ñof speed, of political integration and of economic connectivityò (Harvey and Knox 2012, 524). Nuancing Scottôs (1998) narrative of grand governmental failure, the ñenchantment of infrastructureò was a forceful promise which repeatedly failed on its own promises (see Li 2007). The ñconstant deferral [of modernity] [é] may end up diminishing peopleôs faith in the ability of governments and of experts to deliver suitable material forms, [é but] it strengthens the desire for them and constantly renews the sense that sometime soon they will appear and life will change for the betterò (Harvey and Knox 2012, 534). A comparable cycle of dis-enchantment also took hold of Local Councillors and their critics, who were torn between the disappointments and cynicisms of post-socialist disinvestment, and their desire to outperform previous Local Councils in road building. Hence, emergent governmentality created intense struggles within, through and against the local state.

Similar cycles of enchantment, disenchantment, and re-enchantment would also grip the officials and citizens dealing with social security and social policy, to whom I finally turn.

Transformations of social security

In this thesis I follow a relational definition of ósocial securityôas the

> efforts of individuals, groups of individuals and organizations to overcome insecurities related to their existence, that is, concerning food and water, shelter, care and physical and mental health, education and income, to the extent that the contingencies are not considered a purely individual responsibility [é] (Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann 2000, 14).

Social security encompasses in this perspective the social organization of the satisfaction of material wants, needs (and desires) of the population in six non-hierarchical and interacting domains: cultural ideologies, normative institutions, individual perceptions, social relations, social practices, and social and economic consequences (ibid). I find this complex view of social

[62] Major Serbian highways like *koridor 10* and *11*, however, have been built since 2009 using international credit lines (http://koridorisrbije.rs/lat), accessed 5.12.2015.

security useful to study the making, maintaining, negotiation, and breaking of local welfare relations, in the context of large scale welfare state transformations.

Although it is difficult to pinpoint trans-national trends, it has been broadly argued that a welfare state reorganisation has been underway since the 1970s in Western states, and after 1990 in post-socialist Eastern Europe. Bob Jessop, studying the transformations in Great Britain, tackled Offeôs paradox that ñwhile capitalism cannot coexist *with*, neither can it exist *without*, the welfare stateò (Jessop 2002, 275). In this context Jessop argues that

> basic structural contradictions and strategic dilemmas in the capital relation [é] ensure that the relationship between market, civil society and state is always problematic. Capitalist growth depends essentially on the market-mediated exploitation of wage-labour ï not on the inherent efficiency of unfettered markets [é]. [I]f the state had failed to compensate for the failures of the market within the KWNS [Keynesian Welfare National State] and, in addition, generated its own failures, it does not follow that a return to the market will put things right. The SWPR [Schumpeterian Workfare Postnational Regime] is the latest attempt to square this capital accumulation-social welfare (reproduction) circle (Jessop 2002, 276).

The contradictory relationship between state-regulated capitalism and the welfare state, tending to discipline the poor to work and to moralise their dependency in the SWPR, uncannily paralleled some of the logics that Foucault (1995) had unearthed in ó*Discipline and Punish*ô for the early capitalist state. A similar relationship also characterised the recent changes in the Serbian welfare state, according to which social aid recipients deemed ñable to workò were to work or undergo education in order not to forfeit state support (Mandić 2014). The Minister of Work and Social Protection remarked that the new regulations were ñfull of extraordinary left-wing ideas,ò reminding us of the productionist bias in some strands of Marxist welfare theory:

> Marx is of course famous for having proclaimed [é in the Critique of the Gotha Programme] a certain distributive ideal as the ultimate ñfrom each according to his ability, to each according to his need.ò [é] [A] formula that Stalin would later famously render as ñFrom each according to his ability, to each according to his workò and Lenin even more succinctly as ñHe who does not work shall not eatò (Lenin 1968, 223), a phrase that eventually found its way into the constitution of the USSR (Ferguson 2015, 222 fn.10).

Of course, there have been powerful countertendencies to productionism *within* socialist thought that posited humanist solidarity as a central tenet. This was the case in late socialist Yugoslavia, as I will argue in Chapter Five. The recent confluence of productionism in Great Britain and Serbia therefore urges us to ñthink again about the conventional spatial and scalar fields across which policy is understood to move, perhaps towards a more ófoldedô understanding of proximities and distancesò (Clarke et al. 2015, 49).

For instance, analyses of the structural violence affecting the lives of the black poor in the USA have shown that not only social and economic policy change, but also the ñwar on drugsò and the ñpenalizationò of poverty influenced outcomes (Bourgois 2003; Duneier 2007;

Wacquant 2009). Akhil Gupta (2012, 24) recently borrowed the US terminology to analyse the Indian welfare bureaucracy and argued that ñthe ethics and politics of care [é] is arbitrary in its consequences. [é] [S]uch arbitrariness is not in itself arbitrary, rather, it is systematically produced by the very mechanisms that are meant to ameliorate social suffering.ò Gupta seems to blame here the bureaucracy for the dismal developmental outcomes of India. Franz von Benda-Beckmann enlisted the limitations of such an approach, i.e. of treating social security outside the context of multiple exploitations and distributive exclusions. Dissecting the skewed attempts at introducing state social security in Indonesia, he argued:

> (T)hese policies, intended or unintended, contribute to redistribution from the less well off to the better off. A reverse distributive policy, not spellbound by formal employment, optimalization of production and social security attached to this, is called for [é]. Only then can social security policy stop being the ócleaning lady for the debris left by economic developmentô (Benda-Beckmann 1994, 114).

In the same vein, James Ferguson (2015, 199) has called for a ónew left art of government,ô ña form of politics that would combine the recognition that distribution is central (and not simply a derivative or a reflex of systems of production) with an appreciation of the political sociology that would be necessary to bring it about (within which the bureaucratic state remains a sine qua non).ò Fergusonôs call is based on his analysis of contemporary Southern Africa, in which he showed that large swathes of the population, regarded as valuable and scarce in earlier economic formations, have become redundant to the reproduction of neo-capitalism. Whereas in the 20th century their relations of dependence on industrial labour had assured a kind of ñunequal incorporationò through ñwork membership,ò their recent ñprecarious positionò increased their economic as well as social and moral dispossession (Ferguson 2013, 231, 235).

How societies could weave new ñdependencyò relations as ñwork membershipò receded is a question that has been haunting former Yugoslavia, where moral anxieties arising from rapid deindustrialisation abound. For instance, much ambivalence surrounds the gradations of incorporation/ex-corporation of ñredundantò workers in retraining programmes in the Serbian city of Kragujevac, as one anthropological study has recently shown (RajkoviÍ 2015).

Aggravating the effects of deindustrialisation, the former Yugoslav central states, unlike their South African counterparts, have translated IMF and World Bank policy advice rather less óprogressivelyô since the 1980s (Stambolieva and Dehnert 2011, 49, 101, 141, 229, 268, 324). As they introduced aspects of the Schumpeterian Workfare Postnational Regime, naturalized images of benign kinship regained currency. These images of the ñgood familyò came soon into conflict with rising domestic scarcity and social inequalities. These discursive transformations could sometimes have surprising effects. In a recent article Tatjana Thelen, Dugka Roth and I

have argued that the naturalization of ñgoodò kinship was used by Serbian social workers to innovate state provided old age care by modelling it on images of family care (Thelen, Thiemann & Roth 2014). In Chapter Six I take up and develop the argument further.

Using ócareô as a sensitizing practice concept that cuts across social and ideological boundaries, Tatjana Thelen (2014) found post-socialist óhiddenô caring relationships in eastern Germany that western German contemporaries typically did not expect or evaluated as undesirable. In other words, a post-socialist ñethics of careò (Tronto 2011) still partly informed non-state as well as state-organized care relations. According to research conducted by another anthropologist of eastern Germany, local welfare managers shared a rather socialist focus on care among work colleagues, regardless whether they positioned themselves pro or contra state socialism (McGill 2013). Similarly ï but with a maybe infelicitous terminology ï Marek Mikuġ has termed (post-)socialist Serbian associations for the handicapped ñtraditional forms of civil society,ò because they continued to ask for a ñpaternalist welfare relationship,ò in comparison to Western-inspired disability NGOs that pressed for autonomizing and individualizing reforms (Mikuġ 2013, 167ï 94).

As these interventions suggest, state care and social security can depend on diverse relational modalities of mobilising resources. Ļarna Brkoviĺ, who studied the welfare state in a Bosnian Centre for Social Work (CSW), has found in this respect that social policy was so inadequately financed that social workers, in order to provide resources to the needy, developed gifting qualities and accumulated indebted (ingratiated) relations. One social worker enhanced her political savvy so much that way that she became a ñbig womanò (Brkoviĺ 2012, 199ï 212). Nonetheless, many pressing social concerns could not be managed by the welfare state alone. Thus, the parents of children with serious diseases had to initiate óhumanitarian actionsô to collect funds for treatment abroad. Not all parents succeeded to navigate the multiple social relations, and even the effective ones criticized the emerging, uncanny ñmove-opticonò of public moral self-representation (Brkoviĺ 2014).

Like Brkoviĺ I studied an underfunded ï and in my case over-reformed ï CSW. Fergusonôs valuable provocation of framing socio-economic relations as ódependenciesô has sharpened our sensibilities for the importance of emerging welfare state arrangements. For the *inter*-dependencies across the internal boundary between state and society which I have observed, I propose to use the similarly provocative term ñlocal state relations.ò

Conclusion

The elliptical view of the local state as a Relation owes much to Nicos Poulantzasô (highly scaled) argument about capitalist nation states. In this chapter I combined the political-sociological theory he inspired with three strands of the anthropology of the state ï the Manchester Schoolôs qualitative network analysis of local state actors, ideology-critical research on the modalities of power, and analyses of the materiality of bureaucracy and government. In the process I developed four axes for a relational approach to the local state, namely (1) embeddedness, (2) strategic selectivity, (3) relational modalities, and (4) boundary work.

What is the combined perspective on the local state that emerges? I have argued that the local state mediates concrete, complex, and contradictory processes ï influenced by diverse strategic projects of ordering society that are enacted or challenged in everyday situations by local state actors who negotiate diverse relational modalities within their respective social relations.

Under conditions of present-day neo-capitalism, local states have experienced a strong, transnational political project pushing away from the inclusive organization of infrastructures, work-based social insurances, and welfare payments (the Keynesian Welfare National State) to a more restrictive, market oriented, and punishing approach (the Schumpeterian Workfare Post-national Regime). Yet, as Manchester anthropologists have consistently argued, we need to integrate the agency of people in the interface with structures to develop an adequate theory of state processes (Long 2001: 27, 28). In fact, people resist, appropriate, navigate and re-channel strategically selective images and practices within their social relations. Against the background of broader socialist governmental ambitions concerning the enabling of human relations, post-socialist government negotiates the changing relevance of cultural, material and social practices of the state. The negotiated state practices that I analyse throughout the thesis are desires for socially relevant paperwork, meaningful road building, (socialist) humanist professionalism, caring relations with users, and a reclaiming of government from below. In the process, local state actors experiment with various forms of politics, some of which are conservative, others possible inspirations for a new left art of government.

The production of infrastructures and social security, my two focal points for studying the trans-formations of the local state, have been longstanding subjects of social anthropology, concerns of local government, and interests of the population. In the first empirical chapter I study the ascent of a rising local politician from the vantage point of his ǿembeddednessô in rural and urban infrastructural and social security relevant relations.

2. How to become and stay a politician: Shifting embeddedness, interface diplomacy, and social rebellion

> The very fact of the gathering of the young, in all aspects healthy people, and disciplined trainings, developed the spirit of community, competition, tolerance and solidarity. The other locals spiritedly got fired up with (*dugo navijali*) their village [é]. Applause welcomed every beautiful move, people played [é] attacking football, without passing backwards, similar to how the whole society went with huge steps forward (preface to the 50th anniversary publication of the football club in Lower Village, 2011, p.5).

The 21 July 2009 promised to be a hot mid-summer day, with temperatures rising above 30 degrees Celsius. Lower Villageôs community day Holy Elijah (2 August) lay less than two weeks ahead. In the morning, the priest would hold a special church liturgy for the village patron saint, followed by a feast (*gozba*) organized by a family or neighbourhood selected by the church committee. The Local Council (SMZ) would have its separate celebration with food, drinks and live music in the afternoon, financed by a grant from the Tourism Department of the River City Municipality. For the occasion, the Local Council sent invitations to its former presidents, to dignitaries from Municipal organizations which had done them a favour or were expected to do so, to Local Councils of neighbouring villages, and to ñsponsorsò of village activities.

As part of the expanded, SMZ led celebration, the village football club *FK Zadrugari* (Cooperative Farmers) *1961* organised a couple of friendly matches against guests from River City. Since 8 am, the groundwork for the event had been under way. Zoran JankoviĆ (born 1953), a former midfielder who owned the shop in the village centre, mowed the football pitch on the clubôs new garden tractor. A stoneôs throw away, several men hoed and dug earth around the entrance of the club house/changing rooms (*svlačionica*). Others started to shovel sand, gravel, cement, and water into mixing machines. Their work action (*radna akcija*) was laying the concrete foundations for a roofed veranda of the club house, so that honoured guests could be sheltered from the weather.

The social and economic aspects of the work action were organized by the centre forward of the Veteran team, Mladen ó*Veterinar*ô SimiĆ (b. 1967). Mladen had done the shopping, organized the catering, and constantly reminded people via mobile phone to participate and ñhave some beer.ò For this purpose he cooled beer in the water tanks and fished the bottles out

with a shovel. The atmosphere was relaxed. In total, two dozen men aged between 15 and 63 took part. Most were village residents, others, like Mladen, maintained close ties to the village. Work was supervised by the craftsman (*majstor*) nicknamed *Paliku*Í*a* (burner of the house). A stern looking man, *Paliku*Í*a* (b. 1959) abstained from drinking and regularly urged the men to work harder to get the job done. Tools were provided by the Local Council, the club, and the workers, while most building materials had to be purchased. Funding for this infrastructural upgrade was obtained in small part through the SMZ, but the major share came from the Municipality.

The project funding for refurbishing the club compound had been procured by and large by Mladen *Veterinar*ï who had been a member of the City parliamentôs committee for sports since 2008. In this chapter I reconstruct Mladenôs progress as a politician, a rise not achieved without costs. Although Mladen diplomatically balanced being part of the moral economies of the village and of the city, his new political position at the frontline between the state and the people (in an interface type I), inadvertently strained some of his personal relationships. There were astonishing similarities between Mladen and the Spanish Galician village entrepreneur and township councillor Pedro (introduced in Chapter One), who was described by Roseman (1996, 842) as ñdedicated to democratic governmentò and trying to reorganize the history of ñvillage solidarityò and ñcommunal work.ò Once he was elected to the City parliament, Mladenôs difficulties paralleled Pedroôs to ñremain a member of the moral community of worker-peasants and also be a politician, even a councillor representing several parishesò (Roseman 1996, 854 fn.15).

Two issues were most intensely contested in Mladenôs rural relations. These were the late-socialist ethics of care by helping close relations and fellow villagers to find employment (described in detail below), and a near equalisation of politics with corruption. Anthropologists have described corruption as the pollution of moral economic relations. In nation states modelled on metaphors of kin, the mixing of kinship and politics ñfor practical purposesò has often been seen emically as corruption (see Herzfeld 1998, 77). Indeed, actions that violate any of a number of legal, social, or moral normative orders, have been described that way (see Olivier de Sardan 1999). In fact, the definition of corruption is itself a normative act (Gupta 2012, 79ï81). Therefore I prefer to concentrate on describing how the emic discourses concerning *korupcija*, *korumpiranost* and *malverzacije* [embezzlement], *pokvarenost* [villainy], *ġvaleracija* [adultery], *ġverc* [black marketing], *stranaļko zapoġljavanje* [cronyism], and *nerad* [non-work]) affected local politics.

In his difficult, normatively loaded interface position, Mladen negotiated the contradictory demands of his fragmented community (in interfaces of type I) and of the equally fragmented state (in type II and especially type III interfaces, i.e. with those from the same or higher scales of the state). Local politicians, like village headmen or street-level bureaucrats, had four options in such interfaces: conforming, resignation, self-interested action, and social rebellion. Operating multiple interfaces, their agency was often a hybrid of these four possibilities. Mladen adopted social rebellion as his default mode of action, e.g. by redistributing tax money to the local infrastructure and social organisation of the football club, and by helping villagers to find employment and income. Social rebellion, as laid out in Chapter One, is a newly emergent form of social and political organising brought about by political incumbents who strive to transform politics in the interest of the wider community. However, political actions can inadvertently fuel the critique of corruption by relations who feel left out (Herzfeld 1998, 77). Critical in Mladenôs case were especially the ñfirst neighboursò (*prve komšije*) in his parentsô neighbourhood.

In the first section I introduce Mladenôs biography and describe his work as a sports activist and veterinarian. Mladenôs profession was his primary interface with the capitalist transformations of society, and I show how he developed a modus of economic care for the village. Then I return to the communal work action in the second interface (of a type I relationship) at the football pitch, to compare how Mladen and two other local sports activists who had recently turned local state actors exposed themselves to criticism and irony stemming from the egalitarian discourse of the club. We will see how and why each of the three men fared differently, with Mladen celebrating his cultural intimacy with the club members. The third interface (again of type I) will be the neighbourhood where Mladen grew up and returned to regularly. The main perspective employed here will be that of his neighbours Slavo and Rajka JankoviÍ, who maintained ties with his parents. However, dissatisfied with the politico-economic transformation that disallowed them to act on the socialist ethics of care by providing workplaces to their kin, the neighbours increasingly voiced the critique of politics as corruption, which produced tensions in the neighbourhood. Finally, in the fourth section I discuss the process of Mladenôs re-election and resulting re-adjustment of his networks. Balancing his strengthening ties to the President of the Municipal Parliament in a new Municipal coalition (in an interface type III), Mladen also made increased efforts to find employment for fellow villagers.

I start with a sketch of Mladenôs biography, enriching it with accounts of his sporting activities and two vignettes from his veterinary work. I show how Mladen fostered skills in relational diplomacy and, as a kind of organic village intellectual, developed care for the village.

2.1 The life and profession of Mladen ó*Veterinar*ô SimiĆ

Mladen was born in Lower Village in 1967 as the first son of the driver Milivoje SimiĆ and the housewife-agriculturalist Jovana SimiĆ. His younger sister Valja, a kindergarten teacher in River City, was born in 1971. Mladen started to play football at an early age and according to my host Rajka JankoviĆ was a bright and affable kid. After finishing the villageôs primary school and River Cityôs secondary school, he studied veterinary medicine in Belgrade. There he married his fellow student Lica, a native of Belgrade city. In 1993 they jointly graduated and started an internship in the local state veterinary station of Creek Town, where they treated cattle in a large fattening scheme (which ceased working in 1995). In 1995, they received their doctoral diploma, and Mladen opened a small private veterinary ambulance in Lower Village on his paternal uncleôs land. However, the couple continued living in the urban settlements of Creek Town or River City, moving flats overall for nine times. In 1996 their first son was born. There followed a stint as a co-owner of a *poljoprivredna apoteka* (a shop which sells agrarian inputs). But when their younger son was underway in 1998, Lica decided they should withdraw from this rather unprofitable venture. In spring 1999, Lica went to visit her parents and to give birth to her second son in a renowned Belgrade hospital. She and her baby left hospital the very day when the three-month bombardment of Serbia by NATO began. During this time, the young family moved to Mladenôs parents in Lower Village. Lica worked since 2000 in large animal fattening enterprises in the region, while Mladen persisted with his local veterinary ambulance. Meanwhile, he became a successful sport activist (*sportski radnik*): already in 1998 he had started an open-air volleyball club in Lower Village from scratch. By 2002/2003 this club was promoted to the Serbian league and fused with a team from River City that owned a sports hall. However, in 2004 the joint club faltered when the running costs became too high for the parents of the players and the sponsors of the team. After a break of two years, Mladen and several friends became functionaries of the village football club. They expanded the youth section and trained three teams, which Mladenôs younger son passed through successfully (by 2013 he played in a first league youth team of River City). Meanwhile, the First Team (young adults) of the village club was complemented by a veteran team, where Mladen and his age group came together. One veteran, a medical doctor from River City who owned a week-end house (*vikendica*) in the village, was a member of the party G17plus. In 2008, he recruited Mladen to become a party member. The same year Mladen stood for municipal elections, and thanks to his local popularity he gained enough votes to become a member of River Cityôs parliament and its committees for sports and for agriculture. By 2009 Mladen helped to forge a new SMZ in Lower Village, set up by football club members and their relations, which supported each other in renovating the club and improving other village infrastructures. These football friends also aided Mladen in organizing his second successful municipal election campaign in 2012.

The biography of Mladen suggests that he had a gift as a ñrelational diplomat.ò Hailing from a rural background, brought up in a family of worker-peasants (*polutan, ~i*), he successfully mastered university studies in the capital. Yet, instead of simply ñmoving onò in the value hierarchy of post-Yugoslav space, with ñruralityò at the low end and ñurbanityò at the high end of ñcivilizationò (SimiĆ 1973; Jansen 2005b; M. ĆivkoviĆ 2011), Mladen maintained and

expanded his close relations to his village. He visited his parents regularly, and at the weekends his sons slept over at their grandparents. His activities as a rural sport activist helped him to (re-)establish ties with former school mates, with other sports activists, the youth, their parents, and the wider circle of fans. As I will show next, two passions drove him ï a love of sports and a care for the local economy.

The post-socialist *love of sports* as expressed in the epigraph accorded to sport the power of generating the values of ñcommunity, competition, tolerance and solidarity.ò Indeed, the ñshared habits, outlook and daily practices ï work, school and sports ï united the populationò under Yugoslav socialism (Sterchele 2007, 215). Sport activists like Mladen attempted to reproduce these values under neo-capitalism. He was all but alone ï in contemporary Serbia ñsports, recreational and/or cultural associations at the community levelò (sic) had the strongest continuity with the past and accounted for half of all Civil Society Organizations (CSO) (Sterland and Rizova 2010, 50). Sports activism operated with more volunteer work than other CSOs, and was largely funded through membership fees (Stuppert 2010, 25, 26). Liberal authors like Sterland & Rizova have criticized these post-socialist CSOs as ñold-fashioned organisations in terms of their administration and their approach to stakeholders, particularly the State and governmentò (sic) and portrayed them as ñconservative, socially and politically passive, and with few human resources, organisationally weak.ò On the other hand, they conceded that these CSO ñdo have the necessary capacities to organise activities in the community and to reach their particular target or membership groupò (Sterland and Rizova 2010, 12). The normative disqualification of sports activism by liberal authors sprang from the politics of discarding ñcommunistò associations or changing their functioning, ñembedded in the neoliberal reforms at the state-civil society interfaceò (Mikuġ 2013, 169ï 70). However, I argue that sport activism did not merely reproduce but also transformed state relations, by infusing them with dynamism and socio-spatially inclusive practices and values. Mladen believed that he was able to thrive as a local politician precisely because he succeeded in mobilizing his fellow citizens to participate in the revaluation of local sports.

Mladenôs *care for the local economy* was stimulated by his experience as a veterinarian. Economic care combined care for the self with that for others, as the following vignette shows.

> For the third day of his *slava* (a family feast dedicated to the orthodox patron saint of the household), Mladen had invited some of his veterinary colleagues into his flat in a high-rise building in River City. At the festive table, a colleague worried that since about 2005, the number of domestic animals had diminished rapidly in the area. If this continued, sooner or later they would all have to find a new job. Others nodded in agreement, and the mood turned downbeat. Then an urban veterinarian who had specialized in pet surgery bewildered and bemused the others telling them how he had recently performed a $600 operation on the fatally ill dog of a notorious local gangster (D, 10.11.2010).

The story of the futile and expensive surgery[63] highlighted to the listeners how the agricultural downturn combined with the (sometimes shady) transformations of the local economy was resulting in increasing inequality.[64] The economic changes segmented the market for veterinary services and led to more social insecurity for the majority of the customers, affecting also the professional future of many veterinarians. It seemed advisable to village veterinarians to work with all available customers regardless of class differences or personal liking, and to bind them by offering discount prices. By 2010 Mladen had accordingly worked for almost all households in Lower Village and its surroundings. Through this practice he learnt to accommodate, and often also to empathize with, the discourses, needs and joys especially of the local lower and middling social classes, as I observed when I accompanied him on 10 October 2010. We started at 10 am at the household of his parents, and went in his subcompact car on a six hour tour through three villages. That day, Mladen worked in six households ï where he treated pigs, cattle, and sheep ï and stopped by at his motherôs for a hearty lunch. Furthermore, we had a forty-five minute break at the village shop, where we talked to Mladenôs neighbour and football club friend Miro ó*Supervizor*ô (b. 1965) about upcoming works and events. Miro, an unmarried, self-employed painter and construction worker, was versed in finding useful gadgets for the club, and he was one of the main local state actors at the communal work action with which I started the chapter (see also more below).

A seventh client phoned and brought his recently castrated pet dog for a follow-up examination. Sixty years of age and well groomed, the man had earned a small fortune abroad and owned a weekend house in Upper Village. He talked without cease, especially about his martial arts exploits and his 21 year old girlfriend. Mladen stayed unusually calm while examining the dog. Afterwards Mladen told me that he thought the man ñloved to boastò (*voli da se hvali*). Therefore Mladen had previously rather happily transferred the dogôs castration to his above mentioned colleague in town who specialized in small animal surgery.

In contrast, during the home visits, Mladen had been much more outgoing. For instance, he spent time with an elderly couple who kept two pigs for subsistence to advise them free-of-charge about how to construct a healthier sty. With these and several other small farmers he stayed for a coffee and a chat. Some of his customers were distant relatives ï his large extended

[63] It cost twice as much as the regional average income of ú 300. The nationwide average income, boosted by the higher salaries in the city of Belgrade, lay at about ú 400/month.

[64] Many villagers had relied until recently on urban jobs, complemented by household agriculture. Amplifying older historical trends, the community became increasingly more unequal and differentiated between the unemployed and the underemployed, local worker-peasants, small and larger agricultural and industrial entrepreneurs, local state actors, weekend house owners, returning guest workers from abroad, pensioners, refugees of the recent wars, long established, and newly arrived families, etc.

family stuck together, he told me. Mladen also checked with delight on a medium scale beef-fattening/dairy farm (15 cows and 100 young bulls) run by an extended household of two married brothers. Having in mind such interactions, I appreciated one neighbourôs fond characterization of Mladen as a *ludina* (a very sociable person, between a ñphilanthropistò and a ñlaughter makerò). So how did this sociable veterinarian, who cared for the local economy and sport activism, fare as a politician? To find out, we return first to the football club.

2.2 Football, male sociability, and social critique

In 2008, Mladen had found a way through his new parliamentary mandate to apply to the City Government for a grant to upgrade the villageôs football pitch. The application was written together with Bane EriĆ (b. 1946), a long-term club official, who had been a builder from the 1970s to the 1990s. After going bankrupt, Bane had switched to *rakija* (fruit brandy) manufacturing, working with a food chemist from Creek Town on quality optimization until he received several national prizes.

In spring 2009, in view of the upcoming elections for the Local Council (SMZ), some players from the first team and the younger club veterans decided to try and take over the SMZ. Their aim was to govern their village in the football clubôs spirit of sociability, activism and infrastructure development, supported by Mladenôs new connections to the City authorities. According to the statutes of the Local Council Mladen could not become a member, because he was registered in River City. Therefore, Mladen asked the initially reluctant Bane EriĆ to become president, who was expected to command, through his age, authority with older villagers. Mladen in turn promised to take over most of the lobbying for infrastructural funding in the City.[65] By July 2009 their major achievements included the prolongation of the football pitch by one fourth to a length of 100m, with a drainage system. The club neared its declared ambition to have the best village pitch in the area.

During the community work action described at the start of this chapter, the atmosphere was marked by teasing and other ways of testing social boundaries. President of the SMZ, Bane EriĆ, his ñdeputyò Miro *Supervizor,* and Mladen *Veterinar* all came in for scrutiny from the activists, but they handled the criticism in different ways. Out of the four types of embedded agency as an official, only resignation was not apparent in this situation. Allegations of maximized self-interest were levelled at Bane, and we will see how he somehow dealt with this. Miro *Supervizor* was harder pressed to conform, because he did not command the means to

[65] Without lobbying, it was hard to access the spare city funds for infrastructural development.

smooth relations like the other two. Finally, Mladen *Veterinar* fared best, which had much to do with his social rebellion of obtaining the funding. I will now follow more closely how the different actors experienced and countered the criticism at the football club interface.

Coping with allegations of self-interest – Bane Erić

Bane, the new president of the SMZ, showed up briefly three times at the work action, once in the morning, and twice in the afternoon. At his first visit, he jokingly offered as a »first prize for the diggers« some of his self-produced peaches and wild pear *rakija* in plastic bottles. He also sponsored a labelled glass bottle of his award winning plum *rakija* (*šljivovica*), allegedly produced in 1946. One of the two public workers who were employed over the summer to clear the village roads and who had been »asked« to participate in the football work action leaned over and whispered »I shit on his brandy« (*serem na njegovu rakiju*). His subaltern criticism was a classic hidden transcript (Scott 1990). Nonetheless, like everybody else, he pragmatically decided to make the best of the situation and enjoyed the drinks. We sat down to relax in the shade of the trees near the creek, at the long row of tables laid out with soft drinks, mineral water, and beer, when Ćiko Delić (another self-proclaimed *rakija*-expert), also conjured up several 1.5 litre plastic bottles of *rakija*. This was his own production, and he urged the people to compare it to Bane's. The men drank in thoughtful sips and found both equally palatable. Bane Erić had already left, and the »hidden transcripts« of critique were now expressed openly. Some men informed me winking that nobody believed the story of the 60-year-old *rakija*; it would either have been drunk by Bane himself, or would have evaporated by now. Rumour also had it that Bane bought *rakija* from villagers for some three euros per litre and then refilled it into his fancy bottles, which sold for between ten and 35 euros in Belgrade and abroad.

During the lunch break, the talk turned to present and past work actions. Most vocal was »*Kafe Ljuja*«, the 28 year-old captain of the first team.[66] *Kafe Ljuja* criticized the quality of the installed barriers around the pitch (they were not galvanised), the 5.3 m high fencing behind the goal (70 cm lower than contracted), and the new stands made of concrete and wood (full concrete benches would have been more durable). These criticisms were indirectly aimed at Bane Erić, who had drawn up the construction plan and supervised the work. An agricultural journalist and proud owner of a brand-new tractor, who participated with his teenage son in the work action, tried to defend the work. But as *Kafe Ljuja*'s criticism found ever new targets; the

[66] *Kafe Ljuja* (literally: coffee house owner) ran the only restaurant of the village together with his father.

journalist conceded at one point that if there had been more money, things could have been done more professionally.

In the afternoon, the outhouse toilet was to be relocated behind the clubhouse close to the creek. Bane Eriĺ had returned and discussed the objections of several men about the site. He finished the discussion by exclaiming: ñI was a builder all my life and I know where to put a WC!ò The critique of the president of the SMZ had for a moment become public, but was quickly retained in a more ñhiddenò repertoire.

The initial points of criticism were Baneôs perceived boasting about his *rakija* awards, and his stinginess of not providing enough for all workers, so that a less affluent villager had chipped in. The quality of his produce was equalled by the *rakija* of the hobby-producer, which implied that Baneôs ethics were tainted, that he was ñfakingò (*ġvercovao*) its age and quality and had repackaged other peopleôs produce for his own profit. Such allegations of dishonest business practices were one genre of the vast local discursive field of corruption critique. Consequently, allegations of embezzlement (*malverzacije*) threatened to taint Baneôs supervision of the infrastructure works. Bane felt that a lot hinged on defending his professional reputation, so he loudly insisted on his building expertise. Thus he silenced the open charges of self-interestedness. His ñstand-inò for the day, Miro *Supervizor*, fared less well, although he was only charged with minor misconduct.

Over-conforming in the face of critique ï Miro *Supervizor*

A recurrent target of criticism throughout the day was the inequality of workloads, which seemed to be linked to the class differences of those participating in the work action. Regularly 15 people were present at the construction site, but no more than ten worked at a time. Some men preferred to ñadviseò and do little physical work, others worked hard and had less time to ñcomment.ò The critical public worker we encountered above was, of necessity, a hard worker. He characterized the organization of the workflow in his typically deft vocabulary: ñWe canôt work like that. Five people play the boss [*ġefuju*], and five people work. F**k such work.ò His fellow public worker Pero Krajiġnik worked practically from dawn till dusk, received much advice and instructions, and did virtually no talking (his life story will be analysed in Chapter Four).

On the other hand, the local state officials worked less and planned a lot. These included, to some extent, Mladen *Veterinar*, who was often on the phone trying to organize more workers. However, this was little criticised, because Mladenôs work as a club official regularly involved

phoning.[67] Bane Eriĺ was also partly exempted from workload criticism because of his age, although his lack of supervision was criticized, as shown above. The medical doctor, who had brought Mladen into politics, and who showed up only briefly, was probably spared because of his literally ñwhite collarò profession and his help in attentively treating the sick of Lower Village. The most incisive criticism was directed against Miro *Supervizor*, the new supervisor of the SMZ since 2009. Twenty years ago, as a young man, Miro had worked in Baneôs construction firm, but unlike his married contemporaries, who by now disdained Baneôs patronizing behaviour, the ñold bachelorò (*stari momak*) Miro still accepted Baneôs public advice. Today he had also taken on the supervision of the work during Baneôs absence, and served as a lightning rod for the dissatisfaction.

As indicated above, because of the incessant phone-reminders by Mladen *Veterinar*, more and more club members arrived at the site. Craftsman ó*Palikuĺ aô* repeatedly complained that he was there to work for free, and much paid work awaited him at home. But often, when he asked the men, ñCome on, letôs work,ò they answered ñCome on, letôs be friends/have funò (*hajde da se druģimo*). At one point the teams of two cement mixers pushed more and more new wheelbarrows of freshly mixed concrete to where *Palikuĺ a* was laying the foundation of the veranda, while Miro *Supervizor*, who typically worked next to him, took a longer break. *Palikuĺ a* lost his composure, dropped everything and went over to the tables where Miro sat chatting with a beer in his hand. The workflow immediately came to a standstill, and the men awaited curiously what would happen next. *Palikuĺ a* placed himself some three metres in front of Miro, slowly swiped the sweat from his brows, and then rebuked him like a schoolboy: ñWhat are you doing?ò Miro: ñI am sitting and talking.ò Caught out, Miroôs plea that he also needed some rest only worsened his position. The men laughed and the ashamed Miro jumped to his feet and returned to work. For a while he toiled silently next to *Palikuĺ a*. As it became clear that the porch could be finished with fewer workers, Miro began advancing new subprojects. I suppose that besides diverting the workflow to more effective employment, that way Miro also got out of the critical gaze of *Palikuĺ a*, and spared himself future remarks of being a bad work organiser. Successively, Miro initiated the cleaning of the well in front of the club house, the building of a shed for tools and machines behind it, and the reconstruction and relocation of the outhouse toilet, the position of which had been determined by Bane Eriĺ (see above). Miro continued to join in the drinking, but had less time to sit and eat. Come nightfall he was crouched on his knees, tiling a crooked foot path to the outhouse.

[67] For instance, Mladen informed the league about the score of Lower Villageôs matches, and redistributed the results of simultaneous games in the club.

Although Bane, Miro and Mladen were all self-employed and politically and economically more powerful than average club members, the hierarchy was constantly discursively undermined by a barrage of criticism, ranging from ñhidden transcripts,ò through allusions of misconduct, to direct questioning. Common people did work harder than local state officials, but the relation was reversed in Miro *Supervizor*ôs case ï he reacted to allegations of laziness by working harder than most. In short, Miro Supervizorôs actions represent how a local state actor can be made to ñover-conformò in the face of public demand and criticism. Yet, how did Mladen negotiate the ñcriticalò situation?

Social rebellion and cultural intimacy ï Mladen *Veterinar*

The workers had started in the morning without a public breakfast, except for Mladen who had done the shopping and brought for himself a sandwich, because, as he said, he had had no breakfast at home. Lunch was a huge pot (*tava*) of stewed pigôs offal and potatoes seasoned with tomatoes. It was prepared by the butcher and caterer Mr Toğić, who charged the club only for the ingredients, because his son Tadija (b. 1984) was a first team football player and an SMZ councillor. With the stew went loaves of white bread and tomato and cucumber salad, and for the coffee break fresh watermelons. What could not be eaten and drunk was left standing. Mladen thus redistributed municipal funds not only into the material space of the football infrastructure, but also into the stomachs of the participants of the work action.

Bawdy joking was an integral part of the male cooperative work and banter increased during the breaks. The merry-making repeatedly took place at Mladenôs expense. For instance, some opined that since Mladen would be travelling so much, he could not possibly say that he would ñspend the nights in Belgrade with a Miroslav,ò suggesting that instead of socialising with males in the capital, he was in the company of women and cheating on his wife. Pushing the theme of adultery (*ġvaleracija*) further, others bantered how the veterinarian liked to visit his village clients in the evening, knowing when the husbands of the young wives were not at home ï and thereby compromising their male solidarity and trust.[68] The reactions to such banter can be varied. People are used to sexual teasing, but at a certain point, many get annoyed and react irately, as the following joke indicates. It was recounted during the work action by *KafeLuja*:

[68] In her ethnography of the Bosnian village Dolina, Tone Bringa (1995, 91) recorded similar views by the women on extramarital relations (although not expressed in a joking mode). In Dolina extramarital affairs were seen as ñrisking good neighbourhood relations and the reputation of the household.ò Unfaithfulness was associated with excessive movement, and was better directed to the urban exterior. Some women said ñif a man absolutely had to take another woman, he should go to Sarajevo where it would be his own businessò (Bringa 1995, 242, fn.2).

> A film crew wants to cover ñSex in the Villageò and interviews a grandfather (*deda*) on the subject. The latter misunderstands and talks about his agriculture, his cows, chicken and so on. After a while, his son interrupts him: ñnot (about) that, *deda,*ò but he continues with his gabbling. After the third interruption, the old man gets really annoyed and turns to the camera, exclaiming: ñDo you see now how they fuck you in the village?ò (*Jelô vidiġ kako te jebu u selu?*)

The joke, which alluded to and modified the title of the popular TV series ñSex in the City,ò played with the double meaning of the verb *jebati*/*zajebavati*, which connoted 1) to have sex; and 2) to tease. *Zajebavati* as (sexual) teasing temporarily turned relations of authority upside down, as exemplified by the taunting of Mladen *Veterinar*, which transported a subaltern social critique of him as a middle aged, middle class professional (veterinarian) and successful politician who apparently acted too youthfully and too restlessly.[69] However, in contrast to the irate old man of the joke, Mladen kept his wits. He smiled and sometimes cautiously joined in the good-natured teasing, which affirmed their cultural intimacy and underlined their respect of his achievements as a self-employed man and politician. Within the male bonding of the football club, characterized both by an egalitarian, redistributive ethics and a ñvalue mastering hierarchyò (Bruun, Skroederdal Jakobsen, and Kroijer 2011), Mladenôs redistribution of local state funds for the material and social upgrading of the football club reinforced his status as a *primus inter pares*. With this redistributive social rebellion he thus fared far better than the self-interested Bane and the lazy/over-conforming Miro.

Bane had weathered the allegations of self-interest because he and his associates managed to keep the accusations of stinginess and corruption in a relatively hidden register by showing hospitality (distributing *rakija*), by strategically conceding minor points, and by insisting on his professional expertise. Furthermore, Baneôs seniority cushioned him against accusations of physical laziness. Miro *Supervizor* needed to concede to criticism and he over-conformed, because he could not pacify relations through redistribution and was less skilful at countering treatment below the belt, i.e. of being talked to like a boy (both by Bane and by *Palikuĺa*). Arguably, Miro could not muster as good a defence because his perceived lack of a family or a girlfriend made him appear to most as less than ñmatureò and highlighted his function as a junior ñstand-inò for Bane (and perhaps even Mladen). Finally, Mladen *Veterinar* capitalized on his ñsocial rebellionò of obtaining the funding for the club from the local municipality, which he redistributed in a rather flawless, egalitarian way. Furthermore, he was envied for his good family relations and courteous ways with the female population. Thus he only had to cope with

[69] In fact, Mladen was teased for acting less like a ñfatherò than a ñ*frajer*,ò an irresponsible youth who stirs up trouble (for a detailed discussion of both relational concepts of heterosexual normativity, see Chapter Four).

moderately sexualized teasing. Showing a good sense of humour, Mladen turned this criticism into a performance of cultural intimacy, which strengthened his position in the egalitarian value mastering hierarchy. In the interface of the football club, therefore, Mladen *Veterinar* did well. In the following subsection, we turn to a tougher social interface for him, the village neighbourhood where he was born and raised.

2.3 Neighbourly relations corrupted

Discussions of care often have a bias towards the making of relations, but ñcare as a dimension of social security is a central element of processes of both kinning and dekinning [é] for the (re)production of meaningful bonds as well as of their dissolutionò (Thelen 2014, 106, my translation). The following discussion of the inter-dependencies of care for work, family, and the neighbourhood shows how kinning and de-kinning can be simultaneously produced. In the eyes of Mladenôs neighbours, who were on good kin relations with his parents and who had known and liked him since he was a baby, his venture into state politics stood his reputation from the feet on the head. Fascinatingly, Mladenôs new position devalued his otherwise completely commendable behaviour of helping close relations to obtain state employment, and transformed it into ñstate corruption.ò To explain this scenario, which was diametrically opposed to Mladenôs rise through ñsocial rebellionò in the football club, I will first elucidate the nature of the erstwhile amicable, intimate relationships in the neighbourhood. Second, I turn to how the neighbouring households differently experienced the political-economic transformations from their initially similar socio-structurally positions. Finally I turn to how the corruption discourses shadowed their relationships and became intimately incorporated into them. We will see how, over time, enemies were made.

A tight-knit neighbourly network

Mladenôs parents, Milivoje (b. 1940) and Jovana Simiĺ born Jankoviĺ (b. 1945), lived in the village centre in the Jankoviĺi neighbourhood. Jovana had been born there, and her husband had moved in uxorilocally (*dogjao na miraz*) in 1966. Diagonally opposite lived Jovanaôs remote cousin and childhood friend, my host Slavo Jankoviĺ (b. 1946). Slavo was married to Rajka (b. 1953), who had moved in virilocally in 1969. The couples had known each other for forty years, and were hand in glove. For over thirty years, the two men had worked together in the local state owned bus and truck company óAutoprevozô River City. Milivoje, who had been already

employed in Autoprevoz, helped the younger Slavo, then a bus driver for the spa in Upper Village, to change his workplace in 1972.[70]

Many ties linked the Simiĺ and the Jankoviĺ households: they drank coffee together daily, borrowed food or tools without asking, jointly owned tractor fittings, did agricultural work for each other (*moba*), watched village football together, were active in the local orthodox church, organized community events like sponsoring food for the spring procession and the community day, and helped each other to bear and bury their household members and animals. They were also infrastructurally inter-dependent: for several decades they operated a self-built water-piping system with eight neighbouring households; they had introduced the first private telephone lines in the village in 1979-80, and participated in asphalting their neighbourhood road in 1981 (see Chapter Three).

The friendship grew to encompass the succeeding generations. For instance, one day in 2009, Slavo walked his granddaughter (b. 2007) over to Mladenôs parents to have a coffee with them and their neighbour and former work colleague Simo Lukiĺ. Afterwards, Slavo took his granddaughter out to marvel at Mladen *Veterinar*ôs white Labrador, a one year old bundle of energy trying to jump over its kennel to play with the child (D, 28.10.2009). Similarly, Mladen (b. 1967) and Slavoôs son Slavko (b. 1971) had played football and basketball as teenagers together, and later trained teams in the volleyball and in football clubs. Mladen was, of course, also Slavoôs veterinarian, and administered the obligatory injections to new-born animals for a discount price. Therefore, the ascent of Mladen was welcomed by the Jankoviĺs. However, they had mixed feelings. To understand why, we need to turn to the politico-economic transformations of the previous decades.

The fate of *Autoprevoz*

The 1960-70s have often been seen in hindsight as the golden years of Yugoslavia (see Grandits and Sundhaussen 2013). The 1980s were economically difficult, while the 1990s were a time of severe economic and social decline (Sundhaussen 2012, 452ï 5). From 2000, there have been strong fluctuations in economy and politics, but at the latest when the worldwide depression reached Serbia in 2008, the previous decades merged into one long-drawn negative trend: ñWhat crisis? Nothing new, we were always in crisis,ò people said defiantly. One day, Slavo helped me to pre-test my questionnaire, and I asked him the introductory question ñWhat in

[70] Autoprevoz drivers traversed Europe and went to Iraq and Iran (with two passports), earning up to DM 400 daily, as Slavo recounted. These tours also led to his cardiovascular problems, because of the stress involved, e.g. hold ups at the Turkish-Iraqi border and armed attacks by Kurdish rebels.

your opinion are the three biggest changes in your locality in the past ten years?ò He emphatically responded with ñEverything got worse!ò (PQ 4, 5.1.2010). Especially trenchantly Slavo criticised the two waves of privatization, first in the 1990s under Miloševiđ, and later in the 2000s under the ñliberal revolutionaryò guard (cf. Greenberg 2014). The family had always been against the *komunjari* (derogative term for communists), but had supported Miloševiđôs rise above the old generation of communists in the late 1980s. Subsequent events (the wars, the inflation, ñspontaneous privatizationsò) etc. disappointed them. Welcoming the change in 2000 and voting for Koštunica and his conservative Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), the Jankoviđi experienced the ensuing second privatization process as a disaster, which they associated with politicians like the long-time Finance and Economy Minister Mlađan Dinkiđ (G17plus) (see the Introduction).

I have indicated above that Mladen *Veterinar*ôs father had helped Slavo Jankoviđ in the 1970s to work in the public enterprise (*javno preduzeće*) Autoprevoz, and both later helped two other neighbours to enter the firm.[71] Furthermore, in the mid-1980s Slavoôs wife Rajka worked for four years as a secretary in Autoprevoz, and in the late 1980s Slavoôs godchild from Upper Village was employed in its car repair shop. The godchild, even though he had become an independent truck mechanic, still regularly fixed Slavoôs obsolete tractor, only charging for materials. These examples show how finding work in a social/public enterprise through relatives (*naći i rad u društvenom/javnom preduzeću preko veze*) had been a common practice in late socialism. Following the economic downturn of the 1980s, finding work in state institutions to earn ñbread and butterò became even more attractive (for a similar development in Turkey in the 1990s, see Navaro-Yashin 2002, 165, 169), until it achieved an ñalmost sexual appealò (Rajkoviđ 2015, 166). In other words, kinship relations and local state relations became closely intertwined in the search for social security, cultural intimacy, and a meaningful life. Although emically the state and society were generally portrayed as antithetic, here care for personal social security and care for the state could be two sides of the same coin (see also Rajkoviđ 2015, 168-74). These and similar practices of ñkinning the stateò make it possible to ñtrack how representations of kinship and state function as mirror images of one another and how kinning practices contribute to their reproduction and transformationò (Thelen, Thiemann, and Roth 2014, 109). In this context, the privatization of Autoprevoz in 2008 generated strong emotions in the Jankoviđi neighbourhood. When the drivers went on strike in January 2010, this welded the pensioners together in support:

[71] These were Milan Jankoviđ, the bus driver introduced in the entry vignette of this thesis, and Simo Lukiđ.

> The drivers, already enraged because their salaries were in arrears, planned a wildcat strike after Autoprevoz announced the dismissal of 100 workers. On the eve of the strike, Jovana and Milivoje, Slavo and Simo sat together in the small kitchen of the SimiÍ i and debated the situation. They agreed that the strike action was important, and that ñthe youngò (*mali*) local syndicate man who did the public relations was alright. Heatedly they discussed how the firm had been sold way too cheaply for ú 4 million, but that the Israeli buyer had promised to invest ú 16 million over four years. However, now that two years had passed, only 15 new busses worth ú 1.5 million had been purchased. Simply by selling the firmôs holiday resort in PetriÍ, Montenegro, the whole deal could be refinanced, they opined. Slavo thought that the resort had been practically sold, while Jovana asserted that was still not the case. Right now, Milivoje argued, the privatization could be nullified, and Autoprevoz returned to the work collective (D, 27.12.2009).

No matter how closely knit the neighbourhood was in their concern for their former workplace, their political views differed considerably in this case. Where Milivoje and Jovana SimiÍ hoped for possibilities to reverse the privatization, Slavo thought that everything was lost, and resistance against corruption was a symbolic ï if significant ï gesture.

Economic care and corruption

The JankoviÍ i had come to share the ñcorruptionò discourses that circulated in post-Yugoslavia around the issue of public employment. When I asked Slavo in the pre-test to my questionnaire ñWho should take care of a person if he lost his job?ò he answered ñthe central stateò and ñthe familyò most, while he thought the City Mayor, the president of the SMZ, the church, the village, and the neighbours should not help at all. He added: ñAnd these should only care if the unemployment is not his own fault. However, if the person has not worked for 20 years, and did not secure himself (*nije sebe obezbedio*), nobody should help himò (PQ 4, 5.1.2010). Slavoôs categorical insistence on the role of the central state and the family in caring for the unemployed downplayed his own practice of helping neighbours to find employment. In his additional commentary, he evinced a strong work ethic, which he embodied as an active farmer despite the doctorôs advice to avoid arduous work. Slavo added a conservative moral condemnation of financial irresponsibility, taking up the discourse of the good householder/*pater familias* (*domaÍin*).[72]

However, Slavoôs most striking statement was that no intermediary institution should care for the unemployed. His view of the SMZ and the City Government are of central interest here. First, Slavo indirectly denied the need for the SMZ to organize the Public Works that cleared public spaces and which participated in the communal work action at the football field.

[72] Often Slavo scolded the butcher next door, a friend who regularly worked with him, as a fool (*budala*), because he toiled for 30 years, but smoked and drank, and wasted his money. The butcher never had a dinar and frequently borrowed money, repaying with agricultural, meat-processing and wood-logging labour or not repaying his debts. In any case he found no time to work his own lands.

Furthermore, he tended to see the results of those work actions as inconsequential, stating that the ñlocal recreational resources (sports grounds and pitches)ò had not been changed (PQ4, 5.1.2010).[73] Thus, Slavo implicitly denied Mladen *Veterinar*ôs claims of being a positive transformative force for the community. Even more importantly for what follows, Slavo categorically denied the value of local state employment in the City for alleviating unemployment. Slavo also unfavourably viewed the SMZ, stating that every new president of the SMZ had led the Local Commune only deeper into trouble (D, 20.1.2010). In fact, Slavo tended to deny the value of Serbian politics more generally.[74] His rough take on the uselessness, moral decay, and danger of the state was a radicalised version of a broadly held opinion in the wider region (for Turkey, see Navaro-Yashin 2002, chap. 5). But what fired his conviction?

The state health sector understood as a hotbed of corruption

Every day people were surrounded by the nation-wide discourses of corruption in local state relations. Take the popular TV drama-soap ñThe village is burning, and the grandmother is combing her hairò (*Selo gori a baba se ĺeđlja*) that in 2010 ran in its fourth season on Serbian Television (RTS1). In one episode, the honest and good-natured hero Radaġin had been successfully operated on in the hospital. As a proper rural householder (*domaĺin*), he wanted to ñregaleò the doctor with his homemade *rakija*, half of a baked pig, some money, and so on. The morally upright doctor said he could not accept the gift, as he knew how difficult life was for the villagers. Pointing to the presents stashed up on top of his wardrobe, he declared that he could not even consume those. Accepting money was out of the question, but the doctor finally caved in and took a bottle to ñdrink to the healthò of his insistant, grateful patient. These humorous refractions of the moral panic surrounding discourses of state corruption and an unresponsive health system rang many bells in Slavoôs and Rajkaôs household. They recounted stories about the bane of *stranaļko zapoġljavanje* (party-mediated public employment) in the state-run health sector. Their story was highly personalized, because their daughter Katarina (b. 1975), a trained dental assistant, had worked for more than a decade on temporary contracts in River City.

On 4 May 2012, two days before the national and local elections in Serbia, the topic came up most forcefully in the household, when the daughter and other close relatives of the Jankoviĺ i paid a visit. This is how Katarina told her own story afterwards, when she took me to town,

[73] Slavo conceded that the ñcleanliness of public spacesò and ñcommunal roadsò has improved recently.
[74] One day the news reported a hit-and-run incident involving the driver of the parliamentary president, who drove over the body trying to get away. He was caught and suspended from work. Slavo commented that ñthey should put him in front of a firing squad, together with those who hired him, and the whole political gang.ò

helping me to make sense of the truncated and partially contradictory versions that I had heard (and would hear later) in the neighbourhood:

> During her years on temporary employment (*na odreLeno*) as a dental assistant since 1994, Katarina sometimes had only a one-month contract, sometimes for two, or four months, typically as maternity cover. This time had been ñto go insaneò (*da poludigi*). In between she had menial jobs, e.g. in the third shift at a crisps factory. ñYou always need a relation to fall in [a work position]ò (*treba sve vreme veza da upadnegi*), she underlined, and recounted several attempts to find a job. Especially grim was how the head of the polyclinic had invited her every Thursday for a job interview to his office. After the fourth or fifth time he asked her: ñDonôt you know how one gets a job today?ò She answered ñNo,ò and he simply said ñAsk around.ò She was ferocious, as she came to interpret his words as meaning ñeither a blue envelope [a bribe], or to lie with him in bed.ò Since she was not prepared to do either, she received no contract: ñAdmittedly, many found a job that way,ò she quipped. A friendly teacher from medical school recommended joining the ruling Socialist Party (SPS) to secure a job through ñparty employmentò (*stranaLko zapogljavanje*). Hailing from an anti-communist family, Katarina rather joined the United Left (JUL), but to no avail. The last ñgood relationò (*dobra veza*) she had was the monk (*kaluLer*) of the nearby monastery, a maternal grand-uncle, whom her mother approached shortly after the regime change in 2000. The monk was on good terms with the then Director of the city administration of Health from the Democratic Party (DS). Katarina was immediately employed and stayed in her temporary position for several years, but when a hiring freeze was announced in 2006, she gave up and became a kiosk owner (D, 4.5.2013).

In contrast to Slavo, Rajka had thought that the mediation of the church could help an unemployed person. When she had asked the monk for intervention she must have thought that if society was corrupt then religion could improve it. During the discussion on 4 May 2012, Rajka cited the local priest concerning the roots of the alleged corruption (*korumpiranost*) of society: ñMoney spoils people.ò Slavo interjected: ñAnd him.ò[75] The SimiĆ i apparently did not agree on all details of their story of the trials of their daughter. Nonetheless, for both it boiled down to different scales of corruption in politics, in the state, and in the health sector. Rajka stated: ñYou cannot live here, if you are not a villain (*pokvaren*). The whole society is corrupted (*korumpirano*).ò Slavo seconded that he was particularly angry with his childhood friend ï they had herded cows together in the common meadows ï who later became a medical doctor and worked for years in the emergency medical services of River Cityôs polyclinic. In 2002 this friend founded the local branch of G17plus, and after the elections of 2004 he became the Director of City administration of Health and the City hospital. On the eve of Slavoôs second bypass operation in 2005, he went to the Director and asked about help for Katarina. The latter told him not to worry. But nothing came of it, because of a subsequent hiring freeze and

[75] The priest was employed by the three rural communities that made up his parish. Individual families paid for spiritual acts like blessing the *slava* bread (*kolaL*). Living in a larger village, the priest had managed to build a nice home and to send his son to study in the Netherlands. Hidden allegations of business-minded practice were regularly waged against him by the men of the neighbourhood.

concomitant partial privatization of the health sector. In River City, the dental practice where Katarina worked was split from the polyclinic, and the Director lost influence over it.

Rajka assumed that the Director should have known about this political development in advance. On the other hand, he had been always helpful to the villagers, she thought. For instance, when Slavoôs maternal uncle had fallen sick in the 1990s, he had rushed immediately to his rescue. When the medical sister smirked and asked ñHow come that the manager of the emergency medical service goes out into the field (*na teren*)?ò he had reportedly answered: ñLower Village is not field for me, it is my home.ò Therefore, Rajka still did not fully believe ñwhat everybody saidò that the Director only acted if he got ñsomething.ò Here I grabbed the opportunity and voiced my difficulty to follow the logic of Mladenôs corruption by association. Savoôs elder sister asked Savo to indulge with my naivety, and to ñexplain it to the child.ò Savo tried. He told me that for him the episode in 2005 was evidence of the Directorôs corruption, which he attributed to his involvement in a thieving state (*lopovska država*), epitomized by the G17plus party led by ñthe thief,ò MlaÄan DinkiÄ. The Director, Slavo speculated, was a partner of the Minister of Health Tomica MirosavljeviÄ (G17plus), they ñare the same generation, one pulled the other up, and that is how they came into playò (*Oni su ista generacija. Jedan vukao drugoga, i tako su oni krenuli*).[76] When Mladen *Veterinar* later became member of their party, he had adopted ñtheir play.ò Slavo rhetorically asked me:

> Slavo: ñHow long have they [Mladenôs sister Valja and her husband] been in America [Canada]?ò
> Me: ñ15 years.ò
> Slavo: ñYes, and they came back [in 2008] and Mladen has employed them both [within a year]. And they are old, he is 50, she 41. And my daughter cannot get a job in 15 years, although she has the education?ò

ñMladen was better before he went into politicsò

When Mladen *Veterinar* had become a politician and successfully followed the socialist ethic of care by providing state employment to his sister and her husband, the JankoviÄi began ï at first secretly ï to attach the label of state corruption to their neighboursô relations. For years their cross-cutting ties prevented an open escalation of the conflict. But the continued hidden transcripts of criticism built up a momentum which could erupt in any confrontational situation. As Günther Schlee (2010, 49) has argued, the ñoptional character of [é] references to identity

[76] Mr. MirosavljeviÄ (G17plus) was Minister of Health between 2002 and 2011, with two short interruptions. Since 2009, his sphere of authority was overshadowed by scandals: the panic regarding swine flu, medical treatment mistakes, and his surgery in Germany. In the end, MirosavljeviÄ resigned ñfor personal reasonsò (VuÄoviÄ 2011). According to Katarina, the Director in River City was not nearly as important to the Minister as her father thought. Katarina was sure that he could not have prevented her losing the job because of the nation-wide hiring freeze. Furthermore, he was not ñone *generacija*ò with the Director, but three years younger.

or difference implies that cross-cutting ties can be situationally ignored. They are thus not always present as a binding force. [é] [Yet] It is precisely those cases when one becomes a prisoner of oneôs own logic that are sociologically interesting.ò By 2011, the multiplex relations between the SimiĆ i and the JankoviĆ i had been strained for three years. They finally unravelled as the result of a quarrel over infrastructure and connected social security issues.

In the hot midsummer of 2011, water became scarce in Central Serbia. In Lower Village, which was not yet connected to the municipal water supplies, the neighbourhoods had designed small piping networks that used the water of local springs. In the JankoviĆ i neighbourhood, eight households received water from two different upstream sources. The water was consumed by the people, the animals, and the crops, so that water scarcity rapidly led to tensions between the interconnected households. Allegations of squandering water were seldom directed at Slavo, who was known as a *negativac* (doomsayer), but also as correct, even pedantic. ñIncompetence,ò however, proved a sharper discursive weapon. According to the accounts, there was a verbal duel between Slavo JankoviĆ and his third degree cousin Dugko ó*Buba*ô [beetle] JankoviĆ (b. 1948) in front of Milivoje SimiĆ. Dugko, who was known for his loose tongue (see Chapters Three and Four), alleged that Slavoôs water connection had been faulty and ñmixed waters,ò therefore diminishing the quality of the water downstream.[77] What happened next remained disputed. According to Rajka, Milivoje had joined the attack on Slavo, who started to have breathing problems. Slavo called them mentally ill (*mentalci*), and said that while he knew he was a choleric (*ćivac*), he was not as sick as them. He further argued that his first cousin downstream had found that the water was not mixed ï which his nephew, a professional plumber, had confirmed (I, Rajka, 15.9.2011). His son Slavko told me that he feared for his father when he saw him gasping for air, so he cursed and threatened to kill his neighbours, if they ever attacked Slavo again (I, Slavko, 15.9.2011). Jovana SimiĆ, on the other hand, said that it was true that Dugko had totally hit the wrong note, as usual. Yet Slavo unnecessarily became angry with Milivoje, saying ñAnd you even support him!ò Jovana opined that nobody should take Dugko seriously, and that it was not possible to change him, either. She also stated that she had enough of the biting commentaries while sharing a coffee. Was it her fault that Slavo and Rajkaôs children were unsuccessful, she asked me rhetorically. When the director of the polyclinic had wanted a bribe of DM 1000 from Katarina, Jovana had counselled them to pay. If they had sold a cow, Katarina would now work ñin the Health,ò she stated (I, Jovana, 13.5.2012).

[77] Incidentally, Dugko lived upstream of Slavo and therefore had no economic interest in attacking him.

After the quarrel, possible cooperation stopped, including Mladenôs veterinary services for Slavoôs and Rajkaôs household. Slavko also did not want to be friends (*drugćiti se*) with Mladen anymore, or so his mother wanted to believe (I, Rajka, 30.9.2013). In any case, already in 2010 Slavko had remarked to me: ñMladen was better before he went into politics.ò Neighbourhood relations switched from the modality of solidarity to avoidance and backstabbing. Slavo tried to shame his former best friends in the neighbourhood, but with limited success. Such a decisive break of relations could be best healed during an important life cycle ritual (e.g. a burial, a marriage), if the protagonists started to talk with each other again, as the bus driver Milan JankoviĆ told me. Yet, in this case, the break outlasted the death of Slavo in January 2013. Milivoje and Jovana did not appear at the burial, although it was known in the neighbourhood that Slavoôs childhood friend Jovana was very sorry not to be able to do so. Jovanaôs sister came from Belgrade but arrived too late for the ceremony and was publicly criticized by Katarina. Only Mladen *Veterinar* and Lica calmly expressed the customary words of condolence: ñMay the earth be light on him!ò *(Da mu bude zemlja laka!*).

The rift exemplifies how, for upcoming local politicians like Mladen *Veterinar* (and their families), retaining meaningful relations was very hard relational work. In this context, re-election was by no means a foregone conclusion. It required considerable care through relational diplomacy and social redistribution. Besides work for the football club, this included securing public employment for broader parts of Mladenôs social network, organizing election feasts, and distributing campaign goodies, as we will see in the last section. These practices also opened up new horizons and possibilities of action for Mladen in interface type III.

2.4 Mladenôs second mandate

On 6 May 2012, there were local, national and presidential elections in Serbia. The situation of G17plus, recently renamed URS (*Ujedinjeni Regioni Srbije*) was far from comfortable. In River Cityôs centre, Mladen and young party militants campaigned by handing balls to pedestrians and asking them to throw a hoop. Whoever scored could retain the ball. In the background, the loudspeakers played rock music, a jingle of the party. After Mladen had selected a ñwell bouncingò basketball and a handball for me, we had a chat:

> I told Mladen that I heard that URS faced problems to pass the election threshold of five percent. He replied: ñWho says so?ò I lied that I knew that from my friend Boki in Belgrade, in order not to ñfan the tensionsò in the neighbourhood. Mladen immediately shifted identities from a neighbour suspicious of village gossip to an electioneering local politician: ñThat is a smear campaign of the DS, who talk of three per cent for URS. Why did the last election polls suddenly predict eight per cent? ï Because it would be embarrassing for the polling institutes to be so much off the mark!ò In his view, URS would receive ten or eleven

> percent. Yet, he conceded that the members of his party had to work ñlike animals,ò because they had no core voters. Therefore, the ballot for URS had to be mobilized prior to the election (D, 3.5.2012).

Indeed, in the village much more was needed than handing out balls ï although Mladen made sure that all the balls left from the campaign went to the club.

Politics of favours and duties

Three weeks prior to the elections, Mladen had organized a big election event in Lower Village. Several younger women of the village decorated the House of Culture and baked cakes. They acted out of duty (*dugnost*) to return a favour: one unemployed construction engineer, a single mother of three small children who lived in the JankoviÍ neighbourhood, had received Public Work employment as an elder care giver over the summer. Another unemployed engineer and a mother of two (the wife of ÇikoDeliÍ the amateur *rakija* producer), had received a permanent position as a cleaning lady in the city hospital. A third helper, an employed mother of two, who was a close neighbour of Mladenôs parents, had been delegated to count the ballots for URS in her native village for the considerable financial compensation of ú 50. Similarly, a fourth women from the JankoviÍ neighbourhood would count the ballot in Lower Village. Mladenôs friends from the club/Local Council were also engaged. One official, the vegetable producer Goran TodoroviÍ (b. 1967), told me frankly: ñI like Mladen, not his party. It is only because we are friends that I helped himò (I, Goran, 17.5.2012). Miro *Supervizor*, who as always supported Mladen, had by now become a member of URS and hoped to find employment as a school janitor through Mladen. At the day of the event, the House of Culture was packed. After talks by the Director of Health, other party leaders, and Mladen *Veterinar*, it all ended with a banquet. On 6 May 2012, Mladen received 183 out of 800 possible local votes, and won the election in Lower Village (D, 2012, several entries).

Two days after the elections I visited a *slava* where our *domaÍin* (here: host) was, in his own words, ña political manò and a local leader of the Socialist Party (SPS). The household was related on the maternal side to Slavo JankoviÍ and Jovana SimiÍ. In 2008 our host had been a candidate for the SPS and got elected with a good percentage of village votes, but unlike Mladen he then resigned from his list position. In return, he was later employed in the public waste management of River City as a driver ï incidentally in the same firm, where Mladenôs brother-in-law now worked as a manager for ú 350 per month (D, SPS politician, 8.5.2013; D, SimiÍi, 13.5.2012). Our *domaÍin* told us: ñHe (Mladen) may be my brother, but he is also my political enemy!ò He continued by saying that Mladen had no political vision, and saw everything through the prism of sport and football club. One guest defended the investments in the club as

honest and countered: ñSo what, if Mladen loves sport, then he is still trying to do much for the village, only from his perspective.ò The discussion went on for fifteen minutes. In between, the host phoned ñhis peopleò at the vote count and ñhis enemiesò to chat about the election. Apparently, Mladen was content with his result (D, SPS politician, 8.5.2012).

Despite his good personal results ï he was the most successful campaigner of URS in any electoral ward of the Municipality ï Mladen was in an insecure position after the elections. URS had barely managed to get into the City parliament, winning five mandates out of 75. Mladen had been listed on place seven, and two better placed people needed to step down if he were to return into the parliament. With the help of his party boss, the Director of Health who saw Lower Village as ñhis home,ò Mladen could assert himself. Furthermore, during the first session of the City parliament two months later, he was nominated as its parliamentôs vice president. His newly strengthened state position also made adjustments in his rural relations necessary.

Rising in the state[78]

During his second mandate, which started in the summer of 2012, Mladen *Veterinar* worked in the morning in his new office as part of the City Administration, in a clear interface type III position to his superior and new mentor ï the President of the Parliament. Meanwhile, in the afternoon Mladen continued to run his veterinary ambulance, and remained in interface type I relations to his fellow villagers. Mladenôs state salary amounted to ú 800, nearly double the average salary in Serbia. When his parents both underwent surgery in the late summer of 2013, he milked their cow daily, and his wife Lica learned to produce cheese. Mladen told me he was slightly disappointed with the City government, where there was ña lot of non-workò (*ima dosta nerada*). However, in his new position he had enough responsibilities. What was more, he could disengage from politics in the afternoons, and also discovered several new veteran teams, some even abroad.

Lica meanwhile told me that she had lost her job as the managing vet in the pigsty of a big meat factory in summer 2013 because she had not wanted to fake the statistics. She made a deal with her employer to quit and receive six months of salary as indemnity. In the future she planned to work in a local state vet station in a neighbouring municipality, where she had been employed earlier. Their eldest son wanted to study biology and medicine the following year, and she tried to dissuade him from becoming a veterinarian ñand stink like his parents every

[78] All following quotes are from diary entries from 30.8.2013 and 5.9.2013.

evening.ò I asked her if she could work in the veterinary ambulance of her husband, but learned that there had never been enough work for two. Furthermore, some casual clients had withdrawn, and only the regular customers remained. In principle that was even better, Lica thought, because now they had fewer quarrels about discount prices, allegations of treatment mistakes, etc. Mladen agreed but regretted that he did not work for the medium sized fattening farm anymore that we had visited in 2010. Lica continued to help out in the ambulance when Mladen was on official journeys, for instance to the Czech Republic to lobby for a water piping project for Lower Villagers. Yet she thought that she would not be able to do the physically demanding job much longer. Therefore she hoped her husband could help her to work one day in the regional veterinary control commission.

Political ambitions and possible futures

On 5 September 2013, Lica and Mladen gave me a lift to River City. We drove along small village side roads, as Lica turned to me:

> Lica: ñAndré, do you know that you are sitting next to the future President of Serbia? You should get in his good books.ò
> Me: ñI already knew that long ago.ò
> Lica: ñMe too.ò

We laughed, including Mladen. He still enjoyed a tease, and obviously still had ambitions. However, the political situation had recently turned more unfavourable for grandiose strategies. During a recent political reshuffle, 11 national ministers had been replaced after only a year in office. URS leader MlaĽan DinkiĺÍ, now aged 49, had been dismissed from his finance and economy ministry to make way for the politically inexperienced 29-year old Yale alumnus Lazar KrstiĺÍ. Apparently, the government leaders had not been satisfied with the work of their ministers, but it remained unclear who really led the government. The Serbian National Party (SNS) was getting stronger according to Lica. DaĻiĺÍ from the SPS, an old buddy of Miloġeviĺ, was still in power according to Mladen. ñThey are exchanging people so that it seems that they are working and something is moving,ò said Lica, referencing a popular joke.[79]

At 8.30 am we arrived at the Local Government House of River City. The grand late 19th century building was located in the historic city centre, in the vicinity of the church, the museum, the lyceum, and the city archives. Lica had some business in the city and said goodbye. Mladen and I climbed up the three-stories, passing a security guard, and headed for his office at the far end of the left corridor. The small office had been renovated by Miro *Supervizor* with

[79] The joke is recounted and analysed in RajkoviĺÍ (2015, 15).

another craftsman from the village, Mladen mentioned, as he phoned the cleaning staff to bring us some coffee and juice. Then Mladen rang friends to offer them free tickets for the sports car race the next day. Afterwards he phoned his old class mates and invited them for a reunion in Big Village. Between reading the newspapers, I enquired into his political standing.

> Besides his work in the parliament and its two committees of sports and agriculture, Mladen had recently been made advisor of the City government in both resorts. Twice, he had been nominated by the president of the parliament, a member of the SPS, who was a sport activist (*sportski radnik*) like him. I dug deeper, and Mladen affirmed that repeatedly not his own party URS, but the SPS had suggested him for these jobs. Around 9.30 am the president of the parliament came in for an urgent conversation, and I left the room.

Mladen cooperated closely with the coalition partner SPS, which had recently promoted his career, while his own party became almost a burden. River Cityôs URS had made all efforts to support the mother party at the 2014 national elections, for instance when Mladen and his party friends argued in press conferences that River City had invested in industry, agriculture and sports, and desisted from a ñpolitics of tightening oneôs belt.ò Nonetheless, what has been described as an ñelectoral tsunamiò swept the SNS to absolute power and URS out of the national parliament (Kanzleiter 2014). Party leader DinkiÍ retired, and the URS disintegrated at the national scale. If URS faltered locally, the president of the parliament might reasonably suggest to Mladen to join the SPS before the next municipal elections. Another likely option for Mladen was to remain an adviser to the City Mayor, but without party affiliation.

Conclusion

In this chapter I approached the embedded agency of local politicians in Central Serbia by following the political ascent of Mladen, the veterinarian of Lower Village. His trajectory was indicative of the possibilities and limits of a local redistributive politics in a context in which, similar to post-dictatorial Spain, ñ[r]uling groupsô attempts to control ordinary people through induced insecurity and attacks on collective responsesò had fostered a ñkind of alienation from public politics among the peopleò (Narotzky and Smith 2006, 8ï9). The local disillusionment with the (post-)Yugoslav state since the 1980s was expressed as a generalised critique of corruption. The JankoviÍ family exemplified this disenfranchisement: gravitating towards a self-identification with Christian-Orthodox conservatism, they combined the libertarian critique of the corruption of politics with a residual hope for a socialist ethics of care that entailed selective state employment according to professional qualification.

In Chapter One I argued that the local state was ï often antagonistically ï coproduced by all citizens, regardless whether they were state actors or not. The distrust in politics made the Spanish-Galician township councillor Pedro lose his position after two mandates, because,

according to Roseman (1996, 854, fn.15) the ñpeasants do not believe that politicians will do anything for nothing.ò In Lower Village, Mladenôs moral economic reputation also became strained by his entrance into local politics. However, we can discern how the different relations that made up his shifting intersectional positionality corresponded to his political rise. A major problem was that, according to the opinion not only of his immediate village neighbours, Mladen had chosen the ñwrongò party, G17plus/URS, which had been identified with the politically orchestrated economic transformation, privatisations, and concomitant unemployment since 2000. In his intimate relations with his childhood neighbours, the results were their vote against Mladen, and the unravelling of their multiple ties. Conversely, football friends supported his re-election, despite disliking his party, because of their personal relations. A third group supported Mladen because they owed him gratitude for permanent or short-term employment, like his sister and brother-in-law, several village women, and Miro *Supervizor*.

Indeed, Mladen lived through and acted upon the classic dilemma of the village headman (Gluckman, Mitchell, and Barnes 1949) responsible both to the relational logics of his ñcommunityò and of ñgovernment.ò Between the Scylla of overconforming to relational demands from below ï like the weakly embedded Miro *Supervizor* in the Football Club ï and the Charybdis of enacting relational orders from above ï like the increasingly ñdisembeddedò Pedro from Galicia ï Mladen steered a middle course. Adam Kuper suggested the term rebellion for such mediate embedded action. Rebellion could unfold as self-interested action, of which the economically powerful Bane EriÍ was accused. A cognate option was suggested by Roseman for Pedroôs case, where ñone of the only ways to forge a relationship [as a politician] is through vertical patron-client relationshipsò (1996, 854, fn.15).

Mladen negotiated however a *social* rebellion that emerged from his ñtransversalò relational diplomacy, recombining egalitarian and hierarchical elements. This social rebellion needs to be disentangled into the different relations that went into its making. Thus, Mladen mediated between several locales (country, city, and capital), opposing classes (the unemployed, worker-peasants, small and larger entrepreneurs, local state actors, weekend house owners, fellow veterinarians, and foreign investors), male and female genders, etc., showing sympathy for the less powerful. Second, in Mladenôs case the state consisted of power relations to his party, the City parliament and its working bodies, and to the administration of the City Mayor (in which he rose because of his caring, hands-on attitude).

Following how Mladen steered his socially rebellious course in local politics provides us with a good case study of the concrete-complex ñembeddedness of actors,ò my first axis of studying the local state as a relation. To recap, Mladen started his career as an organiser who

revalued late-socialist sport activism. Entering politics on this mandate, he also covered agriculture in his committee work, a topic which he knew by family background, professional training, and practice. Yet, the rural community of Lower Village was highly differentiated and could not be denoted as ñpeasant.ò Accordingly, Mladen could not represent it solely in his two fields of expertise. At the onset Mladen had already conformed casually to family demands to care for the employment of his sister and brother-in-law. As re-election time drew closer, Mladen *conformed to wider demands* for the inclusive, late-socialist ethics of care through work place provisioning, which enhanced his local legitimacy. However, these activities further fuelled corruption critique from the disenfranchised segments of his relations. *Resignation* had been inevitable in Mladenôs early career as a sports activist when the volleyball club went bankrupt in 2003-4. Yet, as a state actor he did not resign in the face of corruption charges. Rather, he persevered in this late-socialist ethics of care. *Self-interestedness* did play a part, as he accumulated authority, a high regular salary, an enlarged meshwork of social relations, increased knowledge, and travel opportunities. Yet it would be too narrowly instrumentalist to interpret this widening of agential resources and power solely as self-interestedness.

I argue that Mladen grew in and through the ôculturalô productivity of the *social rebellion* that he developed.[80] Moving beyond corporately limited class and family interests, he tried to shape the contradictions of his fragmented local community in the spirit of solidarity. In accordance with the morphing politics of his party G17plus/URS, he slowly translated his triple intuitions (ñsport activism,ò rural development, and the socialist-ethics-of-care-through-work) into a possibly hegemonic position: a social-liberal politics that countered austerity and advocated equalising redistribution, solidarity, and meaningful employment. When URS began to dissolve in 2014, this position was only partially formulated, and the workplaces Mladen offered were relatively lowly paid. Nonetheless, by innovating social rebellion at the heart of embedded action as a local politician, Mladen ñlifted upò a broad meshwork of village relations. Ascending in the political hierarchy, he dragged this local solidarity into a more culturally productive position. New, transversal relations emerged through which relational practices of care circulated.

In the next chapter we will follow how Mladenôs sport friends from the football club, among them Bane Eriĺ, Miro *Supervizor*, and Goran Todoroviĺ, fared in their rebellion in the Local Council (SMZ). Local participatory politics could emerge not despite, but rather because of strong criticism from outside the SMZ.

[80] The following is, in its double meaning, a ñliberalò reading of Haug (2015, 1982 et passim).

Chapter 3: The Local Council at work

> Certain Yugoslavs committed the error of seeing in *autogestion* [self-government] a system, and therefore a model that could be established juridically and that could function without clashes and contradictions, in a sort of social and political harmony. Instead, *autogestion* reveals contradictions in the State because it is the very trigger of those contradictions. [é] This does not happen without real struggles [é]. The same is true of democracy, which is never a ñconditionò but a struggle (Lefebvre 2009a [1979], 135).

On Wednesday, 22 July 2009, a day after the communal work action I analysed in the previous chapter, the Local Council (SMZ) of Lower Village met to discuss the current state of affairs in the organization of the village festival. It was shortly after 8 pm. The councillors waited for latecomers and chatted joyously. Some tried to decipher the illegible signature under an old inventory list of Council property dating from 2002, a document that would become ever more central in subsequent meetings. Meanwhile, Tina, a member of the committee for sports and culture, teased the ñconfusedò SMZ supervisor, her friend Miro. President Bane Eriĺ jokingly reinstated Miroôs reputation naming him ñchief of construction.ò Bane asked Tina about her recent trip, and she told them how good it had been to be home (*kod svojih*) and how excited she was every time she passed the bridge across the Drina.[81] Then Tina returned to Miro:

> Tina: (*in high spirit*). Did you throw away that rubble, eh?
> Miro: Where?
> Tina: That rubble next to the [former] veterinary station?
> Miro: Yes, we did, but we didnôt store it inside.
> Tina: Aha.
> Miro: We donôt have a key.
> Tina: You, *pa*, are ideal, living in the village, I think it is known [how to behave], come on! (*Miro tried to defend himself, but Tina interrupted him raising her voice*). Did you hear that? The Football club dumped its rubble (*Laughter in the background*).

Two aspects of the small exchange are noteworthy. First, unlike in the football club in the last chapter, Tinaôs criticism of Miro was not intended to undermine his authority as a representative of the local state *per se*. Rather, Tina questioned in her gently ironic way the persistent local stereotype that culture and sport politics were the prerogative of men. By showing that she took better care of her own portfolio, Tina enacted her claim to equality in the SMZ. Along the way,

[81] Tina, who was born and raised in Tuzla (Bosnia-Herzegovina) in a mixed Yugoslav family to a Bosnian Muslim mother and a Serb Orthodox father, alluded to Nobel Prize Winner Ivo Andriĺôs bestseller ñThe Bridge on the Drinaò (1945). In the novel the author described the lives of Orthodox and Muslim interrelations in Viśegrad over 400 years. The Drina divides Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Viśegrad being the first town on the Bosnian side.

and second, she turned her absence from the work action into a nonchalant enactment of her cosmopolitan background, indexed by the history of conviviality in Bosnian urban centres like Višegrad and Tuzla. Within this short conversation Tina therefore celebrated two of the major claims to a different approach by the new SMZ ï a better representation of villagers concerning gender and origin.

The councillors turned to the more pragmatic issues, such as who should keep the key for the old veterinary station, or the disposal of the rubble. Then Miro deflected attention by asking President Bane why this meeting had been arranged on a Wednesday evening again, although ï as was generally known ï there was training for the football veterans to get fit for their game on St. Elijah. Besides, they were missing the Champions League matches on TV. With this rebuke Miro took his turn in the councillorsô joking relationships that were scripted on their roles in the SMZ. Miro now ñsupervisedò how and when the President ran the council; while the latter had conducted the meeting in a collegial fashion. The historically asymmetrical gender and age relations still inflected the relationships between the councillors, but they reversed these relations in jocular fashion, as women criticized men and juniors their seniors.

To better understand the óidentity makingô and órebellious aspirationô that were expressed in these seemingly ordinary conversations, we will have to untangle the histories and ideologies, the formation, and the relational practices of boundary work in the SMZ. Firstly, I consider the history of local self-government in the village, to see how the material transformations of the SMZ shaped the expectations of citizens about local state delivery of services and infrastructures. As a result of its dwindling tax base, the activities of the SMZ drastically declined under neo-capitalism, leading to increased public disaffection. Secondly, I follow the discursive controversies that surrounded the Yugoslav concept of local self-government. Since its inception, it had captured the imagination of Western scholars and activists, as the introductory epigram indicates. However, from the second half of the 1970s, and especially after socialism, opinions became decidedly negative. The villagersô material dissatisfaction with the SMZ led them to partly take up the criticism. In 2009 both trends culminated in a local rebellion and the formation of a new SMZ. I illuminate, thirdly, the contradictory socio-spatial relations that were incorporated in this rebellious SMZ, particularly concerning territorial belonging, gender, and age. The contradictions could only partially be moderated by the joking modality of boundary work that we encountered in the vignette above. Therefore, the councillors increasingly searched for a unifying ñboundary object,ò e.g. scrutinising the inventory of 2002, and finally fixing on the yearly budget plan. Fourthly, I analyse the case of

a local road dispute, asking how the SMZôs government of infrastructure through budgetary allocation confronted the criticism of local factions.

As Lefebvre suggested in the epigram, the SMZ and other Yugoslav state relations gave rise to contradictions and struggles. Strong social opposition and criticism led to repeated ruptures in the functioning of the SMZ, yet they also contributed to its longer-term continuity. Criticism rejuvenated the SMZ by partially replacing the actors, ideas and methods, which made it possible to respond to and shape the transformations of the locality and the local state. I begin by tracing some of these ruptures and continuities.

3.1 The history of rural self-government

The SMZ was formalised as part of the last constitution of the SFRY in 1974, in an attempt to tackle the basic socialist philosophical and practical ñdilemma of control required to move toward freedomò (Benello 1976, 398). The setup, with eleven members and a supervisor was elected every four years, and re-election was possible. In 2009 Bane Eriĺ became its new, seventh President. However, some people traced the roots of rural self-government to time immemorial. Thus one grandson of my first host Pantelija ấ okoviĺ advised President Bane in May 2009 to host his foreign guests ñlike a *kmet*ò (village head of old).

According to Rayk Einax (2007), local self-government in the late Ottoman ñold villageò (before 1805) was already a form of electoral democracy, in which male household heads elected the village head (*seoski kmet*) in the village assembly (*seoski zbor*). Village self-government was then constitutionally incorporated into the Serbian nation-state. In the second half of the 19th century, between one and three villages were ruled and self-governed in one *seoska opġtina* (village municipality), which was integrated into the higher state scales of the district (*srez*) and the county (*okrug*). The community law of 1875 re-strengthened the old village, which again directly elected its *kmet*, municipal council (*opġtinski odbor*) and municipal court (*opġtinski sud*). However, a prefecture system, in which the head (*naļelnik*) of the district and of the county was appointed from above, predominated (Einax 2007, 227ï 9). As the constitution was frequently changed, so was the weighting of elements of central rule vs. local self-government. The fluctuation of setups, tasks, scales, territorial boundaries, and depth of self-government has continued till today.

Between 1834 and 1955 alone, some 4000 out of 5000 villages switched their territorial-administrative organisation (NR Serbije, zavod za statistiku 1955, 87). By the early 20th century, Lower and Upper Village formed one local government unit (*opġtina*). Their joint village *opġtina* belonged, together with sixteen others, to a rural district (*srez*). This *srez*, together with

two others, made up the county (*okrug*) Creek Town (ibid, 289). With the advent of the socialist state, self-government even became subject to self-proclaimed revolutionary change.

The early socialist legacy

In 1944, in the final stages of World War II, the partisan movement led by the Yugoslav Communist Party, in alliance with the Red Army, defeated the German occupiers, their quislings, and rivalling guerrilla-formations like the Serb-royalist Ļetniks. In the aftermath of the war and the re-establishment of Yugoslavia, Upper and Lower Village became separate *opġtine*. Each formed its own Peopleôs Committee (*Narodni Odbor*, NO), which initially recruited its members from local partisan veterans (*prvoborci*). Lower and Upper Village remained within one district (*srez*), but in 1947 the district was reorganised and its new centre became River City (NR Srbije, zavod za statistiku 1955, 133).

The Peopleôs Committee (NO) of Lower Village Municipality was housed in the ñOld Srezò building in the village centre. The NO committee was run by the chief of the Municipality (*ġef opġtine*), a secretary, and a clerk. The NO operated a court and an improvised jail (*apsana*), where war collaborators and other villagers were penalized as ñenemies of the peopleò or fined as ñ*kulaks*.ò[82] International tensions rippled down to the village, when the Yugoslav leader Tito and the leader of the Soviet Union, Stalin, fell out in 1948. Tito turned for economic and military support to the West to survive a threatened invasion by the Soviet allies (Sundhaussen 2012, 82ï 96). The paradoxical consequence was that the Yugoslav leadership, in order to prove its socialist credentials against accusations of counterrevolution, aggressively pursued land collectivization and further estranged the countryside. The village cooperative (*zadruga*) was formed in 1948 and it confiscated fields in the fertile valley without compensation, partly in exchange for less fertile land in the hills. 30-40 ha of land were thus amassed. Most peasants answered to such measures with foot dragging and ï at least in Western Bosnia ï with open resistance (Bokovoy 1998). As the combined result of their recalcitrance, two disastrous harvests, and because the Yugoslav leadership felt more secure after Stalinôs death, the forced collectivization stopped by 1954 (DobrivojeviĆ 2013, 293ï 368).

[82] *Kulak* (Russian) originally designated ñagricultural capitalists,ò i.e. agricultural producers with employees, or paid help from outside the kinship realm. Yet, it was metaphorically used for people acting against the socialist economy, whether or not they owned land (Tito, 3.8.1949, in DobrivojeviĆ 2013, 299). In July 1952 the maximum legal amount of private land property was fixed at ten ha (in Vojvodina at 15 ha). In Lower Village, for instance, the ņokoviĆ brothers Petrije and Pantelija lost half of their 35 ha of land. Both had been active Ļetniks. Petrije, a father of four small children, was declared an ñenemy of the peopleò (*narodski neprijatelj*) and lost eight ha of land. He was sent to the penal colony ñ*Goli Otok*.ò His elder brother Pantelija had in time repented and served at the Syrnian front against the Germans. Thus Pantelija ónlyô lost seven ha when he could not deliver the astronomic dues. Pantelijaôs land was returned in 1992, Petrijeôs has not yet been restituted.

Subsequently, the ideological competition between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union had effects that were locally evaluated as more positive. Yugoslaviaôs leaders began to look for their unique way to socialism by way of socialist democracy, for which they drew on readings of early Marx on socialist humanism, the late Marx on the Paris Commune, and the Soviet Revolutionaries on the October Revolution (Sundhaussen 2012, 96ï108). The ñchief-ideologueò of Yugoslavia, Edvard Kardelj, wrote in 1954 that ñsocialist democracyò could be ñonly developed in one direction, an ever stronger development of the self-government of the peopleò (cited in SimoviĆ 1966, 120). The new Yugoslav way to self-managed socialism aroused international hopes for a third way beyond state-centred capitalism and socialism. In France in the 1950 and 1960s, for instance, ñurbanistic and regionalist strands [é] advocated a radical decentralization of political power, enhanced local control over basic economic and administrative tasks and an abolition of the divide between governors and governed.ò Their debates drew on the ñYugoslav system of industrial democracyò (Brenner 2008, 234).

Parallel to the rising international appreciation of Yugoslav self-government, the rural *opġtina* became less feared and wielded increased economic power according to the Law on Self-Government of 1955 (SimoviĆ 1966, 122). The size of an average *opġtina* tripled between 1955 and 1962, by incorporating several localities (ibid, 124, 126). At the same time, smaller rural Local Committees (*Mesni Odbori*, MO) were established and renamed in 1963 into Local Communities (*mesne zajednice*, MZ) (Höpken 1986, 77). Lower Villageôs politicians profited for a while from this development. Around 1960 the *ġef* of the MO cut a powerful figure: he ñwas consulted [in important decisions] and he helped to find employmentò (*pitao se, pomaġe da se neko zaposli*) (I, Jovana SimiĆ, 8.9.2013). The *ġef*, a former partisan, was revered as an ñeducated personò (*pismen ļovek*), because he had finished the secondary agricultural school ñwith the highest grades.ò When Jovana SimiĆôs father (Mladen *Veterinar*ôs grandfather) took Jovanaôs elder sister to see the *ġef* and ask for a job, the latter told them to choose from three neighbouring villages (I, Jovana SimiĆ, 8.9.2013).

In these years, the village experienced strong economic growth and enhanced public and private consumption. In 1955, Lower Village was electrified, and in 1961 the cooperative bought its first tractor. Soon, private tractors ploughed the fields, too. Village hands were many, and communal work actions (*radne akcije*) were recalled by at least some former activists as the occasion of merry making and matchmaking.[83] Thus, in the 1950s, teachers could be offered free housing in four semi-detached houses built by the village. In the 1960s, Lower village had

[83] Note that the work at the football club in the last chapter was also called a *radna akcija*. For a contemporary account of ñcustomaryò Balkan village merry making and match making, see Sanders (1949).

some ten public properties with between 20 m^2 and 200 m^2 of floor space, the largest being the House of Culture (*Dom Kulture*), that featured movies, dances, a cafeteria, a folk dance group, and a chess club. Since 1961, football was organized by the club *FK Zadrugari 1961*, and soon a pitch was built on cooperative land provided by the MO. Meanwhile, as young villagers moved into the industrializing towns and birth and mortality rates decreased, a nascent Yugoslav rural sociology started to comment on the aging of the village (StipetiÍ 2013).

A new step in socialist self-government was taken in 1963, when the third Yugoslav Constitution separated the party and the state. Control of social life was further relaxed, and while enterprises shed jobs and unemployment increased, central and local state investments in infrastructure soared. The administrative units were restructured, and until 1967 Lower Village, together with a dozen other villages, was part of the rural *opština* Big Village.[84] Afterwards the rural *opštine* became second-tier parts of the even bigger urban *opština* River City, which encompassed some 50 surrounding villages.

In the 1960s the Government of Serbia constructed an asphalt road, which connected Upper and Lower Village to the main road (*magistrala*) leading to River City. In Upper Village the spa began to attract visitors, as recreational facilities were built including an indoor hot spa, restaurants, and bars. Meanwhile Lower Village increasingly ñgravitatedò towards the fast growing River City, as the novel public transport catered for uncounted villagers working in its industries. The youth, although increasingly living in town, regularly returned to the village. ñVillage Gatheringsò (*takmičenja sela*), organized by the *opština*, revolved around folk music performances by groups of amateur musicians and were appropriated by the competing youth ensembles. Concomitantly, the social position of rural women improved (see Hofman 2011).[85]

However, growing social inequalities were also felt. In 1968, Belgradeôs students rose up against the ñred bourgeoisieò and demanded a deepening of ñreal self-organizing socialism.ò Tito expressed his support, but the Yugoslav leadershipôs crackdown on the Nationalist movement of the Croatian Spring in 1971 quelled hopes for rapid transformation (Kanzleiter 2011). Nonetheless, the 1970s brought new change. In 1973, the SFRY decided to restructure its agricultural policy and announced the Green Plan (until 1985) intended to push the agricultural sector towards integrated economies of scale (Allcock 2000, 137ï40). For Lower

[84] Big Village lay eight km south-east of Lower Village in the River Plains. Its 3000 inhabitants and concentrated settlement made it a ñsmall townò (*varošica*) with social security and public health services. From another perspective it was a ñrich villageò (*bogato selo*) because of fertile lands and diversified employment.

[85] In her book on the performance of femininity in South Eastern Serbia, ethno-musicologist Ana Hofman (2011) argues that the gendered inequality in the village was both altered and reproduced during socialism. Only after World War II were women granted legal equality with men. New public discourses of gender equality met with a social reality in which village women were subordinated to male control. In state organized village gatherings between the 1960s and 1990s, rural women appropriated the equality discourse and expanded their freedoms.

Village, this meant that the cooperative was decoupled from the *mesna zajednica* and became part of the newly formed Agro-Industrial Combine (PIK) River City. PIK organised the production, processing and consumption chains for dairy, grain, potato and meat products (TimotijeviÍ 2012). Lower Villageôs machine park was moved to Big Village. What remained were the fruit orchards, a plum drying chamber, and a purchasing station. Yugoslavia also channelled World Bank loans via socialized agriculture to private farms. Thus, PIKôs dairy and meat processing plants provided credits to farmers to expand their stables.[86] This economic concentration was accompanied by political decentralisation.

The late-socialist Local Council (SMZ)

The last Yugoslav constitution of 1974 recognised that the big urban municipalities (*opštine*) had become too large to encourage participatory democracy. Local Communities (*mesne zajednice*, MZ) had existed optionally since 1963 and were intended to be the ñpolitical organization of the community,ò the ñhubôof self-government and self-decision, influence and óparticipationôò (SimoviÍ 1966, 152). These MZ became constitutionally obligatory self-governmental subunits of the *opštine* in 1974 (Höpken 1986, 82ï 3), coordinated by voluntary, non-professional Local Councils (SMZ). These village SMZs ñbecame fixated on asphalt, electricity, canalization, [and] street lightsò (I, TimotijeviÍ, 15.5.2012). Infrastructure development has since been an expected part of local state activity.

The MZ clerk Pavle (b. 1942) worked with the Local Council of Lower Village between 1976 and 2002, with a break of five years between 1990 and 1995 (when he worked in another community). As Pavle told me, the SMZ introduced, ñaccording to the proposal and the readiness of the citizens,ò a local contribution tax (*mesni doprinos*) in the citizen assembly (*zbor građana*) by simple majority vote. Local contribution tax was around two per cent of income and was ñdedicated for a particular purposeò (*navodi se namenski*). ñWhether that [particular purpose] was really always respected, I cannot affirm, but all was spent for the village ï that was never a problem thenò (I, Pavle, 4.9.2013). Pavle suggested that under late socialism, money was used off the books. In retrospect this was fine with the villagers as long as it benefitted their moral community. Today, such behaviour would be regarded as corrupt, as we will see below.

Until the 1960s, village roads in Serbia were generally unpaved and could not be used after heavy rain (Halpern 1967, 1, 39). In the 1970s village neighbourhoods increasingly collected

[86] These credits were easily repaid within a few years from the sale of milk and beef.

contributions to co-finance road building contracts between the SMZ and the municipal road building company. Many dirt roads were thus asphalted or at least gravelled. Typically, the villagers asked the municipal company for ñhelp,ò but in the 1980s, several grand projects were also suggested by the Municipality to the SMZ of Lower Village. In 1981 the villagers built a road in the Jankovi*ć* i neighbourhood, followed in 1983 by another in the Filipovi*ć* i neighbourhood, one in 1987 in the Pavlovi*ć* i neighbourhood, and one in 1996 in the Jovanovi*ć* i neighbourhood. When Jovanovi*ć* i asphalted their road, Boro Jovanovi*ć*, who worked then as councillor of the SMZ, ñwas [economically] so strongò (*bio je toliko jak*) that he could lend money to almost every neighbour so that they were able to pay their contributions (I, Pavle, 19.5.2012).

The rural Serbian experience of road building varied remarkably from the coeval Spanish one. Road building in a Galician village under Franco was characterized by Roseman (1996, 850) as a ñsuccessful exploitation of peasant laborò through local power holders and state officials, which locals reinterpreted ñas a continuation of local traditions of labor donation and an expression of village solidarity in the face of outside obstruction.ò In Yugoslavia, as in Spain, villagers used the language and idioms of mutual aid, solidarity, and cooperative village work to make sense of road building. Similar idioms however were accompanied by divergent practices. In the account of Rosemanôs interlocutor Elvira, the hungry Galician villagers prepared the terrain in backbreaking work with manual tools. Decades later Elvira still recalled how the Town Hall offered a meagre ration of wine, sardines and bread, which the villagers were forced to share out themselves as if it was a cooperative labour party (Roseman 1996, 843-4). In Serbia, in contrast, road building was remembered as joyful, indicating that Serbian villagers thought they had co-opted the state to build the road for them.

Serbian local road building was modelled on agricultural customs of a ñwork partyò (*moba*). A *moba* ñcombines mutual help and merry-making. When the dayôs work in the field is done, the helpers relax, eat supper, drink, sing, and dance at the home of their host. Here the return of labor is not formally a necessity, but most peasants regard it as an obligationò (Halpern 1967, 66). The villagers experienced themselves as the host (*domaći in*) of the road building action. Jovana Simi*ć* vividly remembered how she offered mountains of food and drinks to all the construction workers and villagers who hauled the pebbles from the river with their tractors or horse-drawn carts. Her household slaughtered animals and roasted them, a band played, and litres of *rakija* were served. In her recollection, even the weather was beautiful, and everybody was happy (I, Jovana Simi*ć*, 13.5.2012). As the contributions to road building were shared

between the Municipality, the SMZ, and the neighbourhoods ï especially its more affluent households ï infrastructure governance was perceived as a fair co-production.

The economic situation of the local inhabitants fluctuated immensely from the 1980s, with the overall trends pointing towards a lowering of life opportunities. This affected the resources of the SMZ for infrastructure government. First, the local contribution tax was paid by declining numbers of workers from their dwindling salaries (I, Pavle, 4.9.2013). This trend was aggravated by the numerical decline and ageing of the population. The lawyer Aleksandar Brodić, whose father was a Lower Villager, and who was the new advisor to the City Mayor for Local Council Affairs, found the following imagery: ñthe young people all run away into the city, only the old stay behind. The village diesò (I, Aleksandar Brodić, 3.9.2013).[87]

The villagersô experience of infrastructural improvement by the SMZ made during late socialism formed the present horizon of expectation of the middle and elder generations. The mismatch between expectations and possibilities fed into strong dissatisfaction, overlain and complicated by discursive contestations of the socialist legacy of self-government. I turn to these ideological contentions with a view to how they were partially incorporated by post-socialist SMZs, including the rebellious setup of 2009.

Socialist and post-socialist interventions

By the late 1970s, criticism of Yugoslav socialist self-government by sociologists like Henri Lefebvre and historians like Wolfgang Höpken became more frequent.

In his third volume of *De lôÉtat*, Henri Lefebvre presented a short, but incisive discussion of Yugoslaviaôs *laboratoire politique*. He was well informed about Yugoslav political developments through his participation in philosophical summer schools of the óPraxis Schoolô on the island of Korčula, and his position on the advisory board of its journal (Stanek 2011, 64).[88] Lefebvre saw the conflicting tendencies of centralization from the top, and of decentralization from the bottom, playing out ñnot without risk of disintegrationò of the state and society (Lefebvre 1977, III:341ï 2). He characterized Yugoslavia as a ñ[c]urious adventure, of a state that wanted (by directing it, wanted) to organize its proper withering away, according

[87] The population decreased as follows: 1991: 1100, 2002: 1000, 2011: 950 inhabitants. Brodićôs right hand, the chief of the division for local self-government (*šef odseka za mesnu samoupravu*) added that urban SMZ also struggled but had better services in cleaning public spaces, road lighting, etc. because they levied land tax, which villagers resisted (I, advisor, 3.9.2013).

[88] The Praxis School (1963/4-75) was a Yugoslav circle of philosophers and sociologists that creatively appropriated and developed heterodox (humanist) Marxist thought. Its summer schools were frequented by major European critical intellectuals. The Praxis Schoolôs critique of the alienation (or reification) of society by a bureaucratised state, and its focus on the conditions of possibility of de-alienated, emancipatory praxis of man led to antagonisms with the Yugoslav Communist Party and finally to its administrative ban (see Stefanov 2013).

to the perspective opened by Marx, admittedly reinforcing itself in the process (Lefebvre 1977, III:342ï 3). Was the ñcontradiction between ópolitical powerô and ócounter-powerô antagonistic,ò he asked, or could a unity of ñthe nation, the people, the working classò be maintained (Lefebvre 1977, III:343)?

The historian Wolfgang Höpken studied Yugoslav self-government during a prolonged research stay in Belgrade, analysing primary and secondary sources. Writing in the 1980s, Höpken expressed the hope that the West German science of local politics and recent participatory movements could learn from the ambitious Yugoslav project of self-government (Höpken 1986, 69). In his account, Yugoslaviaôs communal system, despite all its efforts and a propensity to reform, had not fully succeeded in combining efficiency with autonomy and participation with influence, but then neither had Western countries (Höpken 1986, 141). In addition, Höpken found that like in Western countries, women were underrepresented at all levels of political decision making. Thus, in Serbian SMZs women constituted only between 2.1 % (in 1970) to 8.3 % (in 1980) of councillors (Höpken 1986, 90ï 3) Nevertheless Höpken approvingly cited Yugoslav sociological studies from the 1970s which suggested that in Yugoslavia ñcitizen participation is greater within the framework of selfmanagement model [sic] than it is within the framework of the democratic model of western societiesò (Barbiļ 1974, 25, in Höpken 1986, 90).

In contrast to Lefebvre and Höpken, post-socialist critiques characterized Yugoslav self-government as radically deficient. I distinguish three tendencies: comparison with an idealised West, ñerasureò through older genealogies, and ñdemocratic actionò by international NGOs.

Comparison with an idealised West. Serbian sociologist Jelisaveta VukeliĹ recently argued that ñ[o]n the four levels of direct citizen participation: providing/ acquiring information, consulting, proposing, and participating in decision-making [é] citizen participation in Serbia exists at a rudimentary level and that in this regard we are lagging behind most countries in Western Europe, but also in the regionò (VukeliĹ 2009, 291). This critique was ostensibly based on a comparative literature review, but omitted the contributions of sympathetic foreign scholars like Lefebvre or Höpken, and the substantial theoretical interventions of Yugoslav scholars like Branko Horvat, Mihajlo MarkoviĹ, and Rudi Supek (1975). Ultimately VukeliĹ constructed a normative, auto-Orientalist account of what kind of (liberal) democracy should be imported. Thus, VukeliĹ drew a neat boundary between good, Western, ñcivil democracyò and rudimentary, Serbian, ñcommunistò self-government.

Construction of older genealogies. A second trend was to ñeraseò Yugoslav self-government by tracing pre-Yugoslav antecedents. For instance, social work theorist Ivana

KrejoviĹ constructed a genealogy of self-government by drawing on human geographers, sociologists and anthropologists from the early 20th century. The function of her piece, she wrote, was to lobby for an intensified application of street-level social work in small localities (KrejoviĹ 2004, 141ï 2). However, as we will see in Chapter Five, the professionalized practice of social work only dated back to the 1950s. KrejoviĹ ôs ñre-brandingò of local self-government may be interpreted as a charitable attempt to use hegemonic discourses of ñcivil democracyò to lobby for more micro-projects in rural social work. Civil democracy, however, had a compromised genealogy.

Civil democracy interventions by international NGOs. Western development planners praised ñcommunity participationò during late British colonialism, rebranded it as ñrural developmentò in the McNamara-era of the 1970s, and as ñcivil societyò in the 1980s/90s (Ferguson, Gupta, and Curtis 2012, 5). Its most recent remake was ñruling by micro-projectsò (Vetta 2009, 27; Sampson 2003). Like in Lefebvreôs times, ñthe notion of the declining state still shored up state legitimacyò (Creed 2013, 61), but the goals had shifted from socialist de-alienation to capitalist creativity. These latest shifts played out in paradoxical ways in development interventions in Serbia.

Between 2001 and 2007, USAIDôs ñCommunity Revitalization through Democratic Action programò (CRDA) ran a $ 40 million programme, including 1000 working groups, 6000 volunteers, and 900 elected board members, to develop ñdemocratic mechanisms that promoted community involvement in identifying and addressing economic and social needs in central Serbiaò (óSerbia ï Community Revitalization through Democratic Action (CRDA)ô 2015). In her ethnographic case study, Theodora Vetta (2009) explored how these micro-projects worked. The CRDA treated the SMZs in the project communities as delegitimized, inefficient and politicized remnants of the past. During the implementation phase, the CRDA experts overrode the SMZ, with the aim to construct ña-political, empoweredò citizens. The newly formed citizen boards outmanoeuvred the antagonized SMZ with their financially supported infrastructure initiatives. Afterwards they ran for office in the SMZs themselves. The CRDA implementers reluctantly included the new óapolitical SMZôthat they had involuntarily shaped in a subsequent project phase. The overall aim to revitalize the community through ñDemocratic Action,ò however, was not achieved. CRDA had exacerbated local political tensions and, as project members self-critically commented, they had focused too much on measurable indicators and their implementation (Vetta 2009, 40ï 5).

As the CRDA experiments demonstrated, SMZs had a base-line legitimacy in post-Yugoslav rural communities. Similarly, in Bosnia-Herzegovinaôs Brļko district, new settlers (internally

displaced persons) founded their own ñethnicò SMZ besides the officially recognized one, in order to represent their interests (Jones 2011).[89] Likewise, critics of the SMZ in Upper Village got themselves elected as SMZ supervisors and thereby incorporated the opposition into the SMZ. This led to stormy and chaotic meetings, as I observed in September 2013. Over time the ógde-politicised democratic empowerment of the communityô has become a shared aim of SMZ councillors, their antagonists, supporters, and usurpers. By 2005 the civil democracy approach was translated into the preamble of Lower Villageôs SMZ statute, as prepared by the Municipal division for local self-government: ñThe Local Community [é] is an interest-based, *democratic and non-party-based* community of citizens with the aim of satisfying the needs of citizens that are of immediate common interestò (SMZ 2005, 1, my emphasis).

In the next subchapter we will follow how the football club in Lower Village took over the SMZ in Lower Village in the alleged spirt of non-party based, democratic representation of the young, the women, and the territorially remote, aiming to clear the SMZ of corruption. Their main obstacles were a low budget and a re-forming opposition that used the same generalised views of politics to criticize the rebels.

3.2 Rebellion and norm in the SMZ

Between 2001 and 2009, the Local Council of Lower Village was led by the charismatic pensioner-entrepreneur Vojo VoloviÍ (b. 1939). Vojoôs father had been born in the village but had made a career in Belgrade. Vojo ï who was rhetorically skilled and spoke clearly and simply ï finished higher education and became a general in the Yugoslav Peopleôs Army (JNA). After he retired in 1989, he moved to Lower Village, where he built a stately week-end house (*vikendica*) and a warehouse. With his son in Canada Vojo engaged in the import-export business, and lived very comfortably. Around his weekend house he planted a plum orchard to prove to his fellow villagers that one could make a profit from growing fruit. Vojoôs will, energy and desire to change his environment drew him into local politics. When he was asked to become president of the SMZ, he wanted ñto make an Edenò of Lower Village (*Ja sam hteo da napravim Raj od ovog sela*) (I, Vojo, 7.9.2013).

Vojoôs SMZ was quite active in its first mandate, during which it renovated the House of Culture, replaced rotten wooden electricity poles, erected announcement tables in the village, built a chapel on the graveyard, and so on. Vojo told me he invested ú 10,000 in SMZ work and used his good contacts in the Municipality, sometimes pressuring the authorities to help him.

[89] The older SMZ slowly incorporated the alternative SMZ into a new, united setup.

Vojoôs activities produced local antipathies, and it did not help that he was the namesake to a famed gangster in River City. One former President of the SMZ of the 1980s, a pensioned bus driver-agriculturalist, emphasised to me that ñVojo was not even born in the village,ò implying that as an outsider, he needed to be treated with suspicion (I, former President SMZ, 4.9.2013). When Vojo used personal means to get things done, it was rumoured that he laundered money. Furthermore, not all of his plans came to fruition, like the communal environmental organization that he started in 2003. Two painting summer schools (*likovna kolonija*) he organized in 2004 and 2005 were also mixed successes. During the second summer school, the artist in charge apparently embezzled money, but Vojo did not sue him, mindful that a scandal would tarnish the reputation of the SMZ (I, Vojo, 7.9.2013). However, his reticence backfired and increased the scandal. In 2010, a villager recounted how Vojo took ú 2000 from the bank account of the SMZ in 2004/5, but where and how the money was paid had never been clarified, despite public protest (I, Boro Nuġiĺ, 6.4.2010).

In his second mandate, Vojo connected the village to the inter-municipal water piping infrastructure. A first abortive attempt had been made around 1990 by the President of the Municipality, a man born and raised in Lower Village. This former Municipal President congratulated Vojo in 2005: ñRespect! [é] the people all but chased me out of the assembly with staves [in 1990], I did not dare to step up to anybody ï how you succeeded, I do not knowò (I, Vojo, 7.9.2013, similarly I, former Mayor Jankoviĺ, 21.10.2010). In effect, in 2005 Vojo persuaded half of the village households to contribute ú 1200 each for the piping in 24 monthly rates of ú 50.[90] In the end, 100 out of 140 households paid the full amount. The piping system was finalized in 2008, but the Municipality had not completed a necessary mains pipeline in the River valley, and the infrastructure remained unused as of 2013.

This state of affairs was locally interpreted as the unsuccessful self-government of the SMZ, and further undermined the trust of villagers in it. The two former presidents of the SMZ of the 1980s, local big men in their neighbourhoods who wanted to polish up their reputation, scented their opportunity. Especially Radivoje Rankoviĺ (b. 1927), a pensioned accountant-agriculturalist believed he had uncovered a major corruption case and repeatedly called financial investigators and police inspectors into the village. They found no evidence in their investigations, but the moral reputation of the SMZ between 2005 and 2009 was shaken.[91] The

[90] Vojo opened a foreign currency bank account for the piping money as president of the SMZ. The exchange rate of the dinar to the euro between 2004 and 2008 was around 75:1. Yet, from 2008 to 2012 it deteriorated yearly by 5-20 %. By 2009-10, 100 dinar already approximated 1 euro. Vojo had thereby prevented a devaluation of the villagersô contributions. For his savviness he received a prize as the best Village President in the Municipality.

[91] In 2008 and 2012, Vojo was nonetheless elected into the River City Parliament on the list of the Pensionerôs Party of Serbia (PUPS), which he claimed to have co-founded in 2005.

accusations of corruption ñmaterialisedò a generalised and widely believed narrative of corruption and gave it a realistic feel. The scandal made the local state knowable to the population, as it were. Similarly to the North Indian cases of road building corruption analysed by Akhil Gupta, ñthe hold that corruption has on the popular imagination,ò including that of state persons, was ña Durkheimian social factò (Gupta 2012, 113). Like Gupta, I cannot report a clear-cut case of local corruption. The discourses were at least ñsemi-autonomousò from illicit practices. The ñDurkheimian factò of corruption consisted in its consequences: ñgiven the ýssures of village society, rival factions who fought for control over democratically elected village councils often spread stories about the corruption of the headman as a way to delegitimize him in the eyes of other villagers and even his supporters [é] [it] served its own function in the politics of village lifeò (Gupta 2012, 122). This is how by 2009 the football club officials argued that they needed to clear the SMZ from its corrupt ñold guard.ò

Plotting the rebellion

As I have indicated in the previous chapter on the rise of the local politician Mladen *Veterinar*, since 2006 the football club had been rejuvenated by a group of energetic football enthusiasts coming from the youngest cohort of sports veterans. Besides Mladen *Veterinar* (b. 1967), these were Kojo ņokoviĺ (b. 1969), a painter and mason, and Goran Todoroviĺ (b. 1967), a small commercial vegetable producer (for details of his work biography, see Thiemann 2014). These three men had belonged to the ñgolden cohortò of players, who in the early 1990s had been promoted three leagues within three seasons, playing a series of 40 matches without defeat. They drew on the support of two dozen veterans who acted as friends, workers, and sponsors of the club. Club activist of the ñsecond tierò was the painter and mason Miro nicknamed *Supervizor* (b. 1965), Kojo ņokoviĺ ős colleague. Although not a veteran, Miro supported many village activities and acted as a referee, secretary, and janitor of the club. Another, very experienced club leader, was *rakija*-producer Bane Eriĺ (b. 1946). A long-time referee and football delegate in the football association, Bane had started to support the club around 1990 when his son-in-law had played in the golden cohort.[92]

This leadership network had proved streetwise in obtaining sponsorship from village migrants living as far afield as Canada; in organising voluntary work actions, swaps of material and financial favours with business partners, and so on. Their growing experience of self-organisation coincided with the surging criticism of Lower Villageős SMZ because of the water

[92] Although Bane did not declare his political allegiance, Rajka Jankoviĺ speculated that he was close to the Socialist Party (SPS).

piping project. Yet there were multiple ties between the club and the SMZ. Kojo ņokoviĺ was an SMZ councillor between 2001 and 2009, and Bane Eriĺ acted as SMZ supervisor between 2005 and 2009. However, when Mladen *Veterinar* went into local politics and became a member of the City Parliament, several club members formed the opinion that they could best ñhelp the villageò with their experience of participatory action (I, Goran, 16.5.2012).

Every four years the SMZ was elected by a citizensô assembly (*zbor gra***Ľ***ana*). Prior to the election of 2009, the leadership of the football club met and discussed the takeover. One of the plotters, Goran Todoroviĺ, told me later that they wanted to constitute a qualitative change in the workings of the Local Council that had been run for too long ñby the same team.ò For his children he wanted to redress the lack of a road and streetlights so they could go to school safely (I, Goran, 16. & 17.5.2012).[93] What needed to be figured out was an acceptable composition of the new SMZ which symbolized their ambitions. In Lower village, whose inhabitants proudly claimed to be progressive agriculturalists, the agricultural relations of production had historically legitimated hierarchies of age and gender.[94] After a period of emancipation between the 1960s and 1980s, and a period of ñregressive tendencies of re-patriarchalisation, re-traditionalisation and clericalisationò in the Miloġeviĺ years (Vujadinoviĺ 2013, 273; see also Jansen and Helms 2009), the idea of emancipation, though nothing new, was still heavily contested. Men and women were considered as relational parts of an economically equal married couple. But men tended (according to older patrilineal patterns) to represent the household politically (see Bringa 1995, 50). The transformation had also led to a stronger economic dependence of the youth on their parents, reversing socialist patterns of relative youth autonomy (Tomanoviĺ and Ignjatoviĺ 2006; Tomanoviĺ 2012). To emphasize their progressiveness, the plotters decided to achieve the (statutorily demanded) just territorial representation by better incorporating women and the young generation.

Territorial representation. The village consisted of eleven neighbourhoods, which were divided up into four territorial zones (*rejoni*) (SMZ 2005, Article 2). According to the statute, ñ[t]he members of the SMZ are elected on the citizensô assembly (*na zboru gra***Ľ***ana*) by public vote, respecting the principle of equal accessibility of all parts of the local communityò (SMZ 2005, Article 24). Villagers observed that ñeverybody pulls in his direction,ò implying that villagers generally acted in favour of their micro-territorial belonging

[93] The SMZ indeed later put up street lights in the village centre up to the school and in front of the church. However, street lighting did not reach the sparsely populated Todoroviĺ i neighbourhood.

[94] In the ideal typical domestic mode of production, agricultural relations of production are asymmetrical. Older males exploit the work of junior males, and both exploit the work of females and children. This mode of production has not been superseded by, but (unequally) incorporated into the world system. The Western family concept, from this perspective, is a particular type of metamorphosis within this context (Meillassoux 1991).

when deciding on resource allocations. All the more, a just territorial representation was a major preoccupation of rural self-government. The ideal SMZ setup would include one councillor per neighbourhood, but this was hard to achieve. A more pragmatic formula was that each *rejon* delegated at least two representatives. But even when including young club members, some of whom had been born and raised outside the village, there was still room to invite educated and friendly female representatives to join the envisioned new SMZ.

Gender representation. One of the women who accepted the invitation was Kamila ņ okoviĺ (b. 1963), who lived in the ņ okoviĺ i neighbourhood in the sparsely populated northern *rejon 4* at the border with Upper Village. Kamila had been born in Vojvodina (northern Serbia) and worked as a skilled seamstress before she married into Lower Village and became a farmer-housewife. Her husband Saġa was a veteran goalkeeper in the football club, and her son followed in his footsteps. Her neighbour Kojo convinced Kamila to volunteer, as she recounted:

> Kojo was before me in the mandate of the SMZ, [é] each *rejon* needs to have apparently two or three members, and he proposed me, for what reason I do not know, probably I occurred to him to be most fit (laughs). [é] I didn't immediately ï on one ï agree, yes, instead he persuaded me a little bit. Like: ó It ôs nothing ï see you attend the meetings, possibly you give a suggestion, ô this and that, later I also heard that Tina will join, ok, we together, it is already different when there are two women, because before there was apparently never a woman in that SMZ, we are the first (I, Kamila, 16.5.2012).

Kamila accepted knowing that Tina Pavloviĺ (b. 1974), from *rejon 3*, living in the remote Pavloviĺ neighbourhood off the Jankoviĺ i neighbourhood, would also work in the SMZ. Their homes were some three kilometres apart, and the two women saw each other only on rare occasions like school days (both had two children between ten and twelve years old in 2009). Kamila self-critically evaluated her own engagement in the SMZ as too passive. At the same time she praised Tina for her commitment and her different temperament.

Tina, whom we met in the initial vignette, was recruited by her friend and paternal cousin Miro *Supervizor*. She had been born and raised in Tuzla, where her mother died when she was ten years old. Years later the war broke out, and Tina was responsible for her younger brother. They remained for almost two years in the besieged city, before they fled to their grandfather ôs land in Lower Village. Here Tina soon married a ten-year older resident of the Pavloviĺ i neighbourhood. They lived in a community (*zajednica*) with her parents-in-law, which Tina, like many young women in the village including Kamila, found difficult to negotiate. More than Kamila, Tina emancipated herself from the claims on her workforce in the domestic agriculture, to which she had initially subordinated. Today, she had ñassertedò that she could work as a waitress in a restaurant at the *magistrala* and earn her own income (I, Tina,

12.5.2012). Tina was self-assured and self-determined in her domestic relations, and she expected to develop similar relations in the SMZ.

Age representation. The change in age politics was effected by recruiting five young men (four of them players in the football team), who were less than 30 years of age, some of them bachelors, others fathers, some from ñold families,ò others newcomers. The plotters also invited senior club members, for instance the coach of the first team. Bane EriĆ, the incumbent president of the SMZ (b. 1946), raised the average age.[95] Of the original õYoung Turks,ôGoran TodoroviĆ and Miro *Supervizor* went into the new SMZ. By 2012, Goran was a vocal SMZ member, football club president, and the coach of a youth team. Miro, as already mentioned, was the supervisor of the SMZ, who although officially not an SMZ member, practically acted as one. In the club Miro continued to work as a janitor. Kojo, the long-term SMZ councillor from 2001-9, argued that he had enough of local politics and concentrated on his enterprise and on playing football in the first team (until 2012).[96]

Purifying the SMZ from the inside

The citizensô assembly (*zbor gra***Đ***ana*) to elect the SMZ took place on Saturday, 28 March 2009, at noon in the school. Some 35 out of the 800 citizens eligible to vote showed up. My host Slavo JankoviĆ, who lived nearby, complained that the *zbor* was organised on a workday during the sowing season, so that he and his son Slavko were on the field and could not attend. Slavo was furious about what he saw as a put-up job by the football club. The SMZ statute defined:

> Article 25 [é] Candidates for membership of the SMZ are proposed on the *zbor* by citizens individually, or a collective proposition is given by a group of citizens. Each citizen or group of citizens can only propose one candidate as a member of the Council. A proposition of a candidate for the Council from a certain part of the Local Community, as a rule, is made by citizens or a group of citizens of that part of the Local Community [é] (SMZ 2005, Article 25).

In light of these regulations, the takeover could be interpreted as a violation of the statute. This kind of rebellion seemed to be rather common ï otherwise the statute would not have explicitly prohibited it. In any case, the illicit nature of the act was used by the new SMZôs enemies like Slavo to diminish its moral authority.

Despite its good intentions, the major cleavages of society concerning gender and age relations were soon reproduced within the new SMZ, even though, as we saw in the opening

[95] In fact, the average age of the new SMZ setup (43 years) corresponded with the average age in the village.
[96] Although he was careful not to discuss politics with me, my observation was that Kojo considered Bane EriĆ (who had four years of primary education) not very suitable as a candidate for the Presidency.

vignette, councillors reversed these asymmetries in their joking relations, with women criticizing men, and juniors their seniors. However, when it came to the part of the budget in the common culture and sports section for which the women were in charge, namely culture ï which seemed to be the ñnaturalò preserve of women, as it were ï the men usurped their resources. This infringement happened in such a casual way that Tina, who we know was quick at repartee, did not have much chance to intervene (tI, SMZ, 22.8.2009, 8.55 pm):

> Bane: You, council for culture and sportsé
> Tina & Kamila: Yes, please? é
> Bane: I have conducted a little talk with the *drugarica* [female address for ñcomradeò] who administers the budget of the SMZ at the Municipality, who agreed that it will be allowed to us, because we have exhausted that part that is reserved for the [football] club, because they work most, [*pause*] to also transfer from culture a bit, in order toé
> Tina: Again for the club? (*turning to Miro*) But how he grins. Yao, itôs just funnyé
> Bane: é And this is not in connection with the festival [of St. Elijah].

Tinaôs tactic to defend the culture-part of the sports-and-culture budget by mocking Miro was unsuccessful. The men simply ignored the friendly joking relationship which incorporated the criticism of gender and age prejudices. The irony which Tina identified in Miroôs grinning, on the other hand, conserved the prevailing power imbalances (on the emerging qualities of joking, see Handelman and Kapferer 1972). This episode points to the lack of procedures safeguarding the interests of less powerful members of the SMZ. The new President of the SMZ did not make a secret of his ambition to help ñhis peopleò (*svojim ljudima*).[97] As the dialogue between the women and Bane made evident, he supported the club with all available means. During the same meeting, he even overturned Goran Todoroviĺôs advice to accommodate villagers who were not sports fans by considering other venues for St. Elijah than the football pitch.

Therefore, similar to the more eloquent and better educated Vojo Voloviĺ, Bane could not instil trust among villagers in an impartial management of the SMZ. Both men were entrepreneurs who were perceived to be profit-oriented, interest-driven actors, as countless slants suggested. The financial room of manoeuver inherent in the semi-accountable position of the President further aggravated suspicions, as the cautious MZ clerk Zlatan ņokoviĺ insinuated:

> The citizen assembly elects [the council], and the council elects the president of the council, they all have the same rights, only that Eriĺ represents the council in front of the Municipality, the court etc. He alone has the signature [right] for the disposition of the [financial] means, again upon the decision of the council, whereas he can dispose part of it also without [the councilsô decision], and the statute gives him the right [to do so] (I, MZ clerk Zlatan, 28.7.2009).

[97] In the case of St. Elijah, e.g., his nephew did the catering and was paid by the Municipal Agency of Tourism.

As the councillors were neither professionally prepared nor salaried for their post, the MZ clerk was seconded by the Municipality to the SMZ to provide advice and bureaucratic services ï for instance, by voluntarily writing the minutes. Yet the MZ clerk did not supervise the work of the SMZ ï nor could Miro *Supervizor* seriously question Baneôs decisions without jeopardizing their relationship. Instead, Bane openly patronized Miro in the SMZ, for instance when he asked him ñas the youngest of us allò (which Miro was not) to serve *rakija* to honour the guests of the SMZ, so that all could toast his new car (D, SMZ 22.7.2009). Given the lack of procedural and financial control of the President, the main activities of the órebelliousô SMZ in 2009 consisted in the renovation of the football club and the big feast on St. Elijah.

As older, male football biases disrupted the original identity work of the self-proclaimed progressive setup, the rebellious SMZ needed to find a new, all-encompassing goal ï which they found in the scrutinisation of their predecessors. They started by revisiting the piping affair. The purification attempts were linked to a ñfixationò on bureaucratic documentation that was differentially shared by most councillors past and present. Ex-President Vojo had handed over 30 folders to his successor in spring 2009, but within ten days Bane returned and asked for more documents. ñMan, I handed it over to you, here you signed for it all! [*pause*] Illiterate people cannot lead the Local Council,ò Vojo remembered and commented the scene (I, Vojo, 7.9.2013). Subsequently, Bane invited Vojo to SMZ meetings to explain where the money for the piping had gone. Vojo proposed to convene a new assembly where the SMZ should explain that they could not find the documentation.

Thereupon the new SMZ intensified its search for ñevidenceò of embezzlement, e.g. finding the inventory from 2002 which they deciphered in the entry vignette. Then they invited Vojo to explain the whereabouts of several missing kitchen appliances. Rumours that something was stolen were not new to Vojo, who told me that in the past the presidents of the 1980s

> [é] had attacked Duġko, who is not golden [pause], Duġko [*Buba*] JankoviĆ. He was a very bad president; I donôt say that he was a bad person, but a very bad president, an illiterate person. Radivoje RankoviĆ attacked him because of some money that he had left for him when he handed over duty, some tableware. My god, when I came [as President] I asked him [Duġko]: What do you have of inventory now, he answered: ówe donôt owe nothing.ô [pause] How nothing? They did not work anything, did not have a single document [...] So, they attacked *Buba*, and wrote an article in the newspaper, how *Buba* stole from the people and how I support him, because I had told Radivoje: ñIt is not like that, Radivoje, *Buba* did not steal, but [acted] out of ignoranceñ (I, Vojo, 7.9.2013).

The old President, Radivoje RankoviĆ, a partisan in World War II but ñnot a friend of the communists,ò had studied book keeping in a post-war qualification course (I, Radivoje, 4.9.2013), and became fixated on documentation. His successor, the poorly educated Duġko

Buba JankoviÍ (b. 1948), had had however no clue of administrative procedures.[98] Radivojeôs interest in proper documentation was shared by the highly educated Vojo, who reprimanded Duġkoôs óilliterateô neglect of documentation. Yet, unlike Radivoje, Vojo did not shame and criticise Duġko publicly. Nor did he believe that all post-socialist politicians were corrupted.

However, these corruption discourses, referring to Vojoôs SMZ, fuelled the fantasy of the rebellious setup that searched for the apparently hidden resources to prove the rumours. Increasingly frustrated by the inability of Vojo to reveal new documents, the rebellious SMZ became painfully aware of its limited legal and financial means. One way left was to scrutinise all budgetary decisions by its predecessors. No cross-cutting ties to the old setup moderated these revisions. The unsettled councillors united behind the budget and scraped resources together to enact their projects. The budgetary question became the SMZôs new ñboundary object,ò a means of translation between social worlds ñboth plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sitesò (Star and Griesemer 1989, 393). The scene was set for a major conflict.

3.3 The case of the NuġiÍ Road

As the new SMZ established, its budget for 2009 amounted to merely 600,000 dinar (ú 6000).[99] No document detailed how the structure of the budget had been fixed by the SMZ before (I, MZ clerk Zlatan, 28.7.2009).[100] However, during the SMZ meetings an oral version of the budget-as-boundary object emerged that was referred to as ñunalterable.ò Goran TodoroviÍ (I, 17.5.2012) gave me the following breakdown:

55 % roads
15 % sport and culture
10 % electrification
05 % maintenance of the graveyard
05 % current questions
05 % emergency cases

[98] Duġko *Buba* JankoviÍ, whom we met in the previous chapter when he attacked his neighbour Slavo JankoviÍ in the pipe-water dispute, was a machinist and mechanic with primary school education who had received training on the job. He was commonly teased for his informal working style as ñthe biggest craftsmen with least tools.ò Duġko was President in 1995 when refugees were accommodated in the village, and appliances, including freezers, were obtained for the SMZ by the municipal ñcommissariat for refugeesò (see Chapter Four). In 2002, when Duġko was no longer President, Vojo listed these items in his inventory list, since then they disappeared.
[99] In 2009 the financial resources in Serbia worsened because of IMF negotiations. River City had a four per cent (approx. ú 900,000) lower budget at the end of the year, which also negatively affected the SMZ.
[100] The four possible sources of funding for SMZ plans and programmes were municipal money, *samodoprinos* [self-contribution tax], service fees, and gifts and other financial means (SMZ 2005, Article 10).

What stood out in this budget, apart from the fact that it did not add up? First, roads received the lionôs share of financial attention, followed by sports and culture. Second, five percent were reserved both for ñemergency casesò and for ñcurrent questions,ò two categories that remained undefined and provided a space for financial discretion.

By summer 2009, the new SMZ had become aware that its road building budget had been blocked for 2009-10 for the Nuġiĺi neighbourhood (in *rejon 4* next to the ṇokoviĺi neighbourhood). This had the following prehistory: in 2008, the inhabitants of the Nuġiĺ neighbourhood had heard that the Municipal firm GRADAC wanted to spend 1 million dinar on roads in Lower Village in the upcoming year, subsidizing up to 75 % of costs. The Nuġiĺi collected 300,000 dinar to match the funds. It took them three months to convince President Vojo to support the project, in order to be able to make a contract with GRADAC.[101] By September 2009, when the construction started, the dinar had lost its value against the euro, so that from a projected 300 m of asphalt road, only 288 m were built. In 2009 the people from the Nuġiĺ neighbourhood collected money for the second tranche, but they were faced with a new SMZ and with a new director of GRADAC. The new SMZ stated it was more interested in a gravelled road in the densely populated Voloviĺ neighbourhood and argued that the SMZ had never built asphalt roads:

> What concerns the SMZ, [I want] [é] that the roads are being cleaned [from scrub], and that there is an attempt that something gets asphalted. That it is attempted. Even though that does not depend on the SMZ, but on the citizens. For citizens join means. That is to say that the SMZ does not take part in asphalting at all. Instead, the citizens join their means with GRADAC. If an asphalt road costs ú 20,000, the citizens collect 35 %, and 65 % gives the Municipality. For 35 %, ú 7000 give the citizens, and ú 13,000 the Municipalityò (I, Goran, 17.5.2012).

Good personal relations were needed to negotiate a reduction of the citizenôs contribution from 35 % to 25 %, and the Nuġiĺi had lost their two reluctant partners in the SMZ and GRADAC.

The impasse lasted into the harsh winter of 2009-10, when it developed into an open dispute triggered by a landslide on the new road. The Nuġiĺi identified the bad landslide protection as responsible and wanted to hold GRADAC liable for botched construction work. But challenging the enterprise was risky, both for the expenses of a law case and for the resulting antagonism with a city institution that needed to be lobbied to continue subsidised infrastructure development. At least the Nuġiĺi hoped to receive ñemergency moneyò from the SMZ to help

[101] President Vojo Voloviĺ had argued that they should not build only half a road, and that Nuġiĺi should collect more money until next year in order to build the whole road in one piece. The Nuġiĺi had agreed to continue collecting money, but persisted in their wish to build the first part in 2009 (I, Boro Nuġiĺ, 6.4.2010).

clear the road. I depict the dispute in detail in order to analyse the actions of the new SMZ in the face of vicious criticism mixed with questions about whether and where to build the road.

The dispute in the Local Council

On Saturday, 23 January 2010, the SMZ meeting had been scheduled for 7 pm. I arrived at 8 pm to find some ten cars parked in front of the SMZ building. The meeting room was so packed that I had difficulty to push the door open. Inside, the atmosphere was extremely tense. Seven of the eleven councillors were present, and so a quorum was reached. Yet, the councillors were outnumbered by other villagers, who had come to voice their dissatisfaction. One villager, Boro Nuġić, put their stance in a nutshell: ñThe people are damn dissatisfied with the state of affairs in road building.ò The first thing that was settled while I was present was that the three members of the road committee (*odbor za putevi*), of which two were members of the SMZ, were to make up a new road financing plan until the next meeting. I learned that the road in the Nuġić neighbourhood had become blocked a couple of days before due to a small landslide. Blagoje Nuġić, a respected farmer and former milk driver in his mid-sixties, suggested that the road construction firm should pay a fine for the damage. ñThen you have to bring legal action against them,ò councillor Dejo Ļolić cautioned. It was reported that the road committee had already accompanied the inspector of GRADAC to examine the damage caused by the severe weather. The President Bane Erić said that a request should be written asking GRADAC to fulfil its responsibilities in cleaning all drainage channels and in overseeing road building, but that he did not support filing a law suit. A councillor from the road committee raised the concern that GRADAC fobbed people off in a cultivated manner, serving coffee and empty promises. Then Duġko *Buba* Janković started to clamour about the partisanship of the SMZ. ñYou lot decided ten days before the election who would be in the SMZ!ò In his high-pitched staccato, Duġko then ridiculed the SMZ actions and insulted councillors individually. Amongst other things, he raised the issue of the missing inventory: if they still could not say where their property was, what had they been doing all along? Councillors retorted that he should ask Vojo Volović where everything was. President Bane Erić felt forced to read out the recently compiled new inventory list. He also detailed that they had presently 516,000 dinar in their bank account and that 55 % of it was earmarked for road building. Thereupon Duġko demanded that the local contribution tax for the streets should be shared out per head of household in each neighbourhood. His neighbour, Zoran Janković's son (b. 1978) retorted that he did not need a street, but that was discounted because his house lay in the village centre next to the categorized street that ñthe [central] state built for him.ò Councillors then maintained that it had never been the case that the village streets had been asphalted with money by the SMZ, since they would only finance gravelling. Alright, Duġko rejoined, then the street to *seliġte* [a certain part of the village] could be gravelled. Viļo Delić, who owned fields in *seliġte* like Duġko, loudly agreed. In the end, Duġko's proposal to divide the road money among the neighbourhoods seemed to have won the day.

Duġko certainly had not been easily appeased. He had engaged in a verbal fight with Councillor Goran Jovanović (b. 1979), whom he had accused of being half-baked. As Duġko and most guests left, the discussions continued in a smaller circle. At one point Saġa Ņoković (Kamila's husband, who had driven her to the meeting) recounted that 500-550 dinar of local contribution tax were deducted from his monthly income for the SMZ budget. Indeed, in the past, it had been 1400 dinar [then worth more than ú 20] when he had still earned 70,000 dinar [Saġa worked in a machine repair firm in River City]. But, in the 50 years since he was born, not a metre of asphalt road had been built in his neighbourhood. A councillor repeated that the SMZ never used to participate in the costs of road asphalting, but that this was always a direct contract between the Municipality and the citizens. Saġa Ņović countered that that was not exactly true, instead the SMZ had never been properly caring for his neighbourhood:

recently the local agricultural journalist [the friend who had tried to defend Bane Eriíôs reputation in the previous chapter] had publicly demanded street lighting for the village, while in ņokoviíi neighbourhood electric power was so inadequate that Saġa could not even use a milking machine to milk his cows.

After the last guests including Saġa had been asked to leave the room, Goran Todorovií admonished the others to stick to a decision once they had made it, and not to give in to the slightest opposition. Otherwise they could stop acting and announce an assembly so that a new SMZ could be elected. The bottom line, according to Goran Todorovií, was that everybody thought that his street would have to be built first. So that pleasing everyone was impossible. It was about 8.45 pm, when Goran Jovanovií, who had been attacked so personally by Duġko, said that he had enough of it all and left [and later stopped acting as councillor]. One councillor reflected: ñOne difficulty is that we are the only SMZ in the surroundings that does not function according to a political line.ò All those positions [in the Municipality etc.] that were filled ópoliticallyô hardly cooperated. Another councillor added: ñAs soon as you kissed up to a director, he can have already been removed from office.ò President Bane stated that he was dissatisfied that ñour vice-mayorò Aleksandar Brodií was of so little help to the village. Somebody interjected that Brodií was in a difficult position, as the municipality got its funds slashed last year, and this year it may be even worse. After some more soul searching, President Bane finally terminated the meeting at 9.07 pm. Outside in the cold, standing by his red Mitsubishi, Bane told me that it was a pity that I had not come for the first, cultivated half of the session. *Buba*, he complained, had quite rained on his parade. Then he quickly drove off into the dark.

Causes and issues

These stormy exchanges between Councillors and villagers were related to several causes and issues. First, like Vettaôs Democratic-Action-SMZ, the councillors experienced themselves as apolitical ï because they had not run for election on a party mandate. Therefore, they saw themselves as disadvantaged and somewhat outside ñthe state,ò which appeared to them as captured by party affiliations. The accompanying image of a ñpartocracyò seemed to explain to them why they were not able to ñkiss up to the directorsò fast enough to attract financing for infrastructures. The frustration of the opposition with the new GRADAC director who did not heed his predecessorsô promises concerning the Nuġíi road was shared by the councillors ï although their decision to invest elsewhere lowered the chances of the Nuġíi to persuade the new director to reconsider.

Second, a prominent part was played by the former President Duġko *Buba* Jankovií, who seemed incensed by the allegations of corruption against Vojo Voloviíôs SMZ, which reminded him of his ordeals a decade earlier (when only Vojo had defended him). Duġko therefore passed the buck of criticism of corruption back to the rebellious SMZ. While Radivoje Rankovií, the President of the socialist SMZ of the 1980s, had provided the biggest opposition to Vojo Voloviíôs post-socialist SMZ in the 2000s, now Duġko Jankovií (the President during the 1990s) slowly turned into the main opponent to Bane Eriíôs SMZ. It was not Bane who half-way united the councillors after Duġkoôs scene, but the óYoung Turkô Goran Todorovií, who

gave a motivational speech. However, even Goran could not avert the resignation of the young JovanoviĹ.[102] In the face of such opposition, the frequency of meetings had already dropped from weekly to roughly monthly sessions.

Further substantial issues of interest emerged in the debate namely whether, and where to build the road.

Whether the SMZ needed to invest

During the meeting, the overwhelming majority of attendees agreed that infrastructure development was good and necessary. Only Zoran JankoviĹ ós son denied the need for further development in his quarter ï but that was his unsuccessful attempt to make a differentiation between less and more useful investments. However, his ñdenialò of the need for further infrastructure complicated the acting of other villagers like Dugko. It has been argued that:

> [d]emocratic politics always involves a kind of play-acting, [é] since óthe peopleô are never actually in the room, but only órepresentedô by those who claim to stand for them. But this is why the ethnographic view is so important, to get beyond cartoon figures like ócivil society,ô óthe community,ô and so on, and develop a richer sense of who is actually engaged here, and what are they trying to do (Ferguson, Gupta, and Curtis 2012, 5).

Of course, in the instance of the post-socialist SMZ of Lower Village, sometimes more ñpeopleò were ñin the roomò than was conducive for acting out a reasoned, representative debate. In the dispute, some actors represented the ñpositionò and others several shades of opposition. Only the voice of one big ñoppositionò was all but missing ï namely that of the disenfranchised, who seldom took part in public discussions. The disenfranchised could be roughly subdivided into two camps, the absolute and the relative objectors.

Absolute objectors might have been more common in the past, when the householder discourse was still hegemonic. For instance, one resident of the NugiĹ neighbourhood had refused to contribute to the new road. A neighbour who recounted the incident jested his apparent (il)logic ï ñWhat do I need electricity, telephone, light for, in the 21st century?ò A proper farmer, the absolute objector worked ñlike in the 1970s,ò motorized, but with no ambitions for his son (who had finished primary school) to learn a vocation or to socialise in town (I, taxi driver NugiĹ, 7.5.2012). Such a conservative householder approach had become difficult to reproduce generationally, because ñwhich bride would like to stump through mud (*koja mlada ģeli da tapļe po blatu*)ò (I, Aleksandar BrodiĹ, 3.9.2013)?

Relative objectors wanted infrastructure development, but later than the rest ï and significantly more cheaply. These cost-sensitive citizens were represented by my host Slavo

[102] In the second half of the mandate another councillor also resigned.

JankoviÍ. He had not always been that way, having contributed substantially to financing and constructing the JankoviÍi road in 1981. Slavo had also been very proud to obtain one of the first private telephone landlines in the village in 1980 (pooling funds with Jovana SimiÍ and Bane EriÍ).[103] But, the water piping project initiated by President Vojo in 2005 came at a critical moment for Slavo involving cost-intensive health care. Thus he argued that he would get connected later and more cheaply once the piping functioned.

However, typically the question in the village was not whether people wanted infrastructure. It rather revolved around where (and why) to have a road, or put differently, how to weigh justly the importance of the multiple options.

Where (and why) to build the road

I differentiate four arguments justifying the location of an upgraded road: connective, central, and demographic representativeness, and support for minorities.

Connectivity. Boro and Blagoje NuġiÍ represented the first option: money should be spent on a single project that had the greatest benefit for a sizeable part of the community. Both men from the NuġiÍ neighbourhood argued that their road section fulfilled both connectivity criteria, because an eleventh of the population lived there, and their street was the best link from the centre to two outlying neighbourhoods and to a neighbouring village. However, the SMZ members argued that the VoloviÍ road was more important (in a more populated neighbourhood, leading to a more connected neighbouring village). Second, the councillors argued that since NuġiÍi had been helped in 2009, VoloviÍ road should have priority in 2010. This point was emphasized by President Bane, who in ñconstruction speakò called the VoloviÍ road ñinvestment-maintenanceò (*investicijono održavanje*) (Minutes of SMZ, 1.9.2009).

Centrality. Arguing an extreme case of centrality, Duġko *Buba* JankoviÍ thought that the muddy road through *seliġte*, a practically unpopulated agricultural strip in the villageôs geographical centre, should have investment priority by the SMZ. This hardly navigable, often swampy area (where Duġko owned and worked land) was divided by the village creek, and because there was no road bridge, the village was practically divided into two halves. At present, NuġiÍ road represented the only year-round navigable connection between both parts, but at the cost of a detour of several kilometres. The neighbourhoods that lay beyond the creek (from the perspective of the administrative centre) ñgravitatedò (*gravitirali su*) to the neighbouring village through which they had proper asphalt access to the *magistrala*. However,

[103] Jovanaôs and Slavoôs households had each paid DM 1000 for their phone line, while a decade later villagers were connected for merely DM 20.

politically these households beyond *seli*ć*te* had been the most loyal support to the SMZ of Vojo Voloviđ and had ñalways responded to calls for communal actionò (I, Vojo, 7.9.2013). A bridge over the creek clearly merited investment according to centrality logic. In the SMZ session of 1 September 2009, when similar arguments had been rehearsed, Vojo Voloviđ had agreed that it was ñbeyond doubtò that *seli*ć*te* was important, but other parts were more so, naming the Nuđiđ i road.

Demography After arguing for *seli*ć*te*ôs centrality, Duđko switched to the demographic option in the dispute. He argued that the road building money should be dispensed yearly according to the importance of a neighbourhood in terms of its tax base. He had good reasons for this, since he lived in the most populated neighbourhood. His argument about where to invest boiled down to: ótо each according to their means.ô

Support of minorities Sađa ọokoviđ, Kamilaôs husband, stood for the fourth option when he argued that the ñminorò neighbourhoods should be treated preferentially. He lived in the smallest neighbourhood, where the number of households had decreased in recent years from eleven to seven. He insinuated minor neighbourhoods should receive more money than they contributed (to legitimate this proposition, Sađa detailed how he always paid local contribution taxes, while in his life no roads had been asphalted). The minority option meant that infrastructure investments should be ótо each according to their needs.ô[104]

Reasoning about connectivity, centrality, demographic representativeness and support for minorities, the villagers communicated over the just distribution of resources in the interest of the common good, acting out a participatory, even critical politics (Villa 1995, 8). I now turn to how critical (discursive) politics affected material practices.

The aftermath of the dispute

In 2010, Boro Nuđiđ told me that the SMZ had changed its position again and went to GRADAC to ask for a different road to be treated as priority investment. The destined benefactor Dule ọokoviđ, an absentee resident in the Jovanoviđi neighbourhood, had lived for decades in Paris. Boro was adamant: ñEh, thatôs why all this happens in the village that is worthless (*đto nevalja*), and in the Municipality and the government and everywhere. That doesnôt make sense, because we have not come so far to build a road for one householdò (I, Boro Nuđiđ, 6.4.2010). Boro criticized that the planned road was a dead end; that the neighbourhood already had many roads, and that Dule had never participated in collective infrastructure actions. Revisiting arguments

[104] These justifications show that Goran Todoroviđ was only partly correct when he argued that everybody wanted the road in their own backyard.

from the dispute, Boro logically reversed option one: ótbuild infrastructure with most connectivity,ôarguing against building dead-end roads. He also modulated option four: ótevery infrastructure decision according to needs,ôsaying: ñHe comes for holidays, the man, and now he needs asphalt to be built for him, but I come here permanently with the others. And I donôt need asphalt, do I?ò (ibid). Confronted with Boroôs and other opponentsôvigilance, the dispute was finally settled in 2011. When I visited friends on their *slava* on 7 May 2012, one guest, the taxi driver from the Nuđić neighbourhood told me that their road had now been ñprolongedò (*produđili*) until the hilltop. All households had contributed. He gave less than those who more immediately felt its benefits (he lived at the far end that even now was not asphalted), so he contributed a quarter of the average amount (I, taxi driver, 7.5.2012).

Conclusion

After four years of voluntary work most councillors did not stand for re-election in 2013. All but two younger men (and the MZ clerk) stood down.[105] Of those two who continued, Dejo Đoliđ became the next President.[106] The women quit and were replaced by their husbands, while no new woman took their places. Thus the ambition of women to politically represent their household, the women, their *rejon* and the community was inauspiciously abandoned.[107]

In September 2013, I visited the new SMZ and praised how it was gravelling the roads in various remote neighbourhoods and connective sites. One new councillor, Tina Pavloviđôs husband, looked at me sceptically, indicating that this was no long-term solution. I then related to Dejo Đoliđ that his predecessor Bane Eriđ thought: ñWe started those roads, the new SMZ just finished them.ò Dejo frankly told me that was nonsense. According to Dejo the old SMZ had done practically nothing ï and that was precisely because Bane had delayed them (ñ*on je nas dugovlačio*ò) and had ñexplained to us things that, as I found out now, do not really function that way.ò Dejo said that as soon as he had received the documentation of his predecessor, he put it in the drawer in the SMZ meeting room, and never looked at it again. Disposing of the minutes and pay slips in this (retrievable) way meant that the fixation on documents had faded. With his ostensible disinterest, the new SMZ president constructed a social boundary to the previous SMZ. Casually (and not prompted by me) Dejo also remarked ñI have absolutely nothing from being a President,ò separating himself from possible allegations of being corrupt (I, Dejo Đoliđ, 11.9.2013). Conspicuously, Dejoôs distancing from Bane echoed Baneôs critique

[105] Kojo Đokoviđ returned into the new SMZ.
[106] The other man was a football player and young father who had come from Western Serbia in the 1990s.
[107] Goran Todoroviđôs wife later told Dejo Đoliđ that she would have run for election had she known that he would become president.

of his predecessor Vojo, and Vojoôs of his predecessor Duġko, etc. What distinguished 2013 from 2009 was that the rebellious fervour had diminished ï neither equal gender relations nor the fixation on the budget remained inscribed in the state relation.

Through itôs almost forty year long history of self-government in the SMZ, the villagers had learned to deal with particular interests in a participative manner. The recurrent negotiations of the boundary between the external, societal critique of the state and the internal practices of local state work perfectly elucidate my second axis of studying the state: boundary work. The rebellious guard experienced the full ambiguity of becoming a new SMZ. The rebels had initially shared the criticism of local politics as a hotbed of corruption. Bane Eriĺ, the former supervisor of Vojo Voloviĺôs second mandate, distanced himself from the ñinteriorò dealings of the old SMZ while retaining the reputation of political experience. Embarking on their rebellion, the new councillors switched into the position they had formerly criticised. They momentarily needed to negotiate the border and deal themselves with suspicions of corruption, with meagre resources, and with the difficulties of maintaining a unifying purpose.

The former councillors and Presidents were most strongly invested in local politics and tended to criticise the new setup most fiercely. The rebellious SMZ tried to displace the corruption charges of the old guard, which it shared but of which it felt not guilty, by in turn criticising the work of their predecessors. This led to the critique of the old SMZôs inventory inaccuracies and poor budgetary decisions, in which the newbies realised how limited an SMZôs means actually were. A period of adjusting their ideals of ñhelping the villageò with their resources led them to set up the budgetary plan as a boundary object. Their new-found identity, however, increased their inflexibility in dealing with relational demands by co-villagers and, in a feed-back process, re-strengthened the criticism and opposition. The dissonances culminated in the Nuġiĺi road dispute. In the ensuing limbo a councillor resigned. Finally the SMZ conformed to the forceful Nuġiĺi demands and somewhat pacified village relations.

However, the successful external criticism that all different scales of the state were ñworthlessò missed two crucial points. First, the SMZ was in practice so entangled in local social relations that drawing a clear cut boundary between state and society was impossible ï any attempts could only lead to a straining of ties. Second, corruption discourses masked the remarkably participative and *autogestive* effects of these struggles in the sense defined by Lefebvre in the epigraph. The intense political nature of these struggles only becomes fully appreciable by applying the relational approach.

In the next chapter I will trace how the SMZ not only conformed in the face of the opposition. It also governed social policy on its own account, when it incorporated the humanitarian problem of the Post-Yugoslav wars and cared for the social security of new neighbours.

4. Of refugees and fathers: Pero and the tacit social policy of the Local Council

> But when the time comes to get up, your knees will be wobbly. And depression, a perpetual state of depression will take hold of you ï till the next glass of rosé. All youôll want is to be allowed to just sit there, never again to get involved in anything. In the past I often got embroiled in things Iôm ashamed of today. Just a little ashamed ï after all, theyôre over and done with (Seghers 2013 [1944], 49).

I came to know Pero Krajiġnik (b. 1960) in the first week of field work, on 21 July 2009, during the common work action at the football pitch. He was a calm slim man, 49 years of age, with ash-blond, greying hair and blue eyes. When he smiled, you could see that he had several teeth missing ï a more and more frequent sight that my Serbian dentist attributed to the bigger worries people had nowadays than their aesthetics.[108] Pero had participated during the whole work action from 8 am till dusk, but I do not recall him saying anything. In my diary I only noted that people referred to him as Pero ó*Piva*ô, a nickname which derived from the Pan-Slav word for beer. Pero seemed to be ordered about by everybody: ñHey, you, come here, bring this or that.ò Living alone near the centre of the village, Pero sat and drank beer almost daily in the male sociability of the village shop. Listening in on the bantering, he was restrained in his own comments. This seemed to me rather peculiar, because people gossiped, commented and judged quite freely in the tight-knit yet fragmented community, and especially at the shop which served as a veritable market of information. With respect to the male egalitarian discourse celebrated at shop and pitch, Pero seemed to occupy the lower end of the value mastering hierarchy (Bruun, Skroederdal Jakobsen, and Kroijer 2011).

Against my intentions, I learned often more in stories *about* Pero than *from* him. People said he was a good worker (*dobar radnik*), but added with an ironic wink: ñhe is also not an expensive one, because he doesnôt consume much food.ò[109] One September evening in 2009 I happened to be alone at the village shop with Pero. I seized the opportunity to ask him about his life story (*njegova priļa*). I was a little surprised when Pero revealed that he was a refugee

[108] Another reason was the high cost of artificial dentition.
[109] Similar to the customs at a work party (*moba*) that I discussed in the last chapters, day labourers were entertained with food and drink during work breaks.

from Croatia who came to Lower Village in 1995. He said he had been a policeman during the war and alluded to me that ñthe war can do horrible things to peopleò (D, Pero, 3.9.2009).

I became curious to understand Peroôs story and through it the trajectory of male refugees and the social policy formation in Lower Village more generally. I prefaced this chapter with a quote by the protagonist of Anna Seghersô ñTransit Zone,ò because it evokes Peroôs ñagony of waiting, of not knowing, of never arriving and never returning [é] in some ways worse than the horrors of warò (Vickry 2010). Yet, there were both remarkable similarities and differences between the two. Seghersô anti-hero Seidel was an opaque, youthful metal worker on the run from the Third Reich who gulped down rosé and pizza in the bars of Marseille. Talking to fleeting acquaintances about his flight while waiting for his transit to leave the embattled continent, Seidel finally stayed to work with his village friends in the peach groves. In contrast, the taciturn, middle-aged welder Pero from Croatia sat and drank beer on a Serbian shop bench when most other refugees had already moved on.[110] Reluctant to detail his story, Pero impressed his fellow villagers with his metal-working skills.

Flight and exile entail social navigation and include ñwaiting and hope for the possibility to return or to re-create a better life elsewhereò (Horst and Grabska 2015, 2). Refugeeness and displacement, therefore, lead to a ñprolonged subjective experience of disenfranchisement in exile [é] with juridical implicationsò (ibid, 3). One such implication is that refugees and displaced persons are often subjected to the ñpartial inclusions of a humanitarian regime targeting circumscribed populations of needò (McKay 2012, 289). Didier Fassin (2007, 150) defined the underlying ñhumanitarian reasonò as ñthe administration of human collectivities in the name of a higher moral principle that sees the preservation of life and the alleviation of suffering as the highest value of action.ò The intended beneficiary of such care, óthe refugee,ô has been famously defined in the 1951 UN Refugee Convention as a person who,

> [é] owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.[111]

[110] Peroôs silence was not unlike that of Serbian war veterans who, fragmented and unorganised, did not develop a powerful voice in the Serbian political space (David 2015). While the silencing of the past may lead to the unhealthy displacement of violent ñtrauma,ò it may also preserve the public space from renewed bouts of collective violence, if political promises are not kept (see Rowlands 2008, 150).

[111] https://web.archive.org/web/20120607013438/http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/refugees.htm (accessed 22.2.2016).

I trace how the refugee concept travelled into the lifeworld of Lower Village and how it was used to legitimate the SMZôs emerging relational modality of ñhumanitarian care.ò Throughout the chapter, Peroôs waiting, disenfranchisement, and muted hopes will provide the foil for understanding the implications of this governmental innovation. We will also follow the unintended consequences of humanitarian care for refugees and displaced persons, as it intersected with the nation-state mandated relational modality of ñsocial welfare,ò resulting in interferences between both modalities of local government.[112]

I will start with the global and the Yugoslav context in which the refugee concept formed, to see how it became translated into local state relations. I focus on how the SMZ and the villagers appropriated the concept via the rural father motif of care for the family. In a second step I follow the transformations and the fading of the refugee question in the village in the decade and a half since the end of the war. Third, I describe the life story of Pero until the moment when the refugee label started to be reapplied to him. Fourth, I show how the rural refugee concept, though unaltered in content, was now used by the SMZ to help Pero in new circumstances of need. In a final twist to the story, the social security situation of Pero was re-conceptualized using the relational modality of social welfare, involving another state institution, the Centre for Social Work (CSW), to care for him. Overall, I argue that beyond infrastructure government as analysed in the previous chapter, the SMZ repeatedly took action regarding social questions. Refugeeness was the vehicle for the Local Council to form its tacit social policy.

4.1 Social security and refugeeness

When the systemic conflict between the Soviet Bloc and the West began to dissolve around 1989, not only apologists of capitalist democracy nurtured hopes for a more humane period in world history (Kalb et al. 2010). The work of liberal intellectuals from the global South, like the Indian welfare economist Amartya Sen and the Pakistani economist Mahub al Haq began to influence the conceptualisation of human progress. Elaborating on Adam Smithôs notions, the authors of the first Human Development Report of 1990 postulated that the real wealth of a nation lay in people and in an enabling environment ñto enjoy long, healthy and creative lives,ò not in the accumulation of commodities and financial wealth (UNDP Report 1990 in Englund 1997, 389). A humanist ethos also underlay the definition of social security ñas a component or domain of general social organizationò including practices and relations beyond the state

[112] On unintended consequences of transnational humanitarianism on government, see Ticktin (2014, 281).

provided by the Benda-Beckmanôs (Benda-Beckmann & Benda-Beckmann 2000 [1994], 14). Such expansive understanding of social security met a new world in disarray, epitomized for many observers by the civil war that exploded the SFRY in the 1990s.

Humanist views on social security and military definitions of the prevention of insecurity were now amalgamated into the new concept of ñhuman securityò headlining the 1994 UN Human Development Report. Human security meant ñsafety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, and repression, as well as protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in the patterns of daily lifeò (Carlsson 1995 in Makaremi 2010, 107). Both concepts ï human security and social security ï could be used by individuals, organisations and social movements to push the borders of state responsibility. Social security sharpened the concern for human wants and needs beyond the boundaries of the ñleft hand of the stateò (Wacquant 2009, 289). Conversely, human security provided arguments to press the international state system to secure wants and needs beyond the Weberian notion of sovereignty (Weber 2002, 821ï 4).

However, there were also warning signs that such concepts could serve hegemonic projects of dominant elites. A case in point was the bombardment of Serbia in 1999, when NATO intervened unilaterally to protect the Kosovars. By declaring war on Miloġeviĺ ôs Serbia, NATO escalated the human security crisis of both the Serb and the Kosovar populations (Sundhaussen 2012, 366ï 80).[113] Concerning the category of needs that is central to both social and human security, Nancy Fraser has theorized that in such democratic struggles dominant groups ñarticulate need interpretations intended to exclude, defuse and/or coopt counterinterpretations. Subordinate or oppositional groups, on the other hand, articulate need interpretations intended to challenge, displace and/or modify dominant ones. In both cases, the interpretations are acts and interventionsò (Fraser 1989, 296). We will follow in this chapter how struggles over need intersected in local state relations.

In Serbia, the politics of needs interpretation and of distribution was profoundly shaped by the events leading to the end of the Croatian and Bosnian War. In July 1995, Ratko Mladiĺ ôs Serb paramilitaries murdered 8000 Muslim boys and men in the UN enclave Srebrenica (in eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina). In the aftermath of these crimes, the Croatian and Bosnian armies deepened their alliance with the US-American military and decided to end the conflict by expelling the Serbian population. The joint Operation Storm (*Oluja*) began on 4 August 1995.

[113]. By 2005 an EU Report on Human Security differentiated ñsurvival rightsò like food, health and housing from the ñnarrower core human rights,ò i.e. the absence of ñ[g]enocide, large-scale torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, disappearances, slavery, crimes against humanity and war crimesò (Makaremi 2010. 112, 123, fn.26). Transnational law thus reverted to the debates about absolute and relative human rights waged since World War II (Benda-Beckmann 2012).

It overran the positions of the Serbian Krajina in Eastern Croatia and ended on 8 August, when the Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia (APWB) fell (Sundhaussen 2012, 351ï 2, 358ï 61).[114] During the operation, hundreds of civilians were killed and 200,000 people fled (Rangelov 2013, 142ï 6). International help for these refugees (*izbeglice*) was coordinated by the UNHCR. The Serbian counterpart to the UNHCR was the Commissariat for Refugees, whose municipal branch distributed the refugees among urban and rural settlements. This is how one trek of refugees was sent to Lower Village, where it arrived in mid-August 1995.

Refugees and the Local Community

As an organ of the Local Self-Government, the SMZ was ordered by the municipality to help the displaced people and to open up a rural refugee camp. The SMZ was quite ill prepared for the task but tried to be helpful. This is how then president of the SMZ Duġko *Buba* JankoviĹ remembered the challenge:

> There came 55 refugees, without anything, and our task was that they are given something, to eat, to warm themselves, that they have clothing and the like. The Municipality assumed that responsibility. The Committee for Refugees, they gave food, etc. (D, Duġko, 8.9.2013).

The number of refugees equalled about 4 per cent of the village population and taxed the possibilities of the SMZ. Some 12 refugees were accommodated in the SMZ house (in the Old Srez building), 17 in the House of Culture, others in school buildings and the former veterinary station. Still others were offered free private housing. Pero Krajiġnik, who independently arrived with his wife, two sons, father and mother on a tractor and trailer, was offered a week-end house in the ẵ okoviĹ i neighbourhood.

Living in the old Srez building, which had four rooms (including the office of the MZ clerk) were one family of three, one of four, and one of five members. The former MZ clerk, who had shared his coffee daily with his new neighbours, explained: ñThe first thing in the morning was that they came to me. And even though this is a family, it is cramped, and all are in a nervous stateò (D, Pavle, 4.9.2013). In this stressful situation, all hands were needed. The SMZ councillors and their relations organized the aid. One councillor in 1995 was the dairy farmer Boro JovanoviĹ (b. 1956), who was repeatedly elected into the SMZ and the Municipal Parliament: ñHe is like Tito, always [there],ò his wife Olga loved to tease him. When asked about the refugee situation, Boro recounted: ñWell, listen, my father was more involved in it ...

[114] The Serbian Republic of Krajina existed as a Serb dominated, ñethnically cleansedò mini-state between December 1991 and August 1995. It occupied a quarter of the territory of the formerly socialist Republic of Croatia. Its beginnings dated to August 1990, when local Serb paramilitaries blocked major Croatian roads. By December 1990 the area was declared autonomous. It received support from the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) and Serbia (Sundhaussen 2012, 311ï 5, 335ï 43, 358ï 61).

Every evening he carried food there, the village collected food, we received [from NGOs] and collected it in the village, and then my father, he had the key [to the depot in the House of Culture], in the evening he left and distributed the food ... and the next day the sameò (tI, Boro, 4.9.2013).

Many villagers participated daily in providing for the refugees, whose impoverishment they saw as a human tragedy. In the beginning, the refugees all seemed to be the same to her, my host Rajka JankoviĆ recalled. But with time she distinguished the different family histories, character traits, saw that ñthere were good and bad people among them.ò From the start, she was only afraid of the look of one former police man, Stanko. Stanko indeed used to be a police type (*policajska faca*), her neighbour Simo LukiĆ agreed. Rajka and Simo remembered how camp beds were everywhere in the House of Culture ï on the rostrum, in the hall, even in the cafeteria. People like Miro *Supervizor* went from house to house and asked for donations. Rajka donated food, kitchen appliances, clothing etc. The cellar contained the food donations from the Red Cross, and Bane EriĆ distributed them (I, Rajka JankoviĆ, and Simo LukiĆ, 30.8.2013). As these recollections suggest, there was an overall solidarity towards the refugees, and in the beginning they were rather lumped together. But soon the villagers appropriated the concept ñrefugeeò and filled it with values particularly resonant in the locality.

Refugeeness and the land-workerist ethos

I argue that the analytical co-evolution of human and social security was translated in post-socialist rural Serbia to perform peculiar work. Humanitarian reason was locally adapted to denote a citizenôs responsibility to provide for the refugees. The latter were seen as deserving people, co-ethnics who were presumably innocent victims of an ethnic cleansing. The predominant picture that the villagers formed was one of civilians fleeing a war, even though there remained doubts about whether refugees had been involved in the violence, as Rajkaôs fear of Stanko referenced. There were several registers with which villagers made sense of the situation, but I concentrate on the most common double step of first assigning sameness and then difference. Locals used images of patriarchal, heterosexual common humanity, which they differentiated with a land-workerist ethos.

When people try to overcome difference and to establish sameness as grounds of common interaction in crisis situations like displacements, they often start by constructing a common humanity. In Post-Yugoslav states these commonalities were typically not sought in alternative discourses ï be they pacifist, cosmopolitan or feminist. Rather, as Stef Jansen (2010) has demonstrated, Bosnians, Croats and Serbs typically performed strategic essentialisms of an

assumed common patriarchal heterosexuality which established a shared ñcultural intimacyò between the actors (see Herzfeld 2005). The position of social actors towards these ñaffirmative essentialismsò ranged from full embracement, over irony, to recalcitrance and distance.

When Post-Yugoslav men met, they displayed their ñperformative competenceò of ñbeing man enoughò to perform the typical motifs of the ñ*frajer*ò[115] or the ñfatherò (Jansen 2010, 41). According to Stef Jansen these were relational opposites, of ña serious, highly educated, well-earning, married father or an unserious, irresponsible, unattached *frajer* on the prowlò (Jansen 2010, 44). Of course, most of my senior village interlocutors did not pretend to have high education and rather valued vocational distinction and achievement. With this minor qualification, middle aged men predominantly displayed their bonding through the father motif. Take the example of the agriculturalist Savo JankoviĆ, who in 2009 was 68 years old and had worked in agriculture since he was 11. As he presented himself (while talking about Pero Krajiġnik), Savo was a hard and skilled worker, which as a father he needed to be in order to bring up the family and to retain the home. Savo valued Pero highly because of the latterôs work ethos and skills in welding. The loss of Peroôs house and land was tragic in the eyes of Savo, and explained his later misfortunes. Pero only needed to think more about his future, Savo was convinced (D, Savo, 15.1.2010). Like Savo, most long-term inhabitants of Lower Village understood the male role of a ófatherô in terms of five qualities: 1) working hard, 2) doing skilled work, 3) providing for the family, 4) keeping up the ñhouseò (*kuĆa*) and land (*zemlja*), and 5) planning for the future.[116]

Unlike the refugees, most families in Lower Village owned some land, and the importance of working it and thus keeping it fertile was emphasized. Their patriarchal land-workerist imagery rooted the village as place to its second nature ï as an always already produced cultural landscape. Many times I heard villagers state with conviction that ñthe land has to be worked!ò (*zemlja mora da se radi!*), and if they could not work it themselves, they tried to lease it out or lend it for usufruct to local family fathers willing to engage in agriculture. Similarly, empty houses were offered by their absentee owners for free use so that the houses did not decay. Thus, land-workerism and house-keeping set the grounds for a rural variant of the father motif.

[115] Jansen defines *frajer* as a ñwidespread colloquial term, used both by men and women, denoting a óguyô who displays a certain degree of cool. While often employed as a neutral word for any man, when used on its own as a predicate (ñheôs a *frajer*ò) it usually refers to a form of youngish, irresponsible, ostentatious, yet nonchalant heterosexual masculinity. Importantly, the term is used both in positive and in negative, slightly ironic waysò (Jansen 2010, 41).

[116] Given the economic hardships at the time of my research, many locals had a diminished horizon of plannability: future planning was seen as a particularly hard feat and failing it was not evaluated as unusual.

The difference between ñrefugee fathersò without land and house, and ñrural fathersò who owned both made it possible to simultaneously include and exclude refugees in relation to the moral economy of patriarchal subsistence production. Accordingly, men who did not own, work, and inhabit property could suggest themselves to be refugee fathers who the villagers should include into their (asymmetrical) social security relations. To see how the villagers navigated this inclusion-exclusion over time, I start with the wider social policy changes since 1995. In fact, the early experience of locals chipping in for the state in caring for the refugees repeated itself as the trans-national humanitarian industry moved on. Remembering the history of humanitarianism allowed villagers not only to make claims on resources and to a future generating social relations and support (McKay 2012, 288), but also to actively shape the present configurations of local state welfare.

4.2 The aftermath of the refugee crisis (1995 until 2008)

For the first ten years since 1995, the refugee question was dealt with by a large network of transnational and domestic NGOs, including UNHCR, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Save the Children, Doctors without Borders, Japan Emergency NGOs (JEN), USAID, Commissariat for Refugees, Red Cross, and the Circle of Serbian Sisters (*Kolo Srpkih Sestara*). At the outset, virtually every Municipality had at least one Collective Centre which coordinated the work of decentralized camps like in Lower Village.[117] One former worker of the DRC told me how the social work with the refugees had been organised.

The social worker had been hired right away from the University of Belgrade in 1995, and had worked on monthly contracts with the DRC until 2004.[118] She characterized the aims of the DRC as ñdeveloping a non-governmental sector and self-organisationò as well as ñthat the refugee population assimilates to the local communityò (D, former DRC, 13.9.2013). For the latter purpose, a small proportion of funds was also set aside for local inhabitants who had not been displaced. The social worker administered ñmicrocredits, non-refundable grants [and gave] psychosocial supportò in nine municipalities including River City (ibid). Given her workload and the large territory, she only once managed to visit Lower Villageôs camp ï on a private trip. The DRCôs conceptualization of self-organisation played out in such a way that ñeverything was on a teaspoonò (*Sve je bilo na kaǵicu*) ï the budgets were tight and project applications were needed to allow the flow of money. That way the Danish Council wanted to

[117] By 2002 there were 388 Collective Centres (CC) for refugees, expelled and temporarily displaced persons. In summer 2014 14 CCs remained in Serbia and nine in Kosovo (RudiĆ 2014).
[118] Later she was employed in a Centre for Social Work (CSW) in a neighbouring Municipality, from where she switched to the CSW of River City in 2009.

strengthen the refugeesô ñpersonal capacities so that they understand that they do not stall, slacken ï so that they become creative, movers, that they have some ideas,ò she said. Projects included the purchase of a chainsaw, a milk cow, pigs, chicken or bees, but also courses to learn foreign languages, computer skills or tailoring. This emphasis on micro-projects and monetary help with strings attached stood in contradiction to the aim of assimilation, as it kept the refugees under the tutelage of a project with its project cycles and did not allow them free access to capital. Nonetheless, Lower Villageôs refugees did once receive a larger grant to build a pigsty behind the SMZ building ï the ruins of which could still be seen long afterwards.

The refugees of Lower Village

During the first few months after August 1995, some 100 refugees circulated through the village, as families reunited. Only a few people in the refugee camp already knew each other, but now long-lasting ties were formed. Between 1995 and 2008 most displaced persons left for other places. A girl went to Belgrade to study, an old man was buried in the local graveyard, a person ñleaning towards alcoholò (*naklon alkoholu*) completely disappeared (but may have gone to live with his sister somewhere). One girl married into the VolovíÍ i neighbourhood, one family went to Northern Serbia, others to the USA or Canada (D, Rajka JankoviÍ and Simo LukiÍ, 30.8.2013). Although several people returned to their former homes in Bosnia and Herzegovina or Croatia, this was not remembered by the old local families. What was remembered, however, was that almost everybody wrote letters or returned for holiday visits (ibid).

Pavle, the former MZ clerk, became personally attached to a refugee woman who shared the Old Srez building with him. They married in 1998, and his wife, together with her old mother and her teenage son Miġo, moved into the clerkôs home. However, Pavleôs wife died soon afterwards. Although he did not write over his land to her son Miġo (as Rajka and Simo regretfully noted), Pavle did help a lot when Miġo fell ill and he needed a kidney operation in Belgrade (tI, Boro, 4.9.2013). Later Miġo married Dana from another refugee family living in the House of Culture. In 2002 Danaôs parents relocated to a bigger refugee camp in Smederevo, because the new President of the SMZ Vojo VolovíÍ closed the local camp. He invited journalists to pressure the Municipality into paying the SMZôs debts. As indicated, the refugees had not received much in the form of cash benefits from the (I)NGOs catering for them ï nor as non-Serbian citizens were they eligible for monetary social aid through the Centre for Social Work (CSW). Therefore they could not pay the mounting electricity bills from the SMZ bank account and the power supply was to be cut off. The old President of the SMZ Duġko *Buba*

JankoviÍ did not have the political clout or inventiveness to redress the situation. Vojo VoloviÍ now effected a reversal by pressuring the Municipality to assume the debts. Concomittantly the SMZ collected money among locals, renovated the House of Culture and the teacherôs homes, and declared the Old Srez Building a dangerous, off limits structure.

Meanwhile the transnational support for refugees also diminished, and most of those who did not return to Bosnia and Croatia or went abroad applied for Serbian citizenship (project money for this was offered by the Danish Council). Thus in 2002 Pero changed his Yugoslav passport for a Serbian one. Locally the SMZ moved into a renovated former teacherôs house, where Miġo and Dana were again allowed to use a room for free. Despite his kidney disease, Miġo now worked as a day labourer. Over time he won the trust of many villagers, and when Bane EriÍ and his wife went to agricultural trade shows to promote their *rakija*, Miġo acted as their night-watchman.

By 2008 Danaôs aunt, who lived in Germany, travelled to Croatia and sold her familyôs several hectares of land to Croatian neighbours at a knock-down price (for the difficult situation of Serb returnees in Croatia, see Leutloff-Grandits 2006). The money was partly reinvested into a weekend house (*vikendica*) near the centre of Lower Village, which had half a hectare of land. Dana, Miġo and her mother moved in. Danaôs father, who had died in the camp in Smederevo, was reburied in Lower Villageôs graveyard. On their parcel of land, the family kept small animals. For instance, in 2011 Dana won a grant from an INGO to buy eight goats for self-help in the form of milk and meat. In 2013 she reduced the number of goats again because they needed too much fodder. Meanwhile she increased her stock of chicken which she bought from Rajka JankoviÍ (D, 10.9.2013).

At one point in my interview with the farmer and ex-councillor Boro (ñlike Titoò) JovanoviÍ, he fascinatingly employed the father motif and the land-workerist ethos to indicate a shift of boundaries between the insiders and the outsiders:

> Boro: Well, there were some 50 refugees here, and today some remained é Stanko and Peroé
> Me: é Plus those two people who rear goats, those who have a week-end house...
> Boro: é Miġo and Dana! Well, ok, they are already ours [*oni su već naši*]; they bought a house and stayed here (tI, Boro, 4.9.2013).

According to the land-workerist ethos, which Boro shared, the refugee status was connected with being without job, land, house, and future plans. 18 years after their exile began, Stanko and Pero fulfilled these criteria and were therefore refugees in Boroôs eyes. On the other hand,

Miġo and Dana, who had married and bought a house and parcel of land, conformed to local values and thus became ñalready oursò (tI, Boro 4.9.2013).[119]

As we will see, the status of Stanko and Pero as refugees made them readily appear as needy and deserving of support from the community. However, why had Stanko and Pero not managed to cross the social boundary and ñbecome oursò?

Stanko

The Croatian ex-policeman Stanko (b. 1959), whose fierce looks had scared Rajka at the outset, was not very intimidating when I met him in 2009. By then he appeared to be a witty and good natured, middle aged man who owned a portable sawmill and offered his services of splitting firewood to villagers. In 2010 I met him again when he was enjoying the sunset in front of the weekend house that he shared with his old parents free of charge. When I returned in September 2013, I bumped into him at the shop. Looking tanned and scraggy, Stanko was relaxing after collecting plums for villagers, amusing the shop attendant and the customers. This was how he related his story, seasoned with a likable humour that I unfortunately could not record verbatim:

> Stanko said that he had been the strongest man in the village when he arrived, but now he had lost his strength and was idling away his time (*dangubi*). Presently he found it even difficult to find agricultural day-labour (*da nadniĺe*), because the farmers for whom he used to work were now day-labouring themselves. The demise of day labour was also inversely connected to the resurgence of mutual support [the land owning farmers profiting more from such exchanges than the have-nots]. Why had he never returned? He had been in the uniformed forces, for this they would indict him in Croatia for high treason. For one and a half years now he had attempted to receive a pension for his police work ï he had been a policeman during the SFRY ï but although he proceeded via official channels, the Croatian state was very difficult about it. When a long-established Lower Villager who sat with us tried to tease Stanko by calling him a war criminal, Stanko calmly and convincingly retorted that he had neither taken part in any war actions nor crimes (D, Stanko, 29.8.2013).

I had mentioned above that the German aunt of Dana travelled to Croatia and sold the house, while Dana and her parents had been too scared to do so. Nobody found it likely that Dana or her parents had been war criminals, and yet they had constantly delayed their return. The situation of policemen like Stanko or Pero was even more complicated, because they had heard the rumours about trials without due process in Croatia against former ñenemyò forces. The two menôs hopes to return were therefore muted by fear for their liberty and physical safety.

Stankoôs family situation had changed in the summer of 2013. His mother had died, and the funeral was attended by Stankoôs brother, who had married and now lived in Tuzla. At the shop,

[119] Boro wondered what Miġo and Dana lived on, as half a hectare was not enough to subsist on. Indeed, Dana was in dire straits and applied repeatedly for benefits at the CSW to cover some of the medication costs for her mother.

a villager reminisced how Stanko, tipsy with *rakija*, had contemplated his future, with his mother dead and his father maybe soon to follow. Stanko had reportedly envisaged selling the land in Croatia and buying a house in Lower Village from his share of the proceeds, which would probably make him ócurs.ô Pero dismissed this as idle talk (D, 28.9.2013). He harboured his own reasons why he did not believe in such a future for Stanko, or why he himself did not sell his property. In Peroôs story we can follow the trajectory of people oscillating in and out of the refugee status and moving into other identities linked to family status, occupation, and source of income. I turn to Peroôs life history, collated from diverse sources.

4.3 Pero Krajiġnikôs story

In contrast to the bachelor Stanko, Pero had arrived in Lower Village as a father, accompanied by his wife, two sons, and his elderly parents. The prehistory to their flight was, as far as I can reconstruct it from several informal talks and a questionnaire interview with him, the following. Peroôs family had been well-to-do agriculturalists in a small village in the Serbian Krajina, a region which in the 18th century had been as a far flung Hapsburg borderland adjacent to the Ottoman Empire. The Krajina was predominantly colonized by orthodox families who had fled the Ottomans. Others had moved over to Hapsburg because they were promised tax-exemption in return for their military services (Grandits & Promitzer 2000). During socialism Krajiġnikôs village belonged to the Croatian part of Yugoslavia, and bordered with north-western Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Pero was born in 1960 in the present-day Croatian municipality Vrgin Most. He had one sister. His family worked seven hectares of land and cooperated in beef production with the agricultural giant AGROKOMERC from Velika Kladuġa, Western Bosnia, some 20 kilometres away. After finishing his secondary education, Pero underwent two years vocational training as a welder. In 1981 he began working for AGROKOMERC, commuting daily from home. In June 1985 he married and soon became father to two boys (born in 1985 and 1987). In the latter year AGROKOMERCôs director Fikret AbdiĹ was accused of financial irregularities and his empire of 13,000 workers unravelled (*Der Spiegel* 1987; Habul 2001).[120] Pero found new

[120] After his economic demise in 1987/8, Fikret AbdiĹ rapidly rose again, becoming a founding member of the Bosnian National Party SDA (*Stranka Demokratske Akcije*) in 1990. During the Bosnian war AbdiĹ turned Velika Kladuġa and AGROKOMERC into the base of his warlord territory that supplied his own army of up to 30,000 militiamen, and traded with Croatian and Serbian Krajina troops. In 1993 AbdiĹ fell out with Bosnian President Alija IzetbegoviĹ (also SDA) over peace negotiations with the Croat and Serbian enemies. IzetbegoviĹ considered the subsequent founding of the APWB and prosecution of loyalists to the Bosnian Presidency as high treason. In the 2000s AbdiĹ served ten years of imprisonment as a war criminal in Croatian custody (PaveliĹ 2012).

employment between 1988 and 1991 in the Croatian town Sisak (60 km from his parentsô home), where he became a transport operator. His rail transport employer ñĆelezarò Sisak was reportedly in Serbian hands, while hiring in the townôs refinery was organised along ethnically Croat lines[121] (for similarly ethnicised local employment patterns in India, see Sanchez & Strümpell 2014).

At the start of the Civil War in 1991 Pero left Sisak and returned to his home region, which was now part of the unilaterally proclaimed Serbian Republic of Krajina (supported by the Republic of Serbia). Here Pero worked for the local Serbian police force. This situation lasted until the beginning of August 1995. As a result of ñOperation Stormò (see above), Peroôs family fled some 600 km eastward on their tractor, until they arrived in Lower Village on 14 August 1995. The Krajiġnikôs matrimonial relations were at rock bottom, and Peroôs wife divorced him in 1996. She lived for a while with the boys in a neighbouring locality, and was reported to be with her new husband in Slovenia today. Peroôs sons presently worked in adjacent villages for a riding stable and in horse conditioning, and hardly visited their father. In 1997 Pero found employment in the laundry of the hospital in River City. Here some women cooked for him, and he also had a new sleeping place. Meanwhile, Peroôs parents went to live with his sister in a small town near Ġabac. His sister nursed an elderly man (*gledala ga*), and in exchange the latter wrote over his inheritance to her.

In 2005 Pero lost his job and returned to Lower Village.[122] He needed a new place to stay, and Zoran PavloviĆ, the ñpolitical manò of the SPS (see Chapter Two), offered him a small old brick house in the creek valley, some way from the village centre. There was no electricity, but it provided a free roof over his head. For half a year Pero received unemployment benefits, but when that ended he depended on work in the village. The focus of Peroôs second life in Lower Village became the shop in the village centre, and the circles of male sociability around it. The shop partly functioned as an informal job exchange, where Pero found day labour e.g. felling trees, cutting firewood, making and bailing hay, or digging graves in the cemetery. However, Peroôs single most important relation became the older metal worker and welder Ćeljko (b. 1949), with whom he teamed up and earned an informal income. Ćeljko became a friend who visited Pero when he was sick, lent him money, or a tool if he needed it. Heating was a constant worry, and sometimes Pero and the ñex-refugeeò Miġo cut the acacia undergrowth along the streets, providing a service to farmers who could better access and work their fields. Important

[121] I thank Duġka Roth for this information.
[122] Rajka JankoviĆ squarely attributed his unemployment to the corruption of the G17plus party which had ñthe Healthò in its hands.

in obtaining firewood were also the shop owners, with whom Pero went into their woods, dividing the proceeds on a friendship basis. The shop owners also gave Pero an extended informal credit line (*on je kupio na veresiju*).

As a setback, the male sociability around the shop was tied to inviting each other for a round of drinks. In fact, in 2008 Peroôs alcohol consumption reached critical proportions and led to a new turning point in his life. According to former President Duśko *Buba* JankoviĆ, Pero ñtotally cracked (*on je totalno pukao*). He sometimes only manages to crouch home on his hands and feet, canôt stop drinking. Last year he was in hospital for a while. He will live another year or two, and then he will dieò (D, Duśko, 18.1.2010). I asked Duśko how he could tell Peroôs imminent death, and got the reply: ñJust look at his head, how deformed it already is. It will burst like a gourdò (ibid). Duśkoôs bucolic dystopia of comparing a human head with an overripe gourd tied directly into a local genre of ñcracking or burstingò (*puĆi*) of people and things. To crack a gourd requires a certain spatial and temporal force. The ñtotal crackingò of such a body/material signified becoming mentally ill and socially ruined as the result of the interplay of external and internal pressures. The concept of cracking was not only applied to the fate of ñrefugeesò or people ñleaning to alcohol,ò but more generally to peopleôs moral and economic failures in the societal transformation.[123]

Hearing the expression that Pero was totally cracked was startling. I remembered how other people, including my fervently Christian landlady Rajka JankoviĆ and the elderly agriculturalist Savo (both cited above) had not berated Pero for alcoholism, insinuating that he had started drinking after he lost his job, and therefore as a result of his pain. When I told Duśko that I had heard this story of Peroôs alcoholism, Duśko laughed it off and said: ñNo, Pero lost the job because of drinkingò (D, Duśko, 18.1.2010).[124] In the case of Pero (and more generally), the moral verdict of ñalcoholismò disproportionally met socially unsuccessful men and overshadowed the degree of empathy employed towards them as fellow fathers. In fact, the ñalcoholism verdictò weakened Peroôs moral claim for support. He counterweighed the threat of de-solidarisation with his hard work, professionalism, and gentle calmness. Although Duśko blamed the victim, he did not state that Pero should be left alone to die. Indeed, Duśko was adamant that the Municipality was responsible for social and health problems, and he was critical of the lack of state initiative and responsibility in these fields.

[123] Elsewhere I have analysed the dialectic of cracking and gluing people (bodies), social relations, technical assemblages, and other spatial fixes that I observed in Lower Village agriculture (Thiemann 2014, 35 *et passim*).
[124] From village sources it was hard to verify whether Pero drank when he worked and lived in the urban hospital.

Duškoôs feelings were shared by many former state persons. Take the answer of the former MZ clerk Pavle when I asked him who should care for people needing help. Sitting at the second village shop in the company of two villagers, Pavle replied that social security and care rarely followed a clear-cut procedure:

> That is essentially the responsibility of kin [*pada na rodbinu*], but also a bit of ćthe Socialô [CSW; Municipal administration for social activities]. First, the family is obliged morally and according to some other... *a table-companion interjected*: é according to the patriarchal standpointé *The ex-clerk paused for a moment, then continued:* Second, that other part is the responsibility of the state, but if that, then nothing [of it]. Here you have to beg for the simplest things (D, Pavle, 4.9.2013).

The ambivalence of the answer was exemplary. It came from a former local state employee who used to be very active in providing help to refugees and villagers in need. Until 2006, for instance, the office of the MZ had regularly directed applications for social aid to the CSW. When the former clerk and his neighbour stated that better social security was provided by the family, they voiced a practice-saturated critique of the law on social protection. The former clerk knew from experience what could be asked from ćthe Socialô and how it had to be ñbeggedò for, a pragmatic criticism that he and ex-President Dušku shared.

In this and similar conversations a kind of normative dualism emerged, according to which social actors expected the state to fail in its broad responsibilities while they were hopeful (but not confident) that the family could provide for all needs (see Thelen, Thiemann, & Roth 2014). The odds seemed stacked against Pero, for whom the care by the state was difficult to obtain because his refugee status had long ceased to be protective, while his potentially caring family had dissipated. Would Pero accord to the pragmatic critique of the former local state actors, fall through the safety net, and ñtotally crackò when hitting rock bottom?

Turbulences and redefinitions in Peroôs life

In 2008, when Pero was drunk and fell again, he did not totally crack. Someone called the ambulance. For a couple of weeks Peroôs alcohol sickness was treated in the hospital of River City in the section for psychiatry. When he returned to the village, he managed to stay sober for a while, later he continued his drinking routine at the shop.

With social worker Dunja, I repeatedly discussed the widely perceived state (ir)responsibility to protect the population in connection to alcohol problems. Dunja said that there was neither a regulation nor a strategy, for it fell between the spheres of Health (*zdravstvo*), the Social (*socijala*), and the police (MUP).[125] When the media headlined drug

[125] Throughout the socialist period, Yugoslav psychiatrists developed a ñmoral panicò about the constantly rising rate of diagnosed alcoholism, which they turned into professionalizing and enhancing treatment options. The

abuse during election campaigns, the Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior Ivica Daļiĺ (SPS) ñbusts a couple of drug dealers. That image may be a bit caricatured, but essentially captures the truth (*u sućini je to istina*)ò (D, Dunja, 17.5.2012). In another conversation, on 30.9.2013, Dunja explained the procedure applied to people endangered by alcohol sickness. It was ñcontraindicativeò to put them into a social institution, she said, that was the preserve of Health. Then she conjectured:

> Dunja: He [Pero] waits until he falls, then they put him into a hospital, there he sobers up and recovers, and afterwards they contact us.
> Me: They didnôt [contact you].
> Dunja: Well, that is because they asked him if he insisted on being treated further and to sign that, but if he does not sign they will discharge him without notifying [us].

According to the interpretation of social worker Dunja, no official process of making a local state institution responsible for Pero had followed his release from the psychiatric ward. Nonetheless, contrary to the widespread image of state non-care and family care, it was state actors and not family that took care of him. First, Pero was employed in Public Works by the SMZ. Second, his refugeeness was renewed by the SMZ in order to legitimate its help in a new ñhuman securityò crisis.

Public works

In 2009 the Serbian State financed a new Public Works programme with a complex application procedure (AnĽelkoviĺ and Golicin 2010, 10ï 11). When the first call for applications for the new programme was announced in 2008, Vojo Voloviĺ was still President of the SMZ. As was generally the case when it came to project applications, it was difficult to find somebody to do the paperwork.[126] Vojo finally authorised Aleksandra Jankoviĺ (b. 1984), the newlywed daughter-in-law of the shop owners, to write a project on cleaning the sides of the village streets from undergrowth. It was not legally previsioned that an SMZ could supervise the works, so the official contractor was Vojoôs building and trading company. Beginning in spring 2009, three workers worked for four months, i.e. Aleksandra as coordinator, and two manual workers. The social proximity between the shop owners and Pero might explain why Aleksandra included him.

predominant explanatory model they promulgated was a pathological one of disease caused by a mixture of personal and societal factors. The enhancement of treatment possibilities was however stymied by the end of Yugoslavia and the outbreak of the war (Savelli 2012).

[126] According to my host Slavo Jankoviĺ, the SMZ had worked through projects for the last 30 years. The problem was to find somebody to do the application. When the minister of infrastructure visited the village some years earlier, he was asked why he had not contributed to the recently finished church. The minister retorted: Did anybody ask? Slavo blamed the absentee priest for failing to do so (D, Slavo, 20.1.2010).

In 2010 it was planned to expand the works to six months and to include six workers (one of them Aleksandraôs female friend). Apart from freeing streets from undergrowth, an added task was to repair the drainage ditches. Aleksandra complained that though the new president of the SMZ Bane Eriĺ was ñnot able to do anything for the village,ò he still wanted to choose the workers himself. Aleksandra was especially incensed that the SMZ gave no money to build a childrenôs playground in the village centre, where 20 small children (including her own daughter) passed daily. Bane chose workers, in Aleksandraôs view, not according to skills but to social proximity. Thus, Baneôs cousin, who had a bad reputation as a gambler (but dug graves) had been suggested (I, Aleksandra, 17.4.2010). While Public Works were funded from the central state budget, the applications were channelled through the Municipal Service of Economic Development and the district (*okrug*) branch of the Republican Agency of Unemployment. Informal negotiations in spring 2010 revealed that funds were reduced and that the Ministries demanded larger projects. Therefore the Municipality preferred a landscape gardening project in Upper Village arranged by the privatised spa to Lower Villageôs project. Upon consultation with the SMZ of Upper Village, Pero and another Lower Villager were employed there.

In 2011 another entrepreneur offered to host the (unprofitable) Public Works in Lower Village. Aleksandra was the successful project writer again, and Pero was employed once more. After a falling out with Aleksandra in 2012, the application was given in the last minute by the SMZ to the municipal firm GRADSKO ZELENILO (Public Greens). This time Pero was among four villagers who were employed for landscaping parks in River City (I, Aleksandra Jankoviĺ, 27.4.2010; tI, Goran Todoroviĺ, 17.5.2012).

For the first time in five years, Pero was not employed in Public Works in 2013. However, that year the Municipal authorities, following a suggestion by Aleksandar Brodiĺ and Mladen *Veterinar*, supported a micro-project to tear down the Old Srez building. The local contractor was the same as in 2011, and Miro *Supervizor* participated in the works. Miro was especially satisfied about the demolition of this building, in which his grandfather had been tormented during early socialism. The wooden beams, floor and so on were retained for Pero and Stanko as firewood. They were told to cut and remove the 30 m² of fuel in a week. Within three days

they had cleared everything (D, Miro, 31.8.2013).[127] As this shows, Pero was regularly supported by the SMZ, and Stanko sometimes, even under difficult circumstances.[128]

ñOurò refugee

During Peroôs turbulent years, Miro *Supervizor* became instrumental for his social security. Miro, who had invited his close relation Tina, a refugee from Tuzla, into the SMZ (see Chapter Three), was genuinely concerned about the refugees. Living near the former camp (see figure 4), Miro had long ago fallen in love with a refugee girl, as he once told me performing the *frajer* mode. By 2009 Miro had integrated his shop-buddy Pero into the running of the football club. Although admittedly not a big football fan, Pero since volunteered as a pitch steward, securing for himself the benevolence of the new SMZ.

A new threat to Peroôs physical safety arose in the winter 2009-10, as I learned on 15 January 2010, while I pre-tested my research groupôs joint questionnaire with him. I found Pero drinking a beer with shop owner Zoran JankoviĹ on the benches outside the shop. It had snowed a little, and it was already dark. Pero explained that to sit here was still better than at home where he did not have electricity, light, TV, or a fridge. And it was not warmer there, either. For the interview, we went into the glass annex of the shop, where it was windless and where I had some light for writing. While Zoran disappeared, his wife Mica listened over and joined the conversation now and then. The interview proceeded haltingly, and Pero revealed only what was strictly necessary. For instance, he said that he did not celebrate the family feast *slava*, and shop owner Mica injected ñbecause he doesnôt have the appropriate conditions,ò in order to ease an embarrassing moment. Questions on income and money were evaded by Pero, who had probably experienced that stating his income could lower the propensity of receiving help. Mica suggested I should write he earned about 5000 dinar (ú 50) monthly. Therefore it came to my surprise that Pero answered my question on ñgeneral securityò with a longer story. Ten days ago he had been almost assaulted, he said. Some people had sneaked to his house, he ran out and yelled: ñWHO IS THERE?!ò and they ran away. Mica was obviously worried, too.

[127] There were critical voices concerning the long-term effects of Public Works. The social policy coordinator of River City thought that prevention of social problems was better than providing for the afflicted afterwards. Yet, the creation of new jobs lay outside the Municipalitiesô competence, and the results of Public Works were not entirely satisfactory. Although they had to last six months, the money for the salaries was spent after two months. Furthermore, Public Workers did not get back into insured full employment, yet this was what they needed (D, Social Policy Coordinator, 14.10.2009).

[128] Pero did not always manage to use the opportunities his friends from the SMZ and the Football Club opened up. For instance, a former footballer with a construction firm in Belgrade invited Pero to work on site. Pero agreed under the condition that his partner Ćeljko came along. But it was too challenging for the latter. As Pero was too insecure to go alone, in the end neither of them went (D, Ćeljko, 18.9.2013).

During spring 2010, Miro casually helped Pero to move to the flat in the SMZ building that Migo and Dana had used until 2008. Rajka JankoviĆ had heard that this was because a couple of days earlier Pero had been attacked by some youths while he was asleep. The rumour was that these were not kids from Lower Village but some ñAlbanian Romaò (Ashkali). This scapegoating of putative outsiders threatening the imagined ñpure Serbò village and ñits refugeeò was a remarkable expansion of the story Pero had told me three months earlier. The allusion to the Ashkali youths activated entrenched (although often rather benign) prejudices against Roma as creating havoc (ObradoviĆ 2008, 25). It also presumed that the culprits were refugees from the Kosovo War in 1999.[129] The incident was thus linked to a human security problem. To better comprehend the point, we need to make a detour to the recent history of post-Yugoslav displacements.

After the Croatian-Bosnian refugee crisis in 1995, a new wave of displaced persons arrived from Kosovo around and after 1999. The Kosovar exiles, both ethnic Serbs and Ashkali who fled the violence of the Kosovar Liberation Army (Sundhaussen 2012, 379ï80) were administratively called ñ*privremeno raseljena lica*,ò i.e. Temporarily Displaced Persons (TDP).[130] The different concepts ï ñrefugeeò vs. ñTDPò ï had various legal and moral connotations. TDP were from the outset Serb citizens with legal claims to employment and a state pension if they had held a job in Kosovo. They also generally applied successfully for NGO grants to build houses. It was furthermore possible for the TDPs to immediately ask for social aid at the CSW.[131] In contrast to ñour refugees,ò the TDPs were better off ï sometimes even better than those locals who had lost employment in the early 2000s. This turned the former asymmetric relations of solidarity with refugees on their head and resulted in moral apprehension of the TDPs by local Serbs. The TDPs ï whether ethnically Serb or Roma ï were often portrayed in local discourse as traitors of the nation who had sold their property in Kosovo to the Albanians and were scrounging on the impoverished mother nation.

It remains unclear whether Miro *Supervizor* intended to use the story of the Ashkali TDPôs threat to ñour refugeeò Pero in order to legitimate helping him, or if this story was invented by others. In any case the allusion to the TDPs confirmed to the villagers that Pero was threatened by a human security crisis and that he needed to ñfleeò from his lone house to the SMZ flat in

[129] One Ashkali family with several adolescent children that had fled Kosovo lived in Upper Village.

[130] *Privremeno raseljena lica* tended to live in larger or richer settlements than Lower Village. They were called ñtemporarilyò displaced because of the futile ambition of the Serbian governments to retain the Kosovo territory within the nation state and to return them as citizens. For the strong links between Serbian nationalism and the Kosovo complex, see Sundhaussen (2007).

[131] In contrast to the exiles from the Serbian province of Kosovo, the Croatian and Bosnian refugees needed to apply for a Serbian passport to be registered as Serbian citizens. However, a Serbian passport potentially made their return more difficult. Therefore many refugees hesitated for years to take such a decision.

the village centre. Lower Villagers, among them the SMZ councillors, from now on increasingly used the refugee concept to support Pero Krajiġnik in his difficulties (although these were increasingly unrelated to his exile of 1995). Larissa Vetters (2014) has recently described a comparable case of an inventive appropriation and re-employment of the relational modality of humanitarianism. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the International Community favoured claims by Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) for support to reconstruct their *rural* housing, as part of attempts to reverse ethnic cleaning (see Jansen 2011). In Mostar, *urbanites* appropriated this relational modality to claim Municipal reconstruction of their *urban* housing, even though some of them had never fled their homes (Vetters 2014, 24).

In Lower Village the relational mode of humanitarianism was re-deployed to help Pero move into the flat in the SMZ house that other refugees had used before. It also seemed safer to live in this ñstateò house, surrounded by neighbours and frequented daily by the MZ clerk.[132] It was arranged that Pero could live there for free. The SMZ accepted Miro *Supervizor*ôs unilateral decision and reactivated Peroôs refugee status, as the following statement of the MZ clerk exemplified:

> He [Pero] is a refugee person [*izbeglį̄ko lice*], we have to help him. Pero received a small flat consisting of a room, a kitchen and a small WC. An electric meter was installed in the flat and he only has to pay the electricity bill (D, Zlatan, 29.8.2013).

Intially Pero had been allowed to use the electricity free of charge, and his power consumption immediately increased the bills of the SMZ. In this sense his ñhuman security situationò echoed the events of the 1990s, which ultimately led to the closure of the refugee camp in 2002. The new SMZ reacted less rigorously and, as MZ clerk Zlatan alluded, simply asked Pero in 2013 to pay his electricity bills. Peroôs ensuing financial problems were partially redressed as he assumed the identity of a ómaterially endangered person,ôas we will see in the final subchapter.

4.4 From refugee to social aid recipient

During the interview with Pero on 15 January 2010, I had also asked whether his household had ever applied for social aid. Pero answered that it had not, and shop owner Mica said that it would be pointless for him to apply. Of course she would counsel him to apply if she only thought that this could be successful. While I hoped it might be, she did not, based on the fact that she knew many less able-bodied and more elderly people who had been unsuccessful in applying for benefits from the Centre for Social Work (CSW). Mica added: ñtheoretically speaking, the Centre would be responsible, thatôs for sure!ò

[132] Nonetheless, in 2011 unidentified persons stole Peroôs tractor from in front of the SMZ building.

Mica nonetheless joined me in trying to convince Pero to give it a try with the CSW ï at least, we argued, he knew me, and I had done several spells of fieldwork in the CSW by now and therefore I might be a helpful connection in obtaining what he seemed to deserve. Pero countered it would be shameful for him to ask for help, to which Mica retorted: ñbut it is not as if they give you a gift. Thatôs tax money, from alcohol and cigarette sales. The money will be spent anyhow, if you donôt do it, then somebody else.ò While Mica portrayed social aid by the CSW as a taxpayerôs right, he saw it as akin to charity, which suggested an admission of moral inferiority because he was not ñman enoughò to earn his living. With her appeal to his rights as a consuming citizen Mica not so much professed a belief in the present law on social protection, but a claim to a reciprocal relation to the state. Micaôs compassion for Pero sprang from their customer-relationship. Under unstable market conditions, face-to-face customer relationships like that between Mica and Pero were never just abstract and ñrationalò equalizing transactions, but involved intense feelings of care and reciprocity (see Trager 1981; Clark 1991).

In order to know how Pero could obtain aid at the CSW, I talked with a senior social worker from the CSW in Creek Town who worked on material benefits. Pero did not own land in the village, so he seemed to fulfil the most crucial eligibility criterion for social aid that most villagers lacked ï landlessness (on social work in the CSW, see Chapter Five). However the social worker reminded me that if Pero could not prove that he did not own land in Croatia, his eligibility was not verifiable. Without a verification, he could only apply for municipally funded ñone-time-aid,ò which had less strict eligibility criteria, because it was designed for crisis situations (D, senior social worker, 10.2.2010).

Finally, in March 2010 Pero and I took the bus to River City. We went to the CSW, and he entered the reception room to tell his story. He preferred that I stay outside. Later, back at the village shop, Pero told me: ñI am under 55 they say. So I am not eligible.ò Pero assured me that he was not angry at me having wasted his time and money for the bus ticket. He stated that he had been convinced beforehand that his chances were minimal. However, as I found out later, it was not written in the law on social protection that 55 years of age was the threshold of eligibility for social aid. This age threshold seemed to be an informal boundary of work ability that social workers had developed to gauge eligibility. I observed during my fieldwork in the CSW that apparently able-bodied men and women were told that jobs in the village were plenty and that they consequently did not need to ask for help. Furthermore, Lower Village was not perceived to be a poor village. The director of the CSW in River City told me that in Lower Village ñ[t]here are users, but not that you would say, ôEh, there are really poor peopleôor óthere are no poor,ô that is everywhere some average, on the town level and in the environsò (tI,

Director, 17.7.2009). The case worker Ana, who had worked in Lower Village for 30 years, agreed that it was an ñagricultural village with only one or two casesò (D, Ana, 9.11.2009), implying that there was abundant day labour in the local agriculture.

As we will see in Chapter Five, the social aid for a single person amounted to approx. ú 50, which could be earned in six days of agricultural labour. As all income was to be 100 per cent deduced, in the summer months able bodied labourers were ineligible for social aid. The problem for rural labourers like Pero, of course, were the winter months when the seasonal agricultural and construction activities were reduced. Even Public Works were almost exclusively organized during the summer months. In other words, Peroôs first attempt to become a social aid recipient in March 2010 was a plain failure. However, the diverse norms that defined poverty and need were only loose statements to be applied in concrete situations. And with his moving in April 2010, a new situation arose for Pero.

New neighbours, ART, and social aid

Through his new flat in the Local Council (SMZ) building, Pero Krajiġnik found himself in a new neighbourhood, although he had not moved far. His life still centred on the shop, the relatively supportive realm of Mica, Zoran and their daughter-in-law Aleksandra, and the hierarchy of men in which he had a low but accepted position. Besides Peroôs increased feeling of security and his stabilized financial situation (in spring 2010 the new Public Works in Upper Village started), there was a third change. His new immediate neighbours Rada (in her sixties) and her daughter Ruģa (b. 1964) began to befriend him. Rada, who had worked for PIK River City and bought her flat from PIK in the early 1990s, was now retired. Ruģa, a former student of Marxism-Leninism diagnosed with schizophrenia, was an outpatient of the psychiatric division of the hospital in River City. Both earned their living doing handicrafts in the association of handicraft producers. The women very fondly displayed their hospitality over home baked cakes and freshly brewed coffee and established neighbourly sociability and provided a modicum of care for Pero.

During the art colonies that President Vojo VoloviĹ had organised in 2004 and 2005 (see Chapter Three), the artist in charge had come to know Ruģa and her handicraft. This ñartist-of-national-importanceò persuaded Ruģa to participate in a number of artistic events organized by his organization ART in cooperation with the CSW and funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Work (MINZRS). Importantly, ART soon formed a network of four artists ñliving on the margins,ò including both Ruģa and the artist himself. It took some persuading to convince Ruģa to produce framed embroidery with motifs of Picasso instead of her national-romantic

goblins. But his efforts were rewarded. Their joint work was exhibited at the Biennale of Art in Venice, and some of Ruđaôs modern-art frames were sold through the artistôs commissioning. Still, for her mainstay Ruđa relied on folklore handicraft. The cooperation went further when the artist commissioned Rada to sew black linen shirts for him. To place such orders, or just check on mother and daughter, he visited Lower Village every once in a while. His contact in the CSW River City was the social worker Dunja, and she sometimes accompanied him to the village to meet Ruđa (or me). On several occasions Ruđa made sure to tell Dunja the life story of her neighbour Pero Krajišnik. Dunja, who thus came to know the situation informally ï although she never personally met Pero ï ñpilotedò (*usmerila*) her colleague Ana towards handling the situation satisfactorily, as she explained to me on 17.5.2012. When I told Dunja that I had sent Pero to the CSW before, and he had been rejected, she replied:

> Well, then they will ask for a lot of documentation, like extracts from the book of property and the marriage register in Bosnia (sic),[133] and that can often not be provided by refugees. Even worse is the situation for alcohol abusers ï they need to have a firm will to receive help, otherwise no institution will take them in. And alcohol abusers quickly lose courage to make it, and give up (D, Dunja, 17.5.2012).

Dunja criticized that the national social policy hindered refugees from accessing social aid, and implied that ñfirm willò was needed to navigate the problems. Furthermore, for stigmatized social issues like alcohol abuse there was no clear-cut policy. And if several categories came together, like in the case of Pero, the chances of receiving proper help without ñpilotingò became bleak.

Like other social workers, Dunja stated that she would like to help more, if the law allowed her to. As it was not possible for state actors to bend the rules and regulations all the time, they reserved their ñpilotingò for socially close cases. Pero applied for social aid in December 2011, a year after I first left the field. When I returned in May 2012, he recounted over a beer at the shop how he had met social worker Ana through the mediation of Ruđa, and received social aid in the amount of 5600 dinar (ú 49). He said his application was to be ñrepeated after half a year or so,ò he would ask social worker Ana next week when she was expected at Radaôs *slava* (D, Pero, 5.5.2012). Only through the unlikely intervention of his neighbours with social worker Dunja, their acquaintance in the CSW, had Pero managed to become a social aid recipient.[134]

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[133] ñ[é] *izvod iz knjige posedovanija i iz matiˆne knjige u Bosni*.ò

[134] Through Dunjaôs piloting Ana prompted her lawyer-colleague Mica to engage in an inconclusive tug of war with the Serbian Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs, the Croatian Ministry of Finance and the land-registry of Virgin Most (ñaddress unknownò), to ascertain the property and financial status of Pero. Though since 2004 there existed a ñbilateral contract concerning the prevention of double taxationò between Serbia-Montenegro and Croatia that ñinter alia envisaged the exchange of information between their amenable institutions,ò the Central tax registry in Zagreb, for instance, saw itself ñin no position to submit the requested informationò (CSW File Pero, documents 28.12.2012, 11.4.2013 *et passim*).

When I returned again for some more fieldwork in September 2013, Pero was receiving social aid of 6250 dinar (ú 55). Nonetheless his situation seemed more uncertain than a year before. He had had a dispute with Ruđa, who suspected him of stealing her firewood. Ruđa had phoned social worker Ana, who summoned Pero to the CSW and ñcounselledò (*vodila savetodavni razgovor*) to stop the quarrelling if he did not want the police involved. Ana said concerning Pero: ñAh, that one who stole the wood from Ruđa? He lives in one room of the former office of the SMZ. He likes a bit to guzzle (*voli malo da cuga*). He is a day labourer, not very old, can still work. That is nothing specialò (D, Ana, 9.9.2013).

Besides the disagreements with Ruđa and social worker Ana, Pero also got into arguments with the newly elected President of the SMZ Dejo Ļoliĺ, who pressured Pero several times to reveal if he was paying the electricity bills or not. Pero, who had always promised that he paid, finally admitted that he was not able to do so. ñBut money enough for beer is there?ò the President asked and threatened to throw him out within 15 days. Later he calmed down: ñAdmittedly, I had been pretty drunk that eveningò Dejo told me, adding that Peroôs monthly bills were not large, varying between 700 and 800 dinar (about ú 7), as he did not own any appliances (D, Dejo, 11.9.2013). Nonetheless, the question of repayment, now that Pero had a ñstable income,ò emerged in yet another of his significant relations. Even the shopkeepers now got into a fight with him, because Pero denied that he could return the informal debt of ú 150 that he had accrued with them. These observations suggest that his switching from ñour refugeeò to ñthe CSWôs social aid recipientò unsettled Peroôs ability to sustain his debt-relations with his immediate neighbours ï Ruđa, the SMZ President, and the shop owners.[135]

Questions were now raised as to whether Pero wanted to sell his land in Croatia like Miđo and Dana and buy a house in Lower Village. Would he not want to be an example to his children as a master craftsman, unite his sons and their wives-to-be around him, and thus fulfil the role of a órural fatherô (again)? Where there was money, the rest would find itself, one shop customer opined. Sitting on the shop bench, Pero was initially dismissive, but then conceded this was ñthe way it should be.ò Nonetheless he offered many reasons why selling his land was impossible, first of all because it was overgrown with weeds and needed investment. Another problem that Pero saw was that his great-grandfather had not transferred the land to his grandfather when he died, and the latter not to Peroôs father who was still alive. It amounted to a ñbig jobò (*veliki posao*) to regulate these property relations. Pero could neither imagine

[135] Not all quarrels were about significant relations trying to collect debts. Pero and his friend Ćeljko had repeated fights. Once Ćeljko reportedly hit Pero in a drunken argument in front of the shop. But Ćeljko was concerned that Pero overcame his inhibition against asking for more from the CSW. Thus, in the winter of 2012/13 Ćeljko ñagitated himò (*Ja sam ga grdio*) until Pero went to claim 3 m² of firewood (D, 18.9.2013).

returning to where there was no place to sleep, nor did he know how to involve the UNHCR in the case. He also did not react to suggestions to visit his sister and his parents to settle an arrangement. Instead, Pero had other plans for the future: ñAs long as I live, I want to construct a beautiful grave, with a tombstone on which is written óKrajiġnik, 1960 ï ôò, he said (D, Pero, 28.9.2013). After 18 years in Lower Village, Peroôs final project was to materially inscribe his experience into the local locus of remembrance, the graveyard. He did not believe that a new start was possible. Nor did he desire radical change. Like Seidel in the epigraph, he just wanted to wait and have his story told ï in his case through an ellipsis on a tombstone.

Conclusion

We followed the biography of our protagonist for over half a century to the moment when he lived and expected to die in the transit zone. Yet, at the outset, nothing suggested that he would not have an ordinary, upwardly mobile Yugoslav middle class life of a skilled worker, family father, and part-time farmer. Several turning points transformed the concepts that he could embrace into those of a refugee father and a materially endangered social aid recipient who could still work and needed to pay back his debts. Pero stopped short of the threshold when, according to social workersô informal criteria, he became eligible for aid.

The majority of Lower Villagers with whom I discussed Peroôs case were adamant that he had not got into his predicament because of personal or moral deficiencies. Most valued him as a skilled and hard worker. While some attributed his misfortunes to political corruption or a morally loose wife, all connected his alcoholism with being a ñrefugee fatherò without house, land, family, income, and future. Therefore, villagers supported Pero by leaving him a house or flat, finding him day labour and Public Works, arranging heating and electricity, sociability and benefits. They thought that Pero, like the other refugees of 1995, deserved the support of the state. However, knowing the difficulties of transforming need into state help, Peroôs associates felt a personal obligation to stand in for and transform the unresponsive local state (see Jansen 2014).

Peroôs falling-but-not-quite-cracking, then, sheds light on the relational modalities with which social actors collaborated in state transformation. When researching relational modalities, we focus on how social relations mediate between state images and ñactual state practices [which] most often do not conform to images, hopes, or wishes for a coherent stateò (Thelen, Vetters, and von Benda-Beckmann 2014, 8). In this case, villagers on and off the SMZ operated with two contradictory and discrete relational modalities ï humanitarian care and social welfare.

Humanitarian care was the major modus operandi of the SMZôs social policy between 1995 and 2002. In 1995 the SMZ had been interpellated by a network of transnational NGOs, the central state, and the municipality to support Croatian and Bosnian refugees. This relational modality officially ended in 2002, when then SMZ President Vojo VoloviÍ closed the rural refugee centre and fixed emergency funding at only five percent of the budget (see Chapter Three). Nonetheless, informal humanitarian care was adopted as the imperative to help the refugees. The refugee concept became translated locally through concepts of common humanity ï the rural father motif and the possibility of cracking. Between the hope of becoming a proper father and the fear of totally cracking lay the zone of uncertainty. In 2009, the rebellious Local Council tacitly readopted this humanitarian modus operandi, and began to push Pero away from cracking, and out of uncertainty, into hope for the future.

Social welfare, the second relational modality, was more indirectly connected to the village. The SMZ and the MZ clerks had assisted the CSW to identify villagers needy of financial social benefits and other support, but found it difficult to interest the CSW otherwise. Furthermore, the social benefits were perceived as barely sufficient to cover basic needs. On the other hand, would-be recipients had to prove their eligibility. This locally enabled two possibilities of blaming the poor for (1) not helping themselves (being undeserving); and (2) for faking their need in comparison to those who were poorer but received no help. At the moment when Pero adopted the relational modality of social welfare, charges of personal inadequacy began to be attached to him. Social welfare and humanitarian care had in the end produced both destructive and constructive interferences.

In the next chapter I consider social welfare in more detail, and follow the negotiation of two relational modalities within it. In order to do this I will shift perspective to urban social workers, their mutual interactions, and their relations with people from Upper Village.

5. Under- and over-implementing the law: Social work, inclusive distribution, and exclusive protection

> The realisation of the principle of humanism in social policy is inextricably linked to the general humanisation of society. Because the meaning of the essence of socialism is the liberation of man and the humanisation of society, only socialist humanism can be comprehensive and real humanism. In [capitalist] class society [é] humanism can only be partial (LakiĆ eviĆ 1991, 36).

At noon on 13 September 2013, an old Lada Niva wound its way uphill through Lower Village. Inside the hot and creaky car, the driver Bogdan (b. 1950) regaled his co-passengers with stories about ñsocial casesò living along the road to Upper Village. Bogdan, who lived in a neighbouring village, had worked as a driver for the Centre of Social Work (CSW) since 1997. Next to him sat the psychologist Siniġa (b. 1974), an urbanite from River City. Siniġa, who was in his sixth year of temporary employment at the CSW, listened to the driver with a mixture of interest and amusement.[136] During more imaginative passages of Bogdanôs monologue, Siniġa turned around, winked at me and smiled, he had indicated earlier that the driver was a good source of village gossip about the people cared for by the CSW. Important for the subsequent discussion of under-implementing the law, Bogdan told us the open secret that the MiloviĆ i family, to whom we headed, made a decent living selling dried mushrooms and wild herbs in River City.[137]

We arrived in the centre of Upper Village and parked near the Local Council (SMZ), opposite the recently white-washed óOld *VoĆ ar*ô warehouse, the home of the MiloviĆ family.[138] ñAh, that [whitewashing] has been done for the recent Rakijada [yearly show of fruit brandies] by the Local Council,ò assumed Siniġa. As we stepped out and into the sun, Siniġa exclaimed: ñSee, what fresh air they have up here?!ò Rajko MiloviĆ (b. 1951), in jeans and with a washed-out red base cap on his head, awaited us at the gate to his courtyard and asked us in. There were open fire pits in the yard; the rest was beds of paprika plants. Bogdan stayed outside, while Siniġa and I climbed up the external staircase. There was no handrail, and one step was loose. The small patio/kitchen was a bit foul-smelling and not very neat, but freshly washed grapes lay on a clean plate. Rajko was quick to tell Siniġa that there was enough food in their home, revealing a big sack of flour. We went into the living room, where Ranko (b. 1999), a dark, squint-eyed boy, slim and smallish for his age, sat on the couch and watched the reality

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[136] Siniġa, who came from an urban white collar family (his father a teacher, his mother a secretary) entered the job market in the mid-2000s, a time characterized by public hiring freezes. He started to work as a school pedagogue in River City in temporary positions (*na odreĐeno vreme*) replacing colleagues on pregnancy leave (*porodiljsko odsustvo*). In 2008 he substituted a psychologist in the CSW of River City. From there he switched in 2009 to the CSW of Creek Town and back again. Once Siniġa bitterly joked that his ñwhole carrier was made up of *bolovanje*ò (*bolovanje* denoted being sick, but was also the colloquial term for maternity leave). Siniġa had even worked as ña substitute of the substitute,ò and weathered interim spells of unemployment. He secured permanent employment in 2014, when he replaced the retiring social worker Ana.

[137] The driverôs knowledge should not be conflated with the CSWôs putative power of control over the users of its services and benefits. The point I argue below is precisely that the social workers did not use their knowledge about side incomes of users to reduce their social benefits, even though they were legally supposed to do so.

[138] *VoĆ ar* translated as Fruit-Grower. The spacious, two-storey building was made of dressed granite stone. Defunct for two decades, it was draughty and the roof leaked. Until the 1990s the fruit growing section of PIK had operated such buying up and storage stations throughout the Municipality.

soap ñ*farma*ò (The Farm). The bed in front of him was made, but in a corner of the room lay a heap of dirty laundry. Siniġa wanted to know from the boy how he was and how he was doing at school, while Ranko stared at the screen and answered in monosyllables. Siniġa then asked Ranko why he had not gone to school, and the latter replied ñI took a day offò (this answer amused Siniġa, when we were back in the car). Yet, for now, Siniġa reminded Rajko that his son needed to attend school. The latter replied: ñOf course, what needs to be done will be done, no worries.ò

We descended the stairs and stepped back onto the street. With a nod to the roof, Rajko said that he had been asked to renovate it, but the SMZ told him that this was not necessary any more. Rajko then recounted how he had recently visited the mayor in River City, who had promised him two spare containers to be converted into a dwelling. The containers had been used after an earthquake in the neighbouring municipality. These containers would soon be installed on the hill where Rajkoôs paternal house had once stood, a kilometre away from here. Bogdan the driver told Rajko: ñPut both containers together, let the craftsman make a hole between them for you,ò but the concrete bases for the containers had already been cast by a village craftsman. Siniġa added: ñKeep the new place in orderò ï Rajko: ñFor sure.ò Bogdan again: ñDonôt let them fool you, climb on their roof if they donôt give you what they promised!ò Rajko replied that the city had meant to set up the containers already by now, but since it was a church holiday he could wait another couple of days. He continued to tell us how he planned to raise a sheep, a goat, and chicken on the hill. After a small pause, Siniġa summed up the dayôs finding: ñFood is thereò ï flipping a finger on Rajkoôs belly ï ñand money is there, tooò ï pointing to the pack of cigarettes in Rajkoôs front pocket. Rajko, lighting a cigarette, replied: ñWell, better smoking than drinking.ò Bogdan interjected: ñIt spoils your pleasures that there are no mushrooms, does it?ò [*jebe te sad da nema peļurke, e?*]. Rajko: ñWhateverò [*Jebiga*]. I wanted to know from Rajko how he earned his money now, and he said: ñI do day labour in agriculture, and dig graves in the village, that is ú 40 directly into my pocket.ò As we left, Siniġa remarked: ñSuch [a person] needs to be born!ò (*Takav mora da se rodi*), indicating that he saw Rajko as a person of rough edges and bravado, although not quite trustworthy and with doubtful parenting resources.

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In this vignette I represented a routine check-up on a family of ñusersò (*korisnici*) of the CSW by Siniġa, the psychologist of the ócchild and adolescent protection team.ôSuch check-ups were done yearly, in urgent cases also much more frequently. The psychologist expressed the generalised self-perception by the CSWôs employees when he characterised their professional approach as óbasically humanist workô(*u glavnom humanistiļki rad*) (D, Siniġa, 9.11.2009). In this chapter I analyse what the social workers subsumed under this phrase, and how this shaped their local politics of distribution and protection. I focus on the emerging long-term, complex welfare state relation between the MiloviĆ family and the CSW, in order to explore how the social situation was influenced by professional debates in the CSW between the early post-socialist period and the present.[139]

[139] The MiloviĆ i received welfare benefits for more than a decade from the CSW. Recently they had also been intensively counselled and supervised concerning their parenting style. I will discuss how their situation was influenced by professional debates in the CSW, but also by relational practices in a wide network of other actors: the SMZ, the school, the Municipality, the police, concerned neighbours, a journalist, and philanthropists.

Following on from the discussion of the local social policy formation in Chapter Four, I analyse how the local state dealt with the growing insecurity of families that had not suffered a humanitarian crisis.[140] In my case study, the responsible professionals, particularly their long-term street worker Ana, bent the increasingly exclusionary central state law on social protection in order to help the Miloviĺi. The social workers thus pushed their professional discretion in a process that we might call ôbureaucratic erring.ô I follow recent theorising which takes the ñshifting and incompatible meanings of erring as a starting point to explore the critical potentials and risks of embracing error, randomness, failure, and non-teleological temporalitiesò (ICI 2014). With ôbureaucraticôI mean rule-based, documented action in a social collective (bureaucracy) ñdesigned to unify and control individualsò (Hull 2012b, 129). In an ideal-typical bureaucratic organisation, a person ñwho causes things to happen without writing or being written aboutò is seen as ñimproper at best, corrupt at worstò (ibid, 130). Stopping short of not writing, social workers manipulated their written accounts to satisfy both the necessities of documentation and their professional values. This was because in practise street-level bureaucracies like the CSW work in terms of both bureaucratic and professional rationales. This leads to the typical street-level bureaucracy dilemma:

> professional norms of behavior toward clients provide a measure of resistance to bureaucratization. Street-level bureaucratsô claims of professional status imply a commitment that clientsôinterests will guide them in providing service. The implicit bargain between the professions and society is that in exchange for self-regulation they will act in clientsôinterest without regard for personal gain and without compromising their advocacyò (Lipsky 1980, 189).

Thus, bureaucratic erring may describe the open-ended negotiation of professional and bureaucratic norms within street-level bureaucracies. My observations suggest that such negotiations were directed both at the local poor in interface Type I relations, at fellow social workers in interface type II relations, and at the manager of the CSW and imputed central state social policy changes in interface Type III relations. For the local citizens in whose interest social workers pushed their professional discretion, the process was ambiguous. They received, as it were, favours granted flexibly, which they would have preferred to be inalienable rights (see Brkoviĺ 2015).

Concerning the internal dynamics in the CSW, social workers explained to me that they had chosen to work in a humanist profession and that they were not willing to compromise their ethics. Their professional self-understanding developed at the complex intersection of personal dispositions, professional education, and ongoing socialisation in the institution (Oberfield

[140] This refers to that part of the population that lived in the area before the refugee situation.

2014, 19). While I concentrate on practices in and around the CSW, the allusion to humanism was linked to (though not determined by) the professional education of social workers during socialism that they maintained even when central state law was distanced from it. I have quoted a definition of ósocialist humanismô in the epigraph from Prof Lakiĺ eviĺ ôs (1991) textbook on social policy that had been required reading for at least the older generation of social workers.[141]

Over countless cups of Turkish coffee, the social workers had not only discussed their cases but also how the larger social transformations impacted on their professional self-understanding as social workers. By the time of my initial fieldwork (2009-10), the CSW employees had thus developed a fairly standardised relational modality of óinclusive distribution,ô that was best characterised by an ñimplementation deficitò of exclusionary laws (Bergen and While 2005). Inclusive distribution meant that social workers extended social aid to families when the eligibility of the recipients was in doubt, although it became increasingly problematic to do so. I want to stress that this relational modality was less the result of pre-existing moral economic relations with the poor than a generalised feeling of responsibility for local social policy arising in concrete situations and social relations. The social workers were subject to a number of tensions. One was the possible contradiction between childrenôs personal needs and the familiesô collective needs. Another factor was new forms of bureaucratic organisation and paperwork introduced by 2008, followed by the new law on social protection in 2011. Both central state policy initiatives tended to decrease the street-level bureaucratsô professional discretion, and they were enforced by the Director within an interface type III relation with the rank and file employees of the CSW.

As a result of these pressures, I could also conversely document the rise of óover-implementationôof laws and regulations, or what Barak Kalir (2015) called an ñimplementation surplus.ò Some colleagues from the younger generation of CSW employees, while subscribing to the humanist baseline, increasingly advocated the relational modality of exclusive protection, up to the point when they over-implemented laws that allowed them to take children out of families in cases when they were deemed to be endangered. By 2011 two relational modalities vied for predominance ï inclusive distribution, centred on the interests of the family, and exclusive protection, centred on the perceived interests of the child. Even a local social policy was, after all, ñnever a completed project. Indeed, [é] policy is always subject to revisions and inflections, which open up a politics of translation in which there are always possibilities at

[141] Highlighting how resources that formed during socialism shaped social work under capitalism challenges, the dominant narrative of international donors who constructed their óright to interveneô by ñdenying, or paying lip service to, earlier welfare assemblages in the pre-1991 socialist period, during which Yugoslavia developed social welfare policies often seen as óbetweenô those of an imagined óWestô and óEastôò (Stubbs 2015, 72).

stake. Policy, then, is necessarily unfinishedñ (Clarke et al. 2015, 15ï 6). In sum, continuing a trend from late socialism, the CSW has remained an important arena for the negotiation of local state responsibility.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, I show how the assemblage of the Yugoslav welfare state was historically co-produced by international, national, and local actors translating socialist, social democratic, and liberal welfare traditions. I follow how from 1991 onwards legal principles and organizational regulations increasingly excluded the rural poor, and portray one vocal social workerôs critical reading of the situation. Second, I describe how the older social workers criticised and under-implemented the new legal strictures, highlighting two moments of bureaucratic erring. Then I represent the arguments with which the Director of the CSW legitimated curtailing the relational modality of inclusive distribution. Third, I return to the extended case of the MiloviĆ i, and follow how inclusive distribution was challenged by a new organisation of street work and increased auditing through refined documentation. In the process, younger social workers pioneered a new relational modality and over-implemented the new exclusionary norms. Ironically, their exclusive protection was made possible through paragraphs in the new law on social protection of 2011, which the socialist humanists had pushed, in other respects, towards more inclusion.

5.1 The history of the Centre for Social Work (CSW)

Rather than trying to provide a comprehensive history of the post-Yugoslav welfare system, I focus on one significant local institution, the Centre for Social Work (CSW), in order to demonstrate the processes of local social policy formation under socialism and capitalism.

Transnational articulation processes were paramount in the formation of what became late socialist Yugoslaviaôs ñrather generous welfare system based on the principles of solidarity and equalityò (Stambolieva 2011, 350). In the wake of World War II the need for state provision of social security was accepted by the new socialist authorities to address health and welfare problems like poverty, rural-urban migration, and what had been diagnosed around 1945 (and quickly silenced) as ñpartisanôs war neurosisò (Karge 2015). Initially, the óadministrative workersô and ósocial protection officersô worked in the Antifascist Front of Women (AFŽ), the Communist Party, and the larger communities (Zavirģek 2008, 736; DobrivojeviĆ 2013, chap. 3).

Early on, Yugoslavia also adopted Soviet welfare principles of social security provision based on the workplace (see Thelen and Read 2007, 7ï 8). After the break between Tito and Stalin in 1948, and ñin accordance with the trends towards international cooperation with the

western countries, schools for social workers were founded in Yugoslavia. The first school was founded in Croatia in 1952 [é], the second in Slovenia in 1955 and later, in 1958, schools were opened in Belgrade, Sarajevo and Skopjeò (Ajdukovic & Branica 2009, 258ï 9). The generalised introduction of social work curricula and of social insurance schemes in the 1950s was supported by American advisors, and influenced by trips to Sweden and UN exchange programmes in the 1960s (Zavirġek 2008; Leskoġek 2009, 240). The establishment of CSW throughout the country proceeded in parallel (see Zavirġek 2008, 738). As a result, the Yugoslav welfare state ñwas [one of] the first socialist state[s] that professionalized social workò beyond the family and the work place (Leskoġek 2009, 239). For instance, it preceded the advanced Hungarian welfare state of the 1960s by a decade (see Haney 1999, 53ï 4).

The drive to professionalise the welfare system continued, and by the early 1970s it led to the establishment of university degree programmes of social work. In Belgrade University a Diploma of Social Work could be acquired at the Faculty of Political Sciences since 1974. By the late 1970s the curriculum included courses on social work and social policy (I, Dr. Biljana SikimiĹ, 12.7.2009). Professor DuġanLakiĹeviĹ, who influenced the emerging ñsocialist humanistò policy for decades, had already lectured at Belgradeôs Higher Education College for Social Workers (*viġa ġkola za socijalne radnike*) established in the 1950s (ErļiĹ, LakiĹeviĹ, & MilovanoviĹ 1967). Later, at the University Department, he authored the standard textbook cited above, which was recommended to me by his student Ana Ļekerevac, a former social worker and presently Professor for Social Work in Belgrade and Podgorica (Montenegro). Professor Ļekerevac maintained that while the practice of social work had not always been up to its own high standards, the Yugoslav theory was very progressive (I, Prof Ļekerevac, 23.10.2009). Besides social work, other disciplines producing employees for the CSWs included psychology, child pedagogy, *defektologija*,[142] gerontology, and sociology. Health historians have only just begun to research the complex history and ñproliferationò of psychoanalysis, psychology, and psychiatry in Yugoslavia, which ñencouraged a more humanistic (as opposed to mechanistic) conception of mental illnessò (Savelli 2013, 266, 288; see AntiĹ 2015). In any case, Siniġa, whom we met in the entry vignette, studied family systems psychology in Belgrade in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

The CSW in River City, Siniġaôs workplace, had been founded in 1960 and was initially ñlinked to the Health [sector]ò (I, social worker Ana, 9.12.2009). At the outset, it had operated in the nearby *varoġica* (and centre of the rural municipality) Big Village. At some point in the late 1960s the CSW was relocated to River City, the new urban core of the enlarged

[142] *Defektologija* translates roughly as special needs pedagogy.

municipality of over 100,000 inhabitants (see Chapter Three). In River City, the CSW was housed in the 100 year old two-storey building of a former brewery,[143] and was supervised by the cityôs social sector. 40 years later the inhabitants of River City still referred to the municipal welfare administration as ñthe old socialò (*stara socijala*) and the CSW as ñthe socialò (*socijala*). The long-term director (2005-2012), who had obtained her university degree in social work in Belgrade in the 1980s, explained the mandate of the CSW in this way:

> First let me tell you what the Centre [for Social Work] is dealing with: the Centre fulfils many tasks (*radi mnogo poslova*) connected with social policy, some in the competence of the [central] state or the republic, regulated by juridical acts, some in the competence of the city [municipality] itself, for that the lawful basis is the decisions about the rights in the competence of the city (*odluka o pravima iz nadleġnosti grada*). So I do not know what interests you, is it materially endangered persons or ï we also work with divorces, with delinquents, we do adoptions, trusteeship/wardship (*starateljstvo*), placement in institutions, we do everything [pause] foster care (*hraniteljstvo*) (I, Director CSW, 17.07.2009).

As the quote illustrates, the CSW was a multipurpose institution with many obligations, political affiliations, and responsibilities. According to the CSWôs time-honoured street work approach called óterritorial system,ô each social worker managed a couple of villages and city streets as their terrain (*teren*), performing all the duties enumerated by the director above. In this way, social worker Ana had been responsible for Upper Village.

Yugoslavia always had official unemployment and parts of the population were poor and needy, and it was a mandate of the CSW to care for them (Woodward 1995). By the 1980s the CSW even gained more responsibility, as the social security of the population worsened during a decade of economic crisis (Sundhaussen 2012, 205ï 19). At the end of the decade the Yugoslav leadership began the re-introduction of the market economy to rectify the dismal performance of the countryôs self-managed economy. Between 1988 and 1991, the Socialist Republic of Serbia reformed its social policy system to meet the anticipated social problems. One innovation was the introduction of a new minimum income for families and individuals in 1989. It was to be secured by a generous means-tested benefit called MOP, a newly unified social aid instrument to be managed and disbursed by the CSW.[144] Simultaneously the CSW administered a new ñsingular evidence system for users.ò At this point ñthe Centre for Social Work truly became the central municipal institution of social work, social protection and social securityò (LakiĆ eviĆ 1991, 389).

[143] Office space was short. For example, the former beer cellar served to hand out New Yearôs packages for the users.

[144] MOP (*Materijalno Obezbeđenje Porodice i Pojedinca*) translates as Material Security for the Family and the Individual. Pioneered in the SR Slovenia, it was introduced in 1990 in Serbia and was linked to the average wage (40 % for one; 60 % for two; 75 % for three; 90 % for four; 100 % for five or more family members).

However, in the 1990s the situation deteriorated more dramatically than expected in the ambitious law on social protection of 1991. Yugoslaviaôs secessionist wars disrupted the social and economic fabric of the country and created large streams of refugees (see Chapter Four). Throughout the 1990s, and especially after 2000, the number of the unemployed grew as the emerging semi-peripheral Serbian capitalist democracy shifted its economic policies and, following the rather informal privatisations of the 1990s, instituted a tough privatisation programme.[145] First, this meant the dismantling of social security provided by the workplace. Second, many privatised industries went bankrupt while those that survived shed jobs. Third, in 2008 the global financial crisis hit Serbia and diminished the volume of economic activity further. Thus, ñ[t]he employment rate fell from 54 % [in 2005] to 50.3 % [in 2010], and it is especially low for women (42.2 %), and young people aged 15-24 (15 %)ò (PeriġiĺÍ and VidojeviĺÍ 2013, 3). Private employers were often in arrears with the payment of workersôsocial contributions so that the latter had difficulties accessing health and pension benefits. Despite rising unemployment, in 2010 the number of people who received unemployment benefits stagnated at only 1.1 per cent, while the number of people living in absolute poverty rose from 6.9 to 9.2 per cent (PeriġiĺÍ and VidojeviĺÍ 2013, 3,6ï 7).[146]

In contrast to the unemployment agencies, the CSWs increased their help to the needy, although the coverage of social aid benefits remained minimal, and their worth stagnated since 2001 below the poverty line. In the law on social protection of 1991, MOP for a single person had been calculated at 50 per cent of the average wage (more generous than when introduced in 1990). Throughout the 1990s, the value of MOP had deteriorated in parallel with the average wage because of inflation. The net worth of the salaries and of MOP was subsequently not restored to pre-war levels, partly because of the low bargaining power of the syndicates. After the opposition overturned MiloġeviĺÍ on October 5, 2000, the new government amended the law on social protection in October 2001 ï and drastically decreased MOP by two thirds to 16 per cent of the average wage (MWSP 2001, Articles 10, 11).[147]

Starting with the 2001 amendments of the law on social protection, the national social policy began to shift ñmore and more responsibility towards the families,ò reducing expenses for the national budget (Interview, Director, 8.12.2009). In 2009 even the World Bank (WB) suggested to the Serbian government to significantly increase the spending on MOP (which was at a very

[145] Organised opposition against the privatisations came from the nationalist-conservative Serbian Radical Party (SRS), a predecessor of the later austerity enforcing Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) (Vetta 2011).
[146] Unemployment benefits were generally only paid for the first half year.
[147] The 2001 reduction of MOP by two thirds went through all family sizes. The maximum number of family members taken account of remained at five, continuing the tradition of disadvantaging large families.

low 0.12 per cent of GDP).[148] There was indeed some subsequent increase of the coverage of the population with MOP. Thus, between 2008 and 2013 the number of households receiving cash welfare benefits and child allowances increased from 50,000 to 120,000 households, which amounted to 2 per cent of Serbian households or 8.6 per cent of the poor (Perišić and Vidojević 2013, 11).

Internal criticism

This adverse constellation provided the background to the trenchant criticism of the social workers which Dunja (b. 1955, who we met in Chapter Four) shared with me. Like many in her generation, her professional and life experience had made her receptive to the social consequences of the complex changes.[149] Dunja said: ñI more and more come to the conclusion that we are the ósusual suspects for everythingô (*degurni krivci za sve*)ò (I, Dunja, 6.9.2013). Social workers were indeed sometimes scapegoated for economic policies which they could not influence ï working with the most stigmatized population and receiving the brunt of dissatisfaction of the excluded citizenry. I learnt that the social question was ñno priorityò in the Serbian state ï rather investments (I, Dunja. 21.9.2009).

My critical interlocutor struggled not to despair in view of the hardship she saw daily. Dunja once observed that the social situation had ñonly worsenedò since she graduated from Belgradeôs Higher Education College for Social Workers in 1980. For six years afterwards she had been unemployed, until she found work in the welfare branch of a social enterprise in River City (I, Dunja, 16.9.2013). In the mid-1990s Dunjaôs enterprise became insolvent and she was part of the workersô delegation that unsuccessfully negotiated the future of their firm. This way she met the future Mayor of River City, who was then a union organiser. Dunja became an early member of his party and was employed as his technical secretary. At the same time she also became member of the municipal supervisory board of the CSW (*Član upravnog odbora*) (I, Dunja, 21.9.2009). In 2004 Dunja quit as secretary for the mayor, who had meanwhile become a minister in the Serbian government and needed less support. For half a year Dunja worked as an informal carer for the elderly, then she applied for a position in the CSW. In her opinion the then director, who feared to lose her position because of a certain scandal, was not aware that

[148] The WB argued for reduced state expenditure combined with a higher efficiency of policy programmes and benefits, to counter the effects of the World Financial Crisis on taxes. The WB saw MOP as a well targeted benefit (70 percent of payments went to the poorest quintile), underfinanced in comparison to new EU member states known for low social expenditures (Poland, Latvia, and Estonia). Thus it was recommended to raise the MOP payments per individual and to enlarge the number of recipients (WB 2009, 48ï 50).

[149] Social workers with Higher Education college degrees formed the majority of the older generation of CSW professionals. They were ineligible for management positions, which required a university degree plus five years of practice.

Dunja had forfeited political backing, and employed her in the hope to be secure. However, within another year the director lost her position, and her successor, whom I cited above, instigated a kind of ñmobbingò of ñpolitical opponentsò (I, Dunja, 21.9.2009). Given their political differences, Dunja did not shy away from explaining to me the widely held (but typically concealed) professional view among the rank and file that the present Director did ñnot understand the essence of social work.ò[150]

What incensed Dunja was how the CSW was now led autocratically, and nobody dared to voice concerns. Especially since the last municipal elections in 2009, the Director feared losing her position and tried to enforce an impeccable bureaucratic record to provide no occasion for her replacement. According to Dunja, the Director now controlled her workers with an ñiron fistò and exhorted them to focus on ñformalities.ò Dunja especially criticised that the Director checked all the files and often returned them to be rewritten e.g. for sloppy handwriting. This bureaucratic tug of war was embedded in the 2008 national regulatory changes in social work procedures (MWSP 2008), which followed the globalised audit culture of ñgoverning by numbers,ò i.e. ñreducing complex processes to simple numerical indicators and rankings for purposes of management and controlò (Shore and Wright 2015, 22). Yet, Dunja alleged that even the supervisors from the Ministry for Work and Social Policy (MWSP) accepted that the rules and regulations were hard to accomplish. If a needy person died of hunger, Dunja quipped, that seemed unimportant to the Director, but when the review (*nadzor*) came, everything had to be flawless (I, Dunja, 21.9.2009).[151]

To see how the social workers navigated their inclusive politics of distribution despite growing financial and bureaucratic difficulties, I return to my case study.

5.2 Inclusive distribution

Rajko MiloviÍ, whom we met in the initial vignette, had lived for a long time in family relations that his environment found odd. In the 1980s he had divorced his first wife to remarry and move in with a considerably older widow. The widowôs children were given into care through the CSW. This also happened to their two common children later on. After his second wife died, Rajko formed a partnership with her daughter ï his ñstepdaughterò (*pastorka*) ï Dejana who was by then a married housewife and mother in Big Village. In 1999 Rajko and Dejana moved

[150] Note that Dunja interpreted their professional dissonance not through the generalised discourses on corruption. In contrast to other public enterprises, she maintained that the Directorship in the CSW was barely a position for embezzlement (*malverzacije*) (I, Dunja, 21.9.2009).

[151] To be sure, an external observer thought the Director needed to strictly control her rather unruly work force (I, protocol officer, 2.11.2009).

together into Rajkoôs half-abandoned paternal house in Upper Village, leaving Dejanaôs children with her husband. That same year their common son Ranko was born, who received the family name of Dejanaôs legal husband (Dejana shortly after divorced to marry Rajko). In 2002 Dejana was pregnant with their third child and the MiloviĆi approached the CSW for support. After they compiled the required paperwork (a dozen documents from various institutions), their application was accepted in 2003.[152]

Social worker Ana (b. 1951), one of the most senior employees of the CSW, knew the MiloviĆi well. Born and raised in River City in a working class family, Ana had studied at the Higher Education College for Social Workers in Belgrade (I, Ana, 12.9.2013). She had been employed in the CSW since 1979, and from the onset was responsible for Upper Village and Lower Village. As Ana told me, the MiloviĆi received monthly MOP of 10,000 dinar (ú 100) through the father Rajko. Child benefits for their four children were collected by the mother Dejana from the child benefit section at the municipal ñold social,ò and also amounted to approx. ú 100. Dejana lived together with ñold Rajko,ò her stepfather (*pastor*), and according to Ana ñthey would be a case for marriage counsellingò (I, Ana, 9.12.2009).[153] Their financial support by the CSW was somewhat unusual, as there were ñonly three to five usersò of the CSW in Upper Village, ñbecause they [village residents] all have propertyò (I, Ana, 9.12.2009). Ana alluded here to a paragraph in the law on social protection of 1991, according to which half a hectare of land was the eligibility limit for social aid (MWSP 2001, Article 12). Before 1991, eligibility had been calculated less restrictively according to the market value of land, as a social worker who was employed in the CSW since 1986 remembered (I, Lena, 30.9.2013). Thus, in 1991 land had been turned from an asset to a liability concerning eligibility to MOP, and the majority of villagers became virtually excluded from the major social aid benefit. This exclusionary innovation reflected an ambivalence of urbanites against the presumably ñun-culturedò villagers that resurfaced during the wars of 1991-5 (Jansen 2005a, 109ï 67). From the perspective of city dwellers, the villagers had profited from their plight when the food prices were pegged to the Deutschmark (BajiĆ-HajdukoviĆ 2014, 68).[154] Urban policy makers, probably influenced by such resentments, thought that villagers had a resource in land that they could sell if they did not work it (neglecting the volatile market prices of land). Finally,

[152] The MiloviĆi had four children. The youngest son was born in 2006.

[153] The marriage of the MiloviĆi was fraught by differences which apparently led to verbal and physical abuse. While a private marriage agency in River City had closed in the early 2000s, marriage counselling was part of the óprofessional workô (*stručni rad*) of the CSW. In 2012 the sociologist of the CSW won a grant to establish a spin-off marriage counselling unit that was open 12 hours a day and half-day on Saturdays. The involved CSW employees received an overtime premium of ú 50/day. The free service was rarely consulted by members of the public, and never by the MiloviĆi.

[154] One farmer told me that the early 1990s were ñthe last time one could live well from agriculture.ò

international organizations like the UNHCR, with which the CSW collaborated after 1991, consistently demanded in their statutes that help be given to the landless (I, Lena, 30.9.2013). The partial overlap of trans-national and national social policies had potentially dire effects for small proprietors in mountain villages like Upper Village who owned poor land of little value and who could not meet their needs from it for lack of (mental or physical) skills and health, machinery, finance, farmhands, or a reluctance to sell their patrimony.

Here we come to *the first case of bureaucratic erring*. Social workers, in the light of what they saw as a too strict property limit for eligibility to MOP, did not like to check on rural usersô landed property (I, Ana, 9.12.2009). The social workers were content, for instance, if the cadastre registered no land ownership. In the Miloviĺ case, the inheritance of several hectares of woodlands by Rajko and his sister had not been registered.[155] Rajko tried to keep a secret of it, and when his wife Dejana told me about it in an informal interview, he cut her short and showed me to the door (I, Dejana and Rajko, 25.10.2010). However, if the social workers had wanted to, they could easily have found out. For instance, the well-informed MZ clerk with whom they collaborated had his office next door to the Miloviĺ i. The point was that no one wanted to formalize this knowledge, as it involved costly legal proceedings and would have imperilled the inclusive distribution to the needy.

Ever more people had to rely on ñthe Social,ò Ana explained, not through their own fault, but ñbecause of the lay-offsò (I, Ana, 9.12.2009). The Miloviĺ i, who had been marginal workers during late socialism ï she a seamstress, he a Public Greens employee ï had been among the first to be fired during the post-socialist restructuring. Therefore their family was seen as a typical needy case. Furthermore, the Miloviĺ i were evaluated as especially deserving because of their children ï echoing the 20th century preoccupation with a ñproper childhoodò and ñproper parentingò (Thelen and Haukanes 2010, 1ï 2). As represented in the entry vignette, the complex notion of proper parenting included the provision of healthy food, clean and safe housing with enough room for the children, compulsory education, development of the potentials of children, and inculcation of good habits like temperance in consumption of cigarettes, alcohol, etc. Other factors were the physical safety of the children, their non-violent upbringing, the inculcation of óappropriateô work habits (not stealing), neat clothing, and the possibility of travelling on holidays. Proper parenting obviously necessitated money, which the

[155] The gap between de jure land ownership and de facto registration was large. The inheritance division procedures were to be initiated by the inheritors and concluded within a year. The beneficiaries bore the legal costs. One problem was that inheritance occurred upon death as a group right of the children and the spouse. The division of land, house, machinery etc. often led to quarrels among the inheritors. Legal division, therefore strained relations and purses, and was often avoided. Crucially for social workers, land without title could not be legally sold or mortgaged and thus had no official market value.

social workers were prepared to help parents acquire. However, the financial difficulties of needy and deserving persons like the MiloviĆi were compounded by the fact that the MOP for an employable person (*radnosposobno lice*) of ú 50 per month was perceived as ñnot enough to live onò (I, Ana, 9.12.2009). Here, Ana referenced the decline of the real value of MOP during post-socialism. After 2001 aid recipients ñhad to find work on the sideò in order to survive ï and that was of course not checked on by the CSW, she underlined (I, Ana, 9.12.2009).

This led to *the second case of bureaucratic erring*. According to the law on social protection, all money earned on the side ought to be deduced from the MOP payments. The professionals worked the restrictive system by summarily deducing the worth of one day of labour per month (ú 8.50 in 2009). Mothers in the first year after childbirth had no deductions (e.g. File MiloviĆi, 2003-4, 2006-7). The minimum enforcement of income deductions was evident in the entry vignette, when Rajko was not scared to tell the psychologist about his earnings as a mushroom collector and a village undertaker.

Not checking the eligibility of the needy according to land ownership, and not policing their supplementary income represented two common methods of inclusive distribution by under-implementing exclusive social policies. Both aspects of the local ñpolitics of distributionò (Ferguson 2015) were born out of the professional discretion of street-level bureaucrats who ñmediate aspects of the constitutional relationship of citizens to the stateò (Lipsky 1980, 4). Under-implementing the exclusionary terms of the law (which increased further in the amendments of 2005) followed the humanist principles laid out in Article 2 of the same law (unchanged until 2011). Social need was defined as ñsuch a condition of a citizen or a family in which societal help is essential ï with the aim to master social and lifeôs difficulties, and the creation of conditions for the fulfilment of basic life needs, inasmuch as these cannot be fulfilled in a different manner, and *on the basis of humanism and human dignity*ò (MWSP 2001, Article 2, my emphasis).

The relational modality of inclusive distribution, in which humanist values were translated into social work practice, allowed social workers to help the needy, reassure themselves of their own professionalism, and counter the red tape approach of the Director.

The directorôs demands for more systemic solutions

Proud of her university degree, the Director underlined that she had 24 years of social work experience and there were ñno unknown questions to herò (I, Director, 17.7.2009).[156] Before her appointment, she had been one of the few social workers in the medical sector. She had not been a ñfield workerò (*terenac*), though, and accordingly did not attach the same importance to it as her staff in the CSW. I once overheard a youthful social worker joyfully shout in the CSW car on her way to the users: ñThe field is the law!ò (*Teren je zakon!*). This put in a nutshell how most social workers saw fieldwork ï more important than paperwork, because it allowed a more nuanced feel of the social situation of impoverished people.

The Director betrayed a peculiar reading of the social fact of large-scale impoverishment, when she told me during a car ride to a social policy and strategy conference in Belgrade ñthose people who are workshy shouldnôt receive helpò (I, Director, 16.10.2009).[157] On the other hand the Director had been a student of Dušan LakiÍ eviÍ, and she also valued Prof Ana Ļekerevac and her approach to social work highly (I, Director, 6.11.2009). Indeed, the Director told me during the social policy conference in Belgrade that she thought that the local innovations promoted there ï which she herself had endorsed previously ï created no systemic solutions. To her mind the idea of reforming the welfare state through local projects, municipal social policy strategies, and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between local state institutions led to quickly outdated solutions. Her experience was that local innovations could not make up for the lack of systemic agreement among the different working groups of the MWSP (I, Director, 16.10.2009). Yet, the Directorôs óproductionistô view of entitlement, compounded with her politically insecure position and decreasing faith in local innovation, explained why she advocated systemic solutions and at the same time stymied her social workersô local initiatives to expand help to the poor. To err on the side of the needy as long as the documentation was impeccable emerged in this peculiar bureaucratic power constellation as the least common professional denominator ñto correct and attenuate certain negative side effects of the market economyò (LakiÍ eviÍ 1991, 380). Unsurprisingly in light of the difficulties in controlling local bureaucracies, recent policy changes by the central state aimed at tightening the regulations of social work. The curtailment of some professional discretion, however, only created new space for discretion.

[156] The artist who connected people at the margins through ART projects (see Chapter Four) argued that the Director thought and worked according to old medical sector patterns under conditions of scarce finance, without sensibility for the aesthetic and creative needs of the poor (I, artist, 13.11.2011).

[157] When the Director gave up her position in 2012 she chose to work in the section for adult protection. Later she admitted to her colleagues that she had underestimated the amount of work and the psychological stress there.

5.3 From street-work to case work

In 2007, the new ócase-work systemô was piloted in the CSW River City. One of the major pillars of reform was the abolition of the territorial system and division of the social workers into specialized sections with internally diversified management positions. A year later, the new rulebook which made case-work compulsory was adopted throughout Serbia. Its introduction largely followed the ñadviceò of the consultancy firm Oxford Policy Management, funded by DFID and the Norwegian Foreign Ministry (*Glas Centara* 2007; see MWSP 2008). Despite the declared goal of including the experience and criticisms emerging during the pilot phase, social workers felt their remarks went unheeded. The Yugoslav street work approach was fragmented, contrary to the wishes of most social workers, who wanted to expand it.

Several new sections were divided into a leader, a supervisor, and the case workers (*voditelji slu*ļ*aja*). The supervisor distributed the incoming cases to the case workers on the principle of overall workload. The case worker then hired two other professionals with whom to collaborate on the case. Although hiring outside professionals was encouraged, e.g. from health institutions, social work NGOs, or the police, the teams were generally made up of CSW employees (which reduced costs). Therefore, the case system appeared to offer no essential advantage over the territorial system when social workers had sought advice from colleagues if needed. Furthermore, in comparison to their Slovenian counterparts who had been trained for two years before the introduction of their new case system, the Serbian supervisors had received very little training (*Glas Centara* 2007, 4, 22ï 9). Nonetheless the supervisors were paid extra and had a reduced case load. Unsurprisingly, their coaching was not evaluated by the ñrank and fileò as superior to the informal model of gossiping about cases over a cup of coffee. Therefore, the supervisorôs guidance was resented by their similarly trained, but now subordinate and less well remunerated colleagues.

A major regulatory change consisted of splitting up the body of social work professionals into three specialised sections: a small adult section of 3½ full positions, a large youth section of 13 positions, and a material benefits section with only 2½ positions.[158] As the figures indicate, the specialisation of social workers could only go so far, because the CSWs were small.[159] As the sociologist of the CSW (b. 1970) who did the statistics and project writing told me, in 2013 the CSW employed 35 workers, of whom 26 were professionals. It had unfulfilled

[158] Furthermore, there was a legal section, a service section with a driver, security, and a cleaner, and a section for correspondence and administration.

[159] I was told that the case study system worked wonderfully well with six cases per month like in Sweden, but not with 25 or 30 cases like in Serbia (I, Siniġa, 31.8.2013).

claims on five more professionals paid by the central state and seven employees paid by the Municipality (seven were already paid by it), (I, sociologist, 13.9.2013).[160] Of necessity, several employees worked in two sections, and section leaders and supervisors worked part time as case workers. The new division, nonetheless, symbolised the higher attention paid to the needs of children in comparison to adults. Furthermore, it showed how the handling of material benefits was perceived as the least important activity.[161]

Ana had ñbeggedò (*zamolila*) the Director to put her into the material benefits section, because in 2008 it promised to be a tranquil workplace. Besides MOP, she administered municipally decreed financial ñone-time aidò (*jednokratna pomoć*), money for school supplies, 3 m² firewood for the winter, New Yearôs packages in kind, etc. The MiloviĆi benefitted from all such aid. Ana, who could have retired in 2012, planned to augment her pension points by working some more years, but she soon came to regret this decision. As the economic difficulties deepened in Serbia after 2008, the number of materially endangered persons rose. With a certain time lag, the numbers of welfare benefit recipients in River City doubled between 2011 and 2013. According to Ana, ñnow each of us [in the material benefits section] has nearly 250 cases, while earlier [in the territorial system] there were 30 [cases]. Soon Mica [her lawyer-colleague] and I will have as much as the Centre used to have overall ï 600ò (I, Ana, 12.9.2013). With piles of social aid requests on her desk, Ana looked forward to her retirement in 2014. This is how, in 2013, she characterized the MiloviĆi, smiling and in her typical short-spoken way:

> They are a family totally [pause]. Maybe they are here 15-20 years on evidence in the CSW. A real social [case], they totally are, both family-wise and poor. In a lethargic state. Neither do they have the wish, nor do they try [to change] anything (I, Ana, 12.9.2013).

ñSocial (case)ò (*socijalni [slučaj]*) was both a professional and a colloquial term. Professionally it signified a person ñin a state of need for social securityò triggered by ñphysiological, familial, professional, societalò or environmental reasons (LakiĆeviĆ 1991, 16; see SrdiĆ and MiljkoviĆ 1970, 1069ï70; PejanoviĆ 2004, 71ï2). Colloquially, ósocial caseô was a stigmatising term denoting impoverished persons who did not conform to norms of orderliness, hygiene, and proper family relations. Anaôs short characterization of the MiloviĆi in 2013 did not evoke her dilemmas in establishing categorical boundaries in her complex, long-term social relation with

[160] Salaries oscillated around ú 400 (close to the average salary). The sociologist who had studied in Sarajevo and Belgrade, and who after a stint in the CSW of his hometown Priboj had worked in River City since 2001, explained how the CSW had struggled for more positions and for offices to respect the privacy of its users. The Director had not openly supported their demands, so that the social workers had leaked information about their squalid working conditions to the press. But they had not gone on strike and had proved so far not very effective.
[161] Judging by the low number of employees in the material benefits section. Young professionals like Siniša and the sociologist suggested that material benefits should be handled outside, e.g. by the Unemployment Agency.

the MiloviĆi in a process of repeated encounters and social situations (as analysed by Don Handelman, see Chapter One). Instead, Ana focused on the present values she attached to their welfare-state relation, which had clearly deteriorated since 2009. Put more abstractly, when comparing Anaôs views on the MiloviĆi family in 2009 and in 2013, we observe an immaterial scale on which a ósocial caseô could slide or rise in the eyes of social workers.

As shown above, in our interview on 9.12.2009 Ana had still seen a possibility of counselling the MiloviĆ couple on their matrimonial relations, whereas four years later she talked of a ñlethargic situation.ò In our informal conversation in 2013 Ana attached five interconnected labels to the affiliation with the MiloviĆi, for which she ambiguously signalled empathy and unease by her smile. The basic category she applied was ñreal social [case]ò (*prava socijala*). Ana immediately unpacked the category ñreal socialò into two subcategories, ñfamilyò and ñpoor.ò This was further qualified by the adverb *skroz* (totally) which referred to the omitted verb *propasti* (to fall through), used to describe ñthe wider meaning of decay ï of falling apart ï of firms and people becoming ruined and degraded, and left with little of their physical, financial, or emotional and psychic wellbeingò (RajkoviĆ 2015, 71). A real-social like the MiloviĆi family, then, was characterized as having ñtotally fallen throughò because of their lethargy ï neither ñwishing,ò nor ñtryingò to change their situation. So what had happened meanwhile to the MiloviĆi to let them slide so low on the social case continuum?

Paperwork

In early September 2013, after I finally acquired the access to the case files of the CSW, I spent hours scrutinising several files. The file of the MiloviĆi revealed a (common) qualitative upgrading after 2007 and a (specific) quantitative expansion in 2011.

The qualitative changes were part of the regulation of social work which followed the general audit cultureôs intuition of ñgoverning by numbersò (see Shore and Wright 2015). During the testing process of the new rules and regulations in 2007-8, one initiative had been to increase the ñaccountabilityò and ñtransparencyò of social work through new, computer-based documentation procedures. The electronic forms provided elaborate indicators as well as open wording sections for a computer-assisted monitoring system, professional supervision, and inspection. Personal computers and printers had been donated by international organizations. The new procedures were promoted by the Ministry of Work and Social Protection to speed up the administration. Ironically they complicated the paperwork, by detailing how the new rules and regulations had to be followed. Furthermore, the regulations allowed the Director to

legitimate close checking of the paperwork, in collaboration with the newly introduced section leaders and supervisors.[162]

A first material effect of the new computer-assisted documentation was that social workers now spent up to 50 per cent of their work time on paperwork. To be sure, the new electronic forms improved the information value of the individual files, which ñwere formerly rather scantò (*gturi*), as Siniga the psychologist observed when he saw me going through the files of the MiloviÍi ñmore carefully than he read or wroteò them. Then Siniga joked ñsome people like to write, and other people like to work,ò indicating that in his view the real work of a psychologist consisted of interacting with people and counselling them in the field or in his office (I, Siniga, 10.9.2013).[163] As I observed, one way of dealing with the new documentation demands were creative forms of copy, paste and edit. Another was scribbling actuarial accounts in the ófollow up listô (*list praÍenja*) in every free minute, while the wording of a binding ódecisionô (*odluka*) was carefully negotiated in sessions of the case team. Finally, some social workers practiced spontaneous prose, e.g. the former employee of the DRC (known from Chapter Four), who was used to heavier bureaucratic workloads (I, former DRC, 13.9.2013).

In the follow up list of the MiloviÍi I found an intriguing hand written entry from spring 2008 about some newspaper articles in which Rajko MiloviÍ had alleged that his family did not receive help from the government. The social worker had noted: ñThis is not true, because since 2004 they have received material security etc.ò This entry had a prehistory in several relocations of the MiloviÍi in previous years.[164] In 2002, when the MiloviÍi had first turned to the CSW for social support, they had lived in Rajkoôs parentsô house, but the age old semi-wooden construction was falling apart. Some years later a weekend house owner offered them free use of his weekend house at the edge of the forest. However, the MiloviÍi wrecked the place, and in May 2008 they were thrown out. The family camped for days in an orchard in the village centre, provided with blankets and food by neighbours, until they squatted the empty óOld *VoÍar*ôbuilding vis-á-vis the SMZ. While some people (presumably SMZ members) wanted to beat Rajko up and throw them out, he defended himself, and his wife called a journalist to draw public opinion on their side.

[162] Supervisors, section leaders, and the Director formed the lowest managerial echelon invested in the novel formalism. At the scale of the central state, the indicators were monitored by the new Republican Institute for Social Protection (*Republicki zavod za socijalnu zastitu*) (*Glas Centara* 2007, 30ï 4).
[163] Siniga was not unambiguously against the new bureaucratic procedures. For instance, he thought that the detailed sociological data in the new anamnesis form aided him to grasp the socio-psychological transformations.
[164] The information on these relocations was not part of the official documentation, but was gleaned from the driver Bogdan, the MiloviÍi, and the Vice-president of the SMZ of Upper Village.

Newspapers and humanitarian action

Between May and December 2008, at least three newspaper articles written by the same journalist described the plight of the family, how it had to occupy a building in order to have a roof over the head, and so on.[165] The articles contain the social norms that the journalist thought most appealing to the public and to the local state authorities. Although Dejana had invited the journalist, only Rajko was cited, playing on the heteronormative patriarchal motif of the father. All articles contained appeals to the authorities to help the Miloviís to care for their children, which were represented by Rajko Miloviís in the first article titled ñThey dream of bedsò as ñthe future soldiers of this nation.ò The second article, which came out a couple of days later in a different newspaper, said ñMiloviís sleep on the floor,ò while the third, appearing half a year on, read ñLike squirrels.ò

The first two articles initiated a ñhumanitarian actionò (*humanitarna akcija*), a widespread set of practices in Post-Yugoslavia which seek to complement the inadequately financed state health protection. *Humanitarne akcije* have the character of fundraising, and they privatise social security provisioning, a fact ambivalently evaluated by the citizens who would prefer a better functioning welfare state (Brkoviís 2014). By the end of 2008, the family that had initially possessed ñonly a table and three chairsò and some old blankets, had been showered with generous gifts from citizens and from the charity foundation of a former basketball player. In the December article, the Miloviís emphasized that they had neither electricity nor running water to use the new appliances or to let the children ñlearn under well-lit conditions.ò Rajko Miloviís reported that the electioneering Mayor of River City (*predsednik grada*) had told him that connections would be provided if he handed in an application, but that he got no reaction ñas if I had thrown it [the application] into a well.ò

Underneath Rajkoôs complaint, the President of the Parliament of River City (*predsednik skupġtine*) was quoted in a box subtitled ñShame for the local government,ò stating: ñI am not familiar with this problem, but I will do everything so that already next week Miloviís will get electricity and that their children do not live in such inhuman conditions. For, if this would continue like now, that would not be their shame, but the shame of the present government in River City.ò The journalist and Rajko had played the blame game and used the father motif to their advantage, employing a mixture of pro-natalist motives (emphasising the plight of the children), nationalist motives (presenting the children as the future soldiers of the nation), but also humanist motives (asking for decent living conditions, and for educational possibilities for

[165] The articles are in my possession.

the children). In this connection, the actuarial quote from the social workerôs follow up list (see above) can be understood as a defence against Municipal inquiries into the alleged non-support.

However, not all citizens supported the MiloviĆi. In the December article, the journalist, quoting anonymous villagers, wrote: ñónobody forced him to produce so many poor,ô but a much bigger part experiences MiloviĆôs poverty as their personal one.ò The next line continued: ñOne of them is the president of the Local Council [é]: ôMiloviĆi are our neighbours who really live in inhuman conditions. If they do not get electricity soon, I will start an action so that MiloviĆi get electricity from the space of the Local Council, which is 50 metres away from the building into which they moved, and there is also good will that we lay water pipes to him [é].ôò

But the MiloviĆi first connected themselves illegally to the electricity grid in 2009, and only in 2011 did the Local Council provide a ñproperò connection. Immediately, the MiloviĆi accrued debts in the form of unpaid electricity bills, which were settled in 2013 by the Municipality. Besides providing housing (initially involuntarily) and paying the electricity bills (through the Municipality), the SMZ let the MiloviĆi use the sanitary facilities in the SMZ building for a while. In summer 2013 it also organized the containers for the MiloviĆi with the help of the Mayor of River City, who obtained them from a neighbouring Municipality. Simultaneously, and this time on its own account, the SMZ paid the bills for and supervised the construction of the containerôs foundation, free water piping, and electric cables uphill to the MiloviĆi (for more than ú 1000). At the SMZ meeting where this decision was promulgated, the Vice President of the SMZ asked Rajko MiloviĆ to make sure to dig a metre-deep trench for the piping next to his house. Rajko promised not only to dig the trench, but to regale the workers with a crate of beer. The Vice President replied: ñYou donôt have to promise me anything. You do not dig this trench for me, but for yourself, so that the pipes wonôt freeze in winter.ò On the quiet the Vice President told me: ñIf the fool (*budala*) does not dig the trench deep enough, I donôt know him anymoreò (D, SMZ Upper Village, 1.10.2013).

From the point of view of the MiloviĆi, not only the relations between them and the SMZ, but also with some neighbours remained supportive but stormy throughout these years. Conflicts often erupted around seeming banalities. Thus, one day when the pupils from the nearby school grounds had repeatedly shot their football over the fence into his garden, Rajko kept the ball, preventing them from trampling on his plants. An enraged father shouldered his hunting rifle and threatened to kill Rajko and to chase away the MiloviĆ children, who were rumoured to steal chickens and do other mischief. The tumult was immense, and concerned neighbours called the police. The policemen managed to cool down the situation and remarked

to Rajko: ñEven for such like you are there is a place in this state.ò When Dejana and Rajko recounted this anecdote to me, Rajko added: ñLook, I am not some vagrant who happens to come along (*dogljak*), but I was born and raised here. And see how they treat me. These are bad people!ò (I, Dejana and Rajko, 25.10.2010). Not that the SMZ was unhelpful. It had helped a lot, maybe more so than other SMZs would have done in similar cases, as Siniġa the psychologist remarked on several occasions. Nonetheless Rajko was scolded by them as a fool (*budala*) who was not able to maintain his inheritance in a proper ñrural fatherò way (see Chapter Four). Villagers told him frankly: ñWe only help you because of your children.ò The children were not seen as innocent, as the incident with the rifle-brandishing neighbour showed. But their óimproperô deeds were blamed on their ófoolishô parents.

Like the villagers, social workers supported the MiloviĆi mainly because they were concerned about the children. The 2008 incident with the journalist may have tainted the social workersô valuation of the MiloviĆi for a while. However it did not profoundly change the modus of their welfare-state relation, which the psychologist Siniġa summed up as follows: ñ[T]his family was always seen from a perspective of material endangerment ï and they really are materially endangered ï but there was some kind of tolerance with relation to untidiness of the children and a bit worse progress in schoolò (I, Siniġa, 10.9.2013). In 2008 the social workers had summoned and ócounselledô Rajko that he should not lie about the involvement of the CSW. Afterwards Rajko refused to go to the CSW and renew the social aid application, so Dejana overtook this task, and the welfare-state relation was again settled for a while.[166]

However, the child motif soon came up again in the deliberations of the CSW. This time it was decided by the social workers to downgrade their support for the MiloviĆi parents and to concentrate more on the protection of their children.

5.4 Exclusive protection

Preliminary signs of a significant change in the welfare-state relation increased in the latter half of 2010, when MiloviĆ ôs eldest son Ranko began to attend the middle school in Lower Village (like all children from Upper Village in grades five to eight). I knew from the teachers of Upper Village that his younger siblings were smart but did not learn at home, and from the school pedagogue of Lower Village that Ranko had problems with his new peers, who bullied him because of his poor clothing, insecure demeanour, and poor school results. In January 2011 the situation deteriorated and Ranko refused to go to school to avoid the teasing. The school

[166] According to an amendment of the law on social protection in 2005 (Article 11), people deemed able to work received MOP for nine months and had to apply yearly for a renewal of payments (see MWSP 2011, Article 85).

pedagogue in Lower Village had no strong support from the teachersô collective and her director, and asked the CSW to intervene and ensure the legally compulsory education of Ranko. Because of this request, the new section on child and youth protection became involved in the MiloviĆ case for the first time. Siniġa remembered his first thought when seeing the squalid and insanitary living conditions of the family: ñI did not believe it, I said: õWhere has the Centre [for Social Work] been until now?ò (I, Siniġa, 31.8.2013).

Soon, the size of the file quadrupled. The family was put under supervision (*pod nadzor*) and Ranko was told to attend school. The social workers asserted that the children lived ñon the brink of povertyò (*na ivici siromaġtva*), and that there was an ñintensive emotional bondò (*intenzivna emocionalna veza*) to their parents (File MiloviĆ i, follow up sheet, 27.1.2011). Within a couple of weeks, the relations in the family worsened and Siniġa felt an urge to take the children out and give them into foster families. However, the socialist humanist modality of supporting the family prevailed. The professional conflict over which relational modality to choose echoed in the psychologistôs explanation: ñStill, such people, unless they are totally impoverished, of course have a right to have childrenò (I, Siniġa, 13.3.2011).

In April 2011 things came to a head when Dejana left the family after a fight with her husband, and went to live with a brother and sister who had come as refugees from Kosovo. Rajko called the police and said he could not care for his children ï at that moment his very elderly sister was cooking for them. Alarmed, the social workers took the small children to Dejana, while Ranko insisted on staying with his father. Psychologist Siniġa still considered Dejana the much more reasonable parent ï after all, who would not run away from such a husband, he thought? On the other hand, how could she stay so long in the first place? So, Siniġa concluded retrospectively, she must also have some psychological issues (I, Siniġa, 10.9.2013).

The first contacts of the child and youth protection team with the situation of the MiloviĆ i had not merely involved talks to the family. To form a more holistic picture, team members spoke to social worker Ana, to the school pedagogue, to the SMZ clerk, to customers at the nearby village shop, to Bogdan the driver, to the village doctor (who ran an ambulance in the SMZ building), and even to me via Skype. The situational framing was highly ambivalent, and the professionals struggled to pigeonhole the case, with its bewildering array of stories. In contrast to the psychologist from the adult section, who roundly dismissed village gossip as ñtheir storiesò (*to su njihove price*) (I, psychologist, 2.10.2013), Siniġa showed interest in the heterogeneous experiences and worldviews in his surroundings. Yet, village gossip about Rajkoôs mother slaying his father with an axe when Rajko was a child, about Rajko clubbing a former communist killer who had not paid his day labour, or about Rajkoôs family descending

from an elfin, were received with a healthy dose of disbelief. Siniġa conceded that Rajko had had a difficult childhood with effects on his behaviour today, but in the present situation he should have struggled to get the children out of trouble (*da ih izvuļe*). Conversely, allegations that the children stole chickens in the village were interpreted by Siniġa as their moral economic right to feed themselves (I, Siniġa, 10.9.2013). The gossip was neither noted down in the documentation nor seriously followed up: ñAfter all, we are not the police,ò Siniġa used to say, indicating his relatively tolerant and non-punitive approach towards diverse life scripts (e.g. I, Siniġa, 28.8.2009).

With hindsight, Siniġa identified two strands of his thinking about the family system of the MiloviĆi. On the one hand, he had been ñmaybe too optimisticò when he was looking for ñcapacities in Dejana as motherò to take better care of the children. Her promises that the place would be renovated, for instance, never materialized.[167] Siniġaôs view of Dejanaôs maternal care was also shaded by her endurance in a complicated partnership ï he evaluated Dejanaôs running away from her family in April 2011 as an indicator of an abusive relationship. However, Rajko had turned the tables and alleged that Dejanaôs new partner threatened the children, which Dejana was unable to prevent. Meanwhile, Siniġa lost faith in the fatherly qualities of Rajko, as the social workers ñdiscoveredò his alcohol problem. Siniġa explained to me:

> The family was followed up in accordance with the plan for protection of children and as we went along we saw that problem of alcoholism, of which we did not know. Because in principle everybody there drinks a little ï you know yourself that in the village everybody drinks a bit ï but Rajko really likes to drink, which directed us towards the plan to remove the children. So that a couple of months before the removal we knew in which direction the things would go, because we saw that there were no healthy resources, but we tried that it would be as little stressful for the children and that somehow the parents also accept that. This means we waited for a favourable situation, well the children were not life threatened so an urgent removal was not necessary, but we waited for a moment so that we could proclaim an urgent removal (I, Siniġa, 10.9.2013).

In the quote we see an initial professional tolerance by the psychologist of the behaviour of Rajko MiloviĆ. But, the limited potential for male bonding across social classes and the rural/urban divide was finally shattered when the ñalcohol verdictò was made. The issue of alcohol abuse led to a deterioration of the value of the welfare-state relation in the eyes of the youth protection team (compare Peroôs struggle against losing moral ground in Chapter Four).[168] This paved the way for the over-implementation of the new law.

[167] The child and youth team planned to help the parents in renovating the house. It also collected new clothes for the children and made sure that the administrative section slightly increased the MOP to 13,000 dinar (ú 120).
[168] Had the priorities remained to support the family like in the Yugoslav street work approach, social workers might have advised Rajko to undergo alcohol treatment and attend CSW family counselling with Dejana.

Over-implementing the law

The youth team concentrated on its core mandate of protecting the children by planning to proclaim ñurgent removalò when ñthe children were not life threatened so an urgent removal was not necessaryò (see above). They only waited for a ñfavourable situationò so that the children were not traumatised and became negatively predisposed to their foster parents (I, Siniga, 10.9.2013). Similar to the under-implementation of the law discussed as inclusive distribution above, the newly emerging over-implementing of the law was related to humanist ideals ï to protect the interests of the child (here excluding the interests of the parents). The street-level bureaucratic action again translated the recent transformations of the law, which I discuss below as the lawôs reduced aims, its top-down deliberation, enhanced material support, and stricter supervision.

First, the new law on social protection was much more detailed than its predecessor.[169] However, its goals were curtailed, symbolised by dropping the subtitle: ñprovision of social security of the citizens.ò Furthermore, the introductory paragraph (Article 2) erased references to social needs, humanism, and the respect of human dignity. Instead, it emphasized autonomy and work as pathways out of social exclusion. Second, the consultation process was criticised because street-level bureaucrats and self-organised researchers had been pressured to accept ministerial decrees and university expertise. The perceived interests of the CSW, i.e. to obtain more resources and employees, have reduced documentation demands, and to transfer MOP to another institution, were ignored (I, sociologist, 13.9.2013).[170] Third, the social workers accepted the law because it incorporated the regulations of 2008, and somewhat enhanced the scope to materially help the poor. The decade-long discretionary pushing by social workers for more social aid had materially condensed in, for instance, the increased number of family members used for tabulating MOP. Now six family members instead of five were calculated, which increased the aid to the Miloviĺi (MWSP 2011, Article 88; see MWSP 2001, Article 11).[171] However, increased support was coupled with stricter ñsupervisionò and ñcounselling conversationsò (*savetodavni razgovori*) with the users of the CSW. The law provided new tools to remove children threatened by ñneglectò (*zanemarivanje*) and to organise foster care by a

[169] The 1991 law on social protection (in the version of 2001) contained 131 articles and 37 pages (see MRSP 2001), while the new law of 2011 was expanded to 230 articles on 80 pages (see MRSP 2011).
[170] The negotiation process remained opaque from the bottom up perspective. The social policy researcher (and former consultant) Paul Stubbs recently described the blurred ñboundaries between óinternationalô and ódomesticô actors, creating a hybrid and flexible óintermesticô sphere [é]. Interpreters, intermediaries and óflex actors,ô skilled at blurring roles and juggling representations [é], often offering their expertise across a range of unstable institutional sites and settings, hold particular power in translation in this contextò (Stubbs 2015, 72).
[171] Furthermore, the MOP eligibility limit in land was enlarged from 0.5 ha to 1 ha (MRSP 2011, Article 82).

new regional ñCentre for family placement and adoptionò (*Centar za porodiľni smeġtaj i usvojenje*) (I, Siniġa, 10.9.2013).

So what happened with the plans for ñurgent removalò? In line with the increased tolerance towards parenting styles, and the expanded, but untried legal authority to remove the children, it took almost seven months to reach a decision. The prolonged deliberations highlighted the constraints and possibilities of team work and the relational complexity of even a small local state institution like the CSW. The senior lawyer of the CSW, who was instructing the team on how to deal with the case, warned against suing the MiloviĹi for negligence, as it could cost the CSW a lot of money if the case was lost. She argued that the police should sue, which did not come forward. Siniġa, who had switched to the new relational modality of exclusive protection earlier than the others, highlighted the relational aspect, too:

> The former social worker [who was at this moment the team leader] was there, and I as a psychologist. When the professional [lawyer] who has worked in this job for 30 years says that we do not sue, it is a bit rookie-like (*debutanski*) to lecture somebody who I cooperate with about whether we should sue or not (I, Siniġa, 10.9.2013).

Siniġa was arguably also restrained in pushing the new relational modality of exclusive protection by the temporality of his contract. The flexibilisation of the social work profession enhanced the period of juniority of younger colleagues like Siniġa, and coerced them to conform to their senior colleaguesô caution and higher inclusionary tolerance.

Finally, in July 2011 the decision for removal was taken by the legal team and signed by the director after a foster family willing to take three to four children had been prepared. The social workers swiftly put the small children, who were by now between five and ten years old, under temporary guardianship. Ranko, who was 12 years old at that moment, ran away. ñOf course I could not keep him against his will,ò Siniġa explained (I, Siniġa, 4.5.2012).[172] In 2012, Ranko visited his siblings in their new foster family and slept there, but he returned to Upper Village and continued living with his father and mother. In 2013, ñasocial behaviourò crept up as a motive in the MiloviĹi files, but other than one might expect, it was not attributed to Rajko. Rather, the latter repeatedly complained at the school that his son abused alcohol and physically threatened his parents. These allegations seemed rather unlikely to the school pedagogue, given Rankoôs introvert character. Nonetheless, the CSW was involved again. In September 2013 psychologist Siniġa matter-of-factly characterized Ranko as ñfor us a closed storyò (*za nas zatvorena priľa*). He ñchose his freedom,ò Siniġa said, and explained that Ranko was by now too old for fosterage, and as long as he did nothing criminal he would not be put in a childrenôs home, from which in all likelihood he would run anyway. Meanwhile, Rankoôs siblings were

[172] The MOP of the MiloviĹi was now reduced, reflecting the decrease from six members to three.

well adapted in their new foster family, had solid results in school, and ñsaw the sea for the first time,ò when they went with their new foster family on summer holiday (I, Siniġa, 10.9.2013).

Elder social workers like Dunja expressed a genuine shock about the decision to remove the children. Dunja connected the removal to the looming degradation of her profession. ñHave we come so low to estrange children from their parents because they are impoverished,ò she asked? Dunjaôs intervention showed that the new focus on the exclusive protection of the children in foster families, even when it offered a safe environment and better school results, was not uncontested. Many social workers, especially older ones, remained attached to the relational modality of inclusive distribution that saw the child as best protected within the family as long as it was financially protected and supported (or supervised) in its capacities by the CSW. Others, like the Director, had long complained about the trend to disinvest from systemic solutions like proper childrenôs homes, thereby leaving the family (both parents and foster parents) the burden to care for children. Siniġa did not present the dealings of the CSW in the Miloviĺ i case as a full success story, either. Indirectly, he criticized the scarce (and diminishing) street work resources of the CSW, when he argued:

> What we need to bear in mind is that there was not always such a situation. They [Miloviĺ i] indeed were always problematic. But apparently with the years, as a result of their increasing alcohol abuse and ageing processes, the behaviour of the parents grew worse and increasingly dangerous [for the children and themselves]. It means they [the responsible local state relations] did not identify their asocial behaviour which became worse and worse and more imperillingò (I, Siniġa, 10.9.2013).

Conclusion: Relational modalities ï inclusive distribution vs. exclusive protection

During the 1990s and 2000s, a local social policy emerged out of interactive practices within the triple dialectic of the large-scale state and societal transformations, mediated by the local Centre for Social Work. Each moment of the triad influenced the other two, opening up the possibility for change in the always-emerging local state Relation. In this context, the relationships between the users and the CSW were characterised by the tension between field work and office based counselling on the one hand and bureaucratic demands of paper work and recent computer assisted governing by indices on the other hand. Social work professionals could choose to work for, alongside, or against these professional and bureaucratic norms. On top of this, the self-will of the users was sometimes at odds with the bureaucratic-professional struggles, and created additional moments of chaotic creativity. The outcome was at times the under-implementing, and at others the over-implementing of national laws and regulations. Out of these muddled struggles emerged two relatively stable relational modalities of social workersô interactions with their users: inclusive distribution and exclusive protection.

In the early 2000s, the street-level bureaucratôs dilemma veered towards a near-consensus of inclusive distribution. This relational modality operated on the principle that the social workers offered material help to impoverished families, giving them the benefit of the doubt regarding eligibility. Inclusive distribution drew on the humanist aspirations of the law of 1991 to ensure the best-possible support for impoverished families in times of politico-economic and social transformation. Socialist humanism had merged with the professional under-implementation of bureaucratic red tape. The main social proponents of this relational modality were the late-socialist generation of high-school educated social workers. Yet, as their policy lacked financial means and political support e.g. from the Director, social workers needed to select beneficiaries carefully, tending to exclude potential users like refugees or people hesitant to ask for support.

The second relational modality of social work ï exclusive protection ï gained strength a decade later, around 2011. This local policy consisted of the close attention to the individual needs of the child, with the trend to quickly remove a child from parents who did not seem to have the capacity to care properly. A more liberal humanist professionalism merged with the over-implementation of new exclusionary legal norms. The social proponents tended to be the next, post-socialist generation of professionals who had studied at university. Although sympathetic to the socialist humanist ideals of their senior colleagues, the new cohort believed in helping individuals, not collectives. It is too early to tell if this policy will establish a local consensus.

What united both relational modalities was that they charted a professional interpretation of the law on social protection. Thus, the inclusive distribution interpreted the law of 1991ôs underlying humanist idea of cushioning the transformation to capitalism in the interest of the family. In the wake of exclusionary legal change in the 2000s, inclusive distribution was maintained by under-implementing the law. The post-socialist generation, turning away from the family, focused more on the individual child. Over-implementing the new exclusionary tools (proclaiming an ñurgent situationò), this generation acted on the liberal humanist spirit of the law of 2011. In the moment when the professionals put the children of the Miloviĺ family into foster care, Duġan Lakiĺeviĺ was proved right that in capitalist class society, humanism can only be partial.

In the final empirical chapter I turn from the family-child bond to the ñproblemò of the ageing society. I will follow the innovations that the framing of the elderly-question held in Creek Town for the CSWôs social workers and elder carers, and the urban elderly and their families.

6. Senior home care in Creek Town

> [C]are work, by its nature, is relational and entails responsibilities among actors in these relationships. Because these relationships are both structured by, made possible through, and shaped by their political, social and economic contexts, a thorough accounting of these relationships requires a *political* process that is as broad as are the relationships themselves (Tronto 2011, 163, emphasis in original).

August 2011 was one of the hottest months that the inhabitants of Creek Town remembered. For weeks the thermometer had not fallen below 30 degrees Celsius at night, and the corn fields in the rolling hills around town were completely dry. At 8.30 am, on 30 August 2011, elder-caregiver Ljilja (b. 1971) stepped from the darkened flat of Veljo (b. 1934) into the heat to visit Veljoôs wife Maja (b. 1931) in the General Hospital. Eight days earlier, Maja had taken the same route, lying under an oxygen mask in an ambulance. Her asthmatic attacks had been so strong in the night of 22 August that she had not dared to lie in bed for fear of asphyxiation. Nonetheless Maja had not wanted to cause inconvenience and told Veljo: ñLeave me alone with that emergency service. Donôt you call again, I beg you é Whenever I get short of breath you just call the emergency service!ò Around 2.30 am Veljo had sneaked to the hallway and grabbed the receiver. When the doctor arrived she scolded Maja: ñWhatôs wrong with you woman? Donôt you see you are suffocating?ò

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After a 10 min walk downhill Ljilja arrived at the modern entrance to the hospital. She passed through the hallway and crossed the small yard to the classicist old building dating from 1925. Passing the surgery, the childrenôs ward, and the emergency service she ascended to the ward for internal medicine. As soon as the ward round had passed, Maja and Ljilja began to chat:

Ljilja: So you have picked yourself up again?
Maja: Yes, it is not asphyxiating me anymore. The way it went it was fine, but we will see how long é
Ljilja: Veljo didnôt have a cookie for Darko [their great-grandson, a toddler]. So Veljo had a good cry, says to me: ôLjilja, I donôt know your number [to call you] so that you buy me cookiesô
Maja: Whose telephone number?
Ljilja: Mine.
Maja: Well ok he is not in contact with that, I was here and that is why he is left on his own. This morning he says to that woman who is maintaining the medical record: ôI donôt know nothing about that.ô
Ljilja: Ah, he was already here?

In the morning Veljo had not mentioned to Ljilja that he had seen his wife. Yet, he had complained about his exertions in grandfatherly care, when he had forgotten to get biscuits for the great-grandchild, a task which he would have liked to transfer to a woman. Veljo had also informed Ljilja that they had to wait for a final doctoral check at noon before the grandchildren could drive Maja home.[173]

Following some gossip about common acquaintances, Ljilja asked Maja what she could carry home for her. Maja pointed to the pillow that she ñhad already washed.ò At that moment an elderly man, a fellow patient who visited Majaôs roommate, interjected:

Patient:	If you knew how tough this grandmother (*baka*) isé
Ljilja	[talking of Maja]: Eh, my old fellow (*E moja stara*), I know her already for many years. She is not even what she once used to be, addled a bit (*ljalabrcnula*).
Patient:	The years would also pass her by if she werenôt that way.
Ljilja:	There you are right.

Ljilja always spoke very fondly with and about Maja. She highly respected how Maja, a strong asthmatic since the 1970s, and with a worsening medical record since then, took care of herself, her family, and her neighbourhood. Recently though, Ljilja had been worrying about Majaôs critical state and failing memory. In fact, towards the end of the sick visit Maja told Ljilja that she had forgotten to take her medication today, and asked Ljilja to inform Veljo about it. A year earlier Maja had still handled her own medication and Veljoôs too, Ljilja remembered sadly, as she left the hospital to visit another of her care receivers.

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In this chapter I analyse the strategic selectivity of local state organised old-peopleôs care in domestic spaces. For that purpose I follow the case study of carer Ljiljaôs care network in Creek Town, an urban settlement to the north of River City. As the vignette indicates, Ljiljaôs care relations extended beyond the elder covered by the formal care contract and included their families. In Majaôs case relations spread to her relatively fit husband Veljo, and down the filial line to their grandsonôs family living in the basement of their house.

Local state programmes of home care for the elderly were relatively recent innovations in central Serbia. Creek Town had started a Public Works project in 2008 that encompassed 50 users. In 2009, as a result of the skilled argumentation of the social workers, care for the elderly was put on the Municipal budget. In the programme the old people received considerable aid, initially with little effort. As the quote in the epigraph by Joan Tronto suggests, home care was

[173] Maja had lost both legs 10 years previously because of diabetic gangrene and could not go uphill in her wheel chair.

a political project: care receivers, care-givers, and social work professionals collaborated in producing this emerging local state Relation. Care did not flow one way. Rather, all four ñmoral qualities of careò ï caring about, caring for, caregiving and care receiving (Tronto 2011, 165) flowed, to a greater or lesser extent, between the parties. What makes these care practices particularly interesting is how several state institutions ï the CSW, the Health, and tentatively a voluntary centre ï were incorporated in a new network of state care.

However, most senior citizens interpreted the emerging caring-state-relations as ñnot quite stateò but rather ñkin-likeò exchanges. While in material practice the state and kin spheres were intimately and inseparably intertwined, hegemonic discourse posited strong boundaries between the ñgood familyò and the ñbad state.ò To find out the strategic selectivity that encouraged the dichotomy, I take inspiration from Nikos Poulantzasô (2000) insight that the (capitalist) state is the material condensation of the relationship of forces. Timothy Mitchell (1991, 90) has argued that an actor which appears to ñlie outside the formal political system, thereby disguising its role in [é] politics,ò may gain ñits strength as part of a larger political order.ò So what political strength could kin gain from denying state involvement?

In Serbia, as in contemporary India ñmuch ambivalence surrounds the project of state-backed old age security [é], both morally and economicallyò (Lamb 2013, 74). In the semi-peripheral state Serbia, international development interventions aimed at downsizing the state while enhancing its capacity, promising to catch up thereby with an imagined West (BlagojeviĆ 2009). In this context, when attempting to secure long-term local state financing the social workers needed to cover up the state aspect and emphasise the family-like nature of new state care services for the elderly. Fascinatingly, the old also interpreted their positive care experiences as family-like and used kin terminology to name the resulting relations. Conversely, they tended to blame negative experiences on the absent, uncaring state. Tatjana Thelen, Dugka Roth, and I have interpreted these processes as ñ ókinningôthe stateò (Thelen, Thiemann, and Roth 2014).[174] For the elderly, in the light of the hegemonic state-society divide, it was important not to appear to have been ñreducedò to depending on the state, which implied having been let down by their families who had neglected them to the point of isolation. In that situation the elderly people sought to make the state agents into kin in terms of still having a good family, even if it was provided (or enlarged) by the state.

The resulting bonding through ókinning the stateô made some care relations last beyond death. In the conclusion to our joint article, we wrote that it ñwould be interesting to follow up on these elder care programs to see whether and how the contradictions may be resolved in the

[174] The term ókinningô was used by Signe Howell (2006) in the context of transnational child adoption.

long run and what that would mean for the dominant image of the absent stateò (Thelen, Thiemann, and Roth 2014, 120). We had covered care in Creek Town between 2008 and 2010, and here I follow up by adding material from my fieldwork between 2011 and 2013. While we had closely analysed the relations of Ljilja with the family of one household (Milica and Dugans), I here compare Ljiljaôs relations with two families: on the one hand Maja and Veljoôs, on the other hand Marijaôs. Finally, I focus newly on the interface type III relationship of the social workers supervising and instructing the care givers.

While the discursive contradictions between the caring family and the absent state have not yet been resolved, I present three new findings. First, I differentiate between processes where kinning dried up after death and those where it went beyond. Succinctly put, kinning congealed on death when the care practices included only one or two strong caring ties of mutual learning and affection. Kinning was likely to continue if multiplex ties of cooperation with several close, intimate, and familial relations of the elderly had been established during their lifetime. Second, the emerging care programme for the elderly was both similar to its Scandinavian inspiration in its practices of flexible time-space tinkering (see Lutz 2013), and different in its refusal to plan time-compartmentalisation according to New Public Management (NPM) ideas. Third, the expansion of the local caring state relation remained fragile because of the weak financial and political support from the central state, affected by bouts of austerity negotiated with the IMF. However, the local state actors also generated their ñwill to improveò the programme out of the strategic-selective setbacks to their endeavours.

I proceed in four steps. First, I present the intertwined discourses on the family, ageing, and elder care that informed the service. Second, I introduce the social workersô ideas about home care for the elderly. They looked to Scandinavian role models for inspiration, which they combined with local concepts of care by neighbours and social children, emphasising the importance of coffee-friendship rituals. Third, I present the biography of caregiver Ljilja and follow her strong care relationship with Maja and Veljo, which, unexpectedly broke down when Maja died. In contrast, Ljiljaôs multiplex relations to Marija and her daughters will likely continue beyond death. Fourth, I discuss Ljiljaôs ideas of improving senior care according to individual needs. Her ideas partly tallied with social worker Zoranaôs interest in upgrading the collaborative aspects of the programme. What intrigues me overall is the cooperative shaping of these new Local State relations of care.

6.1 Kin norms and the ageing society

According to classic local kinship discourse, the question of the elderly concerned the whole family. Social scientists of the Balkan region have identified extended household structures well into the 20th century. Since the early 19th century, ñ*zadruga*ò has been the semi-orientalist term for a patrilocal, patrilateral extended household of married brothers and their offspring.[175] Other folk terms for extended households abounded: ñ*kuĺa* (house), *domaĺinstvo* (household), and *ļeljad* (household or members). *Zadruga* [é] was first imposed by historians, ethnographers and folklorists, but was later adopted by the peasants themselvesò (Rasson, Stevanoviĺ, and Iliĺ 1999, 181).

Maja and Veljo, as we know from the entry vignette, lived close to several junior generations of their family, but physical proximity did not always map to social closeness. Especially their son, a truck driver who lived with his wife in the yard, seldom found time to talk with his parents, even when he was at home. ñThey are in strange relations [*oni su u ļudnim odnosima*],ò Ljilja thought. Veljo himself used to be a womaniser and had been constantly out of the house, leaving Maja to raise the children virtually alone. He had only lately become more caring, Ljilja told me secretly. In this respect, Maja and Veljoôs household was not untypical because married family life was seen as desirable and the norm, even if relations were far from ideal (Gudac Dodiĺ 2010, 113). Furthermore, the surrounding households of the junior generations had relied until recently on Majaôs family care work ï she had therefore lived up to the normative expectations since the 1970s:

> A grandmother could make a significant contribution to the family by providing childcare, which was costly and hard to find. Also, she had company. ôThere is an especially warm relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, with much kissing, stroking, and verbal manifestation of affection [é]ô (Halpern and Halpern 1972, 89 in Rasson, Stevanoviĺ, and Iliĺ 1999, 194).

Veljo tried to act on the customary ñgreat-grandfathering,ò too. Yet, without the support of his wife he sometimes forgot to obtain the obligatory treats for the children. By 2011 he also worked hard to assume a caring role for Maja, as the phoning of the emergency medical service against her wish indicates. Nonetheless he experienced unknown difficulties as a caregiver, as he confessed to the medical sister (ñI donôt know anything about that [medication]ò).

The above represented practices were supported by the prevalent self-image of Serbian families as involving intensive three generational bonds. Children and parents alike believed or at least made believe in intergenerational family care as a ñdeferred exchange strategyò (cf.

[175] For a summary of the protracted debate on *zadruga*, see Brunnbauer (2012). The Yugoslav socialists had later appropriated the term to denote diverse types of cooperatives.

Hollstein 2005, 194). When the ideals of reciprocal kin care could not be lived up to, one possibility was denial of the dissonance. Such denial could reach the point that ñoutsidersò like caregiver Ljilja found the family of Maja and Veljo relatively reserved and uncooperative.

Another option was offered by the new discourses on the problem of the ageing population and the inadequate medical system. Representing ageing as a societal, not merely a family problem made it possible to voice concern about, yet stop short of questioning, the value of kin care.

Ageing as crisis

During my fieldwork, public discourse on the demographic ageing of the population was typically linked to ideas about a general impoverishment of Serbian society, with apocalyptic undertones presaging the doom of the nation. This was a post-socialist development. During socialism, the percentage of people below 20 had fallen slightly from 38.47 per cent (in 1948) to 34.40 per cent (in 1981). At the same time the share of people aged 60 and above had very moderately risen from 10.03 per cent in 1948 to 11.03 per cent in 1981, while the general life expectancy rose from 50 to 70 years. Professor of Social Work Duġan LakiĆeviĆ had evaluated these demographics as a manageable challenge for social policy:

> These data show that the population of Yugoslavia ages, but in comparison to other European countries our age structure is favourable. [...] The rise of the absolute and relative number of the elder is of special importance for social policy, because it elicits heightened needs for societal activities concerning their protection, especially taking into account the reduction of the social-protective function of the family. By the way we talk about a *world process*, needs, and activities (LakiĆeviĆ 1991, 347, emphasis mine).

However, post-Yugoslav nationalist circles interpreted the continuing demographic trends of the ñreduction of the social-protective function of the familyò very differently. First of all, the challenge was stood on its head and the lack of care by parents and grandparents for children emphasised. Nationalists called the perceived threat to the body politic the ñwhite plagueò (*bela kuga*).[176] The term referenced a ñperceived epidemic of low birth rates,ò which ñhas long been a prominent theme in the Serbian media, promoted mainly by conservative nationalist politicians and their clerical and academic alliesò (Jansen and Helms 2009, 222). Since the late 1980s ñnational-moral education, a return to family values and the overhaul of reproductive and welfare policiesò have been suggested as remedies (ibid, 223).

[176] The term ñwhite plagueò is derived from the ñblackò plague: ñ[A] feminine force in the languages of the region, the plague or óblack deathô was seen to take especially greedy pleasure in taking away children. óWhiteô likely refers to the void left in their absenceò (Jansen and Helms 2009, 222).

Since the 1990s, Serbian society has been customarily divided into a Nationalist camp, and a liberal, civic ñOther Serbiaò (*Druga Srbija*, also translatable as ñSecond Serbiaò) (see NaumoviÍ 2009). In practice, the dichotomy of the two Serbias did not hold. Protagonists from both camps shared many basic assumptions. Thus, war veterans (read: Nationalist Serbia) and NGO workers (Other Serbia) shared ñthe conceptual and material reliance on the state as the one key similarity [é]. Even though their specific state projects were different, and even though they saw the state as consistently failing their expectations, both groups continued to look up to it to resolve the crisisò (Mikuġ and DokiÍ 2015, 17).

According to Mikuġ and DokiÍ, the crisis-narratives of veterans harked back to the lost model of socialist Yugoslavia, and those of NGO workers to the frustrated liberal-revolutionary hopes following the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran ņ inLiÍ in 2003. Yet the nationalist remedy to the perceived demographic crisis lay, as we saw, not in a return to socialist humanist values but in their denial, advocating a return to natalism. At the same time the Other Serbia groped towards a stance on elder care similar to socialist humanism. This becomes evident in a contribution of the liberal media channel B92:[177] ñBecause of the absence of proper health care, a large number of old people live a hard life. This is not only the case in Belgrade and Serbia. It is like this *in the whole world*ò (B92 2009, my emphasis). In these lines the post-socialist depravation of the elderly was described not so much as a national phenomenon, but as universal, very much like in the quotation by LakiÍ eviÍ above. Three discursive elements were important in this statement: first, it premised deficiencies of the health system (see Chapter Two). Second, it evoked an alarmist discourse on the ageing of the population ï a mirror-image of the nationalists who posited a fertility crisis. Third, while during the 1970s Serbian journalists might have proudly surmised the world could learn from them, their post-socialist counterparts had lost faith in their own vanguardism and understood that ótheô Healthôshould be reformed in line with ñworldò (read: Western) experience in elder care.

Similarly, while senior social workers leaned towards socialist humanist values (see Chapter Five), they responded to the óproblemôof the elderly with recourse to Scandinavian models. At the same time they translated these models through the lens of local forms of neighbourly and ósocial childrenôsôhelp.

[177] B92 had started in the early 1990s as a rebellious underground station (Collin 2004). In 2011 it still had a reputation of belonging to the ñcivicò Other Serbia (Mikuġ 2013, 133).

Neighbours and social grandchildren

In the 1980s, several late socialist welfare systems began to professionally organise old age care homes (for the Czech Republic, see Read 2007). Serbia hardly followed this trend. Since 1991 the ratio of people over 65 in Serbia had stayed above 1.2 million, or 16.0 per cent of the population (16.6 % in 2002, 17.3 % in 2011) (RZS 2014, 37). However, in 1998 there were only 32 homes for institutional care (Budurin 1998, 312). This number rose to 78 by 2011, which was still not enough to meet demand.[178] Support by non-biological relations like neighbours and social children often played the key role in old-peopleôs care.

Anthropologists of kin politics have long questioned ñcommon Euro-American ideas about kinship, according to which only the biological parents are the órealô, ónaturalô or good parents, whereas other forms of parenthood through adoption or fostering are viewed as precarious solutions in crisis situations, with somewhat ódeviantô connotationsò (Alber 2003, 488). They argued that fostering children could often have positive, normative outcomes both for the children and for the elderly social parents (cf. Donner 1987; Bledsoe and Isiugo-Abanihe 1989). However, the extent to which grand-parenting could effectively activate ñrearing reciprocitiesò (E. Goody 1975) remained to be seen.

Zorana (b. 1965), a dedicated social worker and a driving force behind ñHelp at Home for the Elderlyò explained how she was inspired by the customary neighbourly relations of help when pushing for a care at home service:

> These good neighbourly relations are also some sort of óhelp at home,ô when the neighbour helps in the field, to prepare a *slava*, calving, well, collecting plums, i.e. any specific kind of work é Today it is only differently thought out [é]: it is known who comes, when, how long the person stays, and approximately what sort of work will be accomplished. And on the other hand there are people who need somebody to ópen their doors.ô Because when we are diseased and are not active we withdraw inwardly [é] and have our own world (tI, Zorana, 23.5.2012).

This neighbourly support, especially the ñopening of the doorsò of inactive or old people, was sometimes practiced by what might best be termed social grandchildren. I met one social grandchild when I accompanied Zoranaôs colleague, the special pedagogue Goca (b. 1981), on the hunt for potential elder care receivers in a village near Creek Town:

> We entered a tended courtyard with restored traditional wooden houses and full of flowers. A young woman who lived in Belgrade most of the year opened the door. She had just visited the owner, an old unmarried lady, who was her former family neighbour and with whom she had practically grown up. Every year she came several times to look after (*gledati*) the lady, who could not hear well and was weakened from a stroke. Recently, the old lady had also developed a cyst in the brain. Yet there was no exact diagnosis, she only complained that she felt drowsy. The social grandchild began to read the contract of care

[178] Data by the MWSP (http://www.minrzs.gov.rs/cms/yu/adresar), accessed 10.10.2011. Regionally, in River City two private old peopleôs homes have been built since 2011, but Creek Town had none as of 2013.

> for the elderly. She had not heard of the project but had seen the informational letter from the CSW on the cupboard. Goca explained: ó*The gerontodomaćica* is not a domestic worker, but the óright handô of the older person.ô The social grandchild thought it was a good initiative and it was agreed that the carer should come on Tuesdays and Thursdays (D, 10.8.2009).

As this excerpt from my field diary shows, some social work professionals and social grandchildren experienced the posited elder care crisis as an accurate depiction and collaborated in devising state care arrangements in order to alleviate the situation in their social environment.

6.2 The CSW and ó*Help at Home*ô

The folk belief that ñthe crisisò had ñarrivedò in Serbia developed over time. In 2009 people had still rejected the idea with grim sarcasm: ñWhat crisis? We have been in crisis for 20 years!ò However, the discourse changed, as I learned when I visited the small CSW of Creek Town in 2011, and Zorana invited me and her colleagues to her office for some coffee and sweets. When I casually asked how they evaluated the present situation, the psychologist stated: ñThe crisis has been here for years now. Our state is not as indebted as Greece, we will not totally fall apart, but it wonôt get better.ò The supervisor (who also wrote the yearly reports) added: ñWe are getting closer and closer to those [social cases], as it is said [pause]. The middle class (*srednji sloj*) is closer to poverty than to normalityò (D, CSW, 29.8.2011).

The CSW, founded in 1972, was situated outside Creek Townôs city centre in a two storey house of 230 m². 70 per cent of funding was provided by the MWSP, the rest came from the Municipality (CSW 2008a). There were 14 permanent workers, so the complexity of organizational life of a CSW that I represented in Chapter Five rested here on half as many shoulders. Of nine social work professionals, six were trained social workers (like Zorana), plus one pedagogue, one psychologist, and special pedagogue Goca. There were also two lawyers and three maintenance and administrative personnel. When going to the field, the professionals tended to be driven by social worker Lazo, as most did not have a driving licence and there was no official driver.[179] In 2008, in theory, the óservice for social and family rights protectionô had been divided into two óprofessional teams,ô one for the óprotection of children and youth,ô the other for the óprotection of adults and elderly personsô (CSW 2008b). Yet this was ruled impractical because of the small number of staff and the division was adhered to only formally, as social worker Zorana, by now the part time *trijaģer* (case admitter) and part time case worker, explained (D, Zorana, 10.2.2010).[180] Zorana, the dedicated social worker who loved to invite

[179] Lazo was unhappy with this de-professionalization and needed to shift his professional work into the afternoon, often staying at the CSW after working hours to get things done.
[180] In the CSW Creek Town, one position for a professional allotted by the MWSP remained vacant.

her colleagues to socialise (*druđiti se*) over a cup of coffee Turkish style (*domaće u kafu*), explained the rationale of the ócoffee-socialisingô as follows:

> It is probably a fact that this economic crisis has alienated us from each other a bit, but also the way we live has influenced how we start to behave differently and have other kind of relationships [*odnose*]. For those good family relationships we simply have to thank our parents [é]. Today it is a question whether that solidarity exists at all, the way it existed then. [é] Here it was a time-honoured custom, letôs say in the morning because my mother [b. 1944] started to work late, that you drank coffee, at one neighbour, a second, a third and a fourth. They were more friends [*oni su se više druđili*] than today, and that habituation is what we donôt have. That was for me really, you know, good that way, because it allowed people to discharge some inner problems, to exchange experiences and decisions, and to more easily come out on top of a problem of a tougher kind, when it appeared (tI, Zorana, 23.5.2012).

Referencing an imagined better past that she linked ï through her motherôs neighbourly coffee rounds ï to socialism, Zorana today assembled the staff of the CSW into the coffee group in the little office she shared with Goca. As I learned, special pedagogue Goca was paid by the municipality to lead the urban and rural elder care programmes which Zorana had initiated.

Zoranaôs life experience influenced her interests in developing this new service. She had been born and bred in Creek Town, where she raised two sons as a single parent. When her children were big enough to leave for university, she increasingly cared for her mother, who had dementia. Her parents had belonged to ñthe middle class,ò she said, in the sense that the family went to the seaside every year when she was a child and her mother only started working when Zorana was 17 years old (and her brother 15). Their father worked as a supervisor at a big retail and wholesale trade company. When Zorana studied social work in the Higher Education College in Belgrade between 1983-5, her parents rented a single room for her, a luxury many of her fellow students from the dormitories could not afford. Her fatherôs firm also paid her stipend (a practice discontinued when her brother studied agronomy four years later). In 1986 Zorana returned to Creek Town and began to work for the youth job exchange (*omladinska*). One of her first jobs was a four month contract with the CSW, and it ignited her interest in care for the elderly:

> [M]y work was an investigation of the citizens above age 35 to find out if they were interested in placement in an institution of social protection, more precisely a gerontological centre that was planned in Creek Town. However it was not built, and the situation has stayed like that until today. From the questionnaire we could see that the older people were not interested, but the younger ones had already thought about that option and were interested. Many people decide today for such an accommodation. Those prejudices of the type ôWhy go there if I have children?ô, ôWhy if I have a house?ô, today the mind-set is different and the people understand now that this doesnôt mean something worse for them, but something better. [é] We didnôt make it to the rural area, a couple of villages were finished and then the survey was interrupted because there was no more money [é] (tI, Zorana, 23.5.2012).

After that short stint at the CSW, Zorana worked for almost sixteen years in several positions in the trading company where her father was employed. After a while she began to work there in social work professions, as a human resources officer (*kadrovski referent*) and as a social worker. In February 2004 Zorana replaced a social worker in the CSW who moved to another municipality. She thought that the amount of work had increased since 2004, because there was a rising rate of ñdepressionò in the population today (which she linked to changes in economic and social structures, as indicated in her explanation of the coffee-ritual above). Depression brought with it all kinds of diseases, Zorana thought. With the former Director of the CSW (until 2008) she had hoped to counter such depression by recreating supportive social relations, e.g. for those elderly ñthat were not for accommodation in an institutionò through a care at home programme.

In contrast to her survey in 1987, Zorana undertook no ñreal studyò to prepare the project in 2007. Instead, the social workers asked their users whether they were interested in participating. While special pedagogue Goca ran the project, Zorana attended an in-service further training course (open only for social workers) in Ćuprija on ñ*gerontologija* and care (*briga*) for the elders.ò This course lasted for two years and was financed by the Norwegian government. Zorana met professionals from different towns and institutions (CSWs, polyclinics, and hospices) in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Norway, and travelled for seven days to Norway so see ñorientationallyò how colleagues worked there and ñwhat Norway can offer its citizens.ò Zorana thought these experiences enhanced the quality of her work, e.g. her sensitivity in supporting the usersô decision making processes. So what may these Scandinavian inspirations have looked like?

Scandinavian elective affinities

Norwegian social policy advisors have supported the establishment of home care projects in Serbia since the mid-2000s. They generated organizational and professional structures, and also new welfare discourses and models that entered professional self-understanding. Although British social policy was equally ñtranslatedò into Serbian practices, most social workers aimed for the ñScandinavian model.ò After self-managed socialism with its vision of universal state obligation for modernisation and welfare, citizens expected the state to be involved in their lives to a high degree compared to liberal states where more people preferred non-involvement. Therefore the social democracy of Scandinavian countries like Norway, where local politicians accepted the ñdeeply moral taskò to primarily ñsecure the welfare of everyoneò (Vike 2002, 62), appealed to the social workersô own values and ambitions.

It is fascinating to observe overlaps between post-Yugoslav and Scandinavian care practices. First, both in Scandinavia and in former Yugoslavia, high value was attached to state involvement in social security, while a sharp boundary was drawn between a supposedly impersonal state bureaucracy and the emotional intimacy of the home. An ethnography of Danish child care homes, for instance, revealed that these were modelled on the ñhom[el]inessò of private homes (Hojlund 2011). Second, in Swedish home care for the elderly, like in Serbia, space-times ósurfacedô through careful relational moves (Lutz 2013). In Lutzô ethnography, the Swedish care receivers were often very elderly, frail people who were visited daily by an array of caregivers. Time compartmentalisation inspired by New Public Management was the norm, but it was partly circumvented by the caregivers, who negotiated care arrangements that incorporated the rhythms of the caregivers, the care receivers, and the service managers. A ñcareful surfacingò was observed when care givers discussed their dayôs work schedule over their morning coffee, while the folders with the work schedules remained unopened. One carer explained:

> We have a schedule, but generally we donôt use it. We know all the clients. We tend to reach an agreement between ourselves. Also, we donôt make the same rounds every time. We switch villages every other Sunday and on main holidays so we can know everything. We have so many clients now. We try to vary ourselves. Otherwise, we have no real perspectiveò (Lutz 2013, 87ï 8).

Lutzôs ethnography led him to argue that ñgood senior home care involves not only knowledge and experience but also flexible practices or possibilities for tinkering that far exceed the objective-subjective divide on which NPM strategies dependò (Lutz 2013, 88). This account of the position of care givers (and social workers) in Scandinavia shows an emphasis on flexible, humanist time and tinkering with schedules similar to that of their counterparts in Creek Town.

Pitching the programme

Creek Town did not pioneer senior Care at Home in the region ï the CSW in neighbouring River City began such a project in 2006, but it did not support Creek Town in establishing one of its own. While both CSWs operated in the same interface types II and III vis-á-vis other local state institutions, there were significant differences in the welfare state Relation that they each developed. The CSW in River City was ñspecific,ò rather self-contained and difficult to work with (tI, social worker of Polyclinic River City, 10.2.2010). In contrast, the CSW in Creek Town, maybe because it was smaller and had less political weight, nurtured good contacts with the Municipal authorities that ñsimply have that feeling of solidarity and responsibility to the inhabitantsò (tI, Zorana, 23.2.2012). As the single institution of Social Work in the

Municipality, the CSW also cooperated with other local state institutions, although things were seen as far from ideal:

> [W]e cooperate with kindergartens, schools, polyclinic, and hospital. We try to maintain every type of cooperation. How far we are able to do so is an open question. It has not been raised to the level on which it should be. We have cooperation also with the court and the police, but it is not raised to the level [...]. Formerly we had more influence concerning employment, because we could propose why someone could have preference [in employment] [...] from a person with the same educational profile [...]. [I]n reality family circumstances are one of the causes why somebody should have preference [...]. I think after all we should be heard a bit, because we would automatically participate in the quality of life, contributing to the better functioning of the city (tI, Zorana, 23.5.2012)

Zorana did not beat around the bush with her critical view of what she saw as apparently socially irresponsible employment decisions and their consequences for the quality of life in Creek Town. Already in 2003 her colleagues had argued in the annual CSW report to the MWSP and to the Municipality: ñWe have to state that in the last couple of years there has been the tendency of a continuous growth of the number of unemployed people, which is especially pronounced in the last two yearsò (CSW 2003, 2). In the programme of work for 2008 the alarmism was only thinly veiled:

> It can be realistically anticipated that the social set of problems next year will manifest itself as the consequence of a growing mutual dependence and disturbance of interpersonal relations. The social work services will, in the coming year, proportionally adjust from the predominantly material sphere (which realistically will grow linearly) to the psychosocial sphere, with regards to mental problems, conflicts and disturbances of balance [é] (CSW 2008b, 3).

Here the social workers connected the ñmental problems, conflicts and disturbances of balanceò to the growing tasks in the ñpsychosocial sphereò that a new ñHelp at Home for the Elderlyò service could tackle (CSW, 2008b, 3). If ageing as crisis discourse was merely alluded to, the 2009 Public Works application for a ñHome Elder Care in the Villageò project by special pedagogue Goca argued more bluntly:

> [N]ot only the number of old people is a problem, but the number of single households, with disturbed health status, without kin help, in social isolation and impossibility to satisfy their basic existential needs; and along with this the low quality of life (CSW 2008c, 3).

Goca framed the separation from kin as a key issue in problematic elderly situations. Playing on the imaginary kin-state division, where kinship was seen as a good realm in which the state should be rather absent, she suggested that local state relations should (especially) act as a substitute for absent kin. In practice, however, most of the elderly who were included in the care arrangements had kin. What both the CSW programme for 2008 and the rural project application of 2009 had in common was that a stark problem formulation was used as a tactic to lobby for funding. In the CSWôs programme plan for 2008, the supervisor directly addressed the municipality with the ñhope that the [elder care] projects that were in an experimental phase

will find the understanding on the part of the local self-government. And that they will, accordingly, be included in the budget for the next periodò (CSW 2008b, 4).

This lobbying proved successful when in March 2008 the municipality pledged to take over the annual expenses of 1.8 million dinar (then ú 18,000) for the urban elder care service after the Public Work funds were exhausted (CSW 2008c). The CSW also ñwonò every year a Public Works grant for the similarly sized village project through the summer. The CSWôs hopes to ñbudgetò the rural project permanently, however, were curtailed by municipal spending cuts from 2009. In the next subsection I turn to the organisational features of the (urban) service.

Organising ôHelp at Homeô

In order to stretch the meagre funds, the initial ten carers started to work without any job training. Obviously it was expected that the women somehow ñnaturallyò knew how to deal with the exigencies of their new profession.[181] The carers, who were colloquially called ñ*gerontodomaćice*ò (geriatric-domestics), visited five or six households two to three times a week for two hours. The weekly workload was calculated at 30 hours, and they received 25 per cent below the legally guaranteed minimum wage of ú 150 for forty hours of work per week. Contracts were renewed every month, and so the expenses for holidays were also scrapped. On the up side, social insurance contributions were paid. Meetings between Goca and the carers were planned monthly, although in practice they were more irregular. At these meetings, carers voiced problems or exchanged users. This is why in 2011 one carer whom I accompanied had worked with 20 households, while Ljilja always stuck to ñherò seniors and had had ten households in all by 2012 (three users died). After some years, the carers in the two teams also began to exchange their experiences in joint team meetings.

The insecure, underpaid and non-professionalised working conditions upset the urban care workers. By 2011, their number reduced to seven (some moved away or found better paid employment). Given the stable budget, salaries could be raised by a third (which compensated

[181] In contrast to their urban colleagues, the carers for the village received at least a pro-forma training, as I observed on 1 August 2009. I arrived at 11 am at the training workshop held in the CSW. Ten trainees had already waited an hour for the trainer, who finally arrived 11.15 am. He was a social worker from the CSW in Jagodina, and ran a social work NGO on the side. There had been some problems on the road, he explained his delay. The training then lasted for ca 2.5 hours. Basically the women followed a power point presentation on problems and solutions in elder care. One crammed slide, for instance, described the needs and difficulties of seniors as: ñsocial security; economic independence; existential needs; safe living space [é] concordant with the physiological needs of the old person, reduced possibility to move, enfeebled sense of hearing, sight et al.; need to belong ï qualitative relations and contacts with the family that cares about it. [é]; what other kind of needs do we have?ò At 2 pm the workshop ended with a multiple choice test. Goca was unhappy to put it mildly, because the training was booked from 9 am to 3 pm. She thought the man had drunk the previous night, and that was why he came late and lacked concentration (D, 1.8.2009).

for inflation). Yet the number of seniors remained constant at 50, so that carers now catered for seven or eight each (D, Zorana, 6.9.2011). This reduced the time available for each household, but unlike in the managed care time analysed by Lutz, the spatio-temporal adjustments of the carers were basically left to their own discretion. Though the *gerontodomaĺice* handed in rough monthly schedules that they wrote themselves, the implementation was hardly ever checked. Indeed, several of the seniors cared for by Ljilja had not seen a social worker until 2012.

Despite these problems, the senior care service was able to kill several birds with one stone. The CSW proved agentic in its fight against the impoverishment of the population. Their users ñin the filesò received an additional form of support, which cost less than putting them in a care institution. Furthermore, the CSW created insured (though underpaid and deregulated) jobs, which reduced unemployment and helped the carers to earn a living and a future pension. Ironically the last point was the main argument to convince the reluctant old people to try and use the service:

> When we introduced Help at Home [...] it was rather difficult at the start to do the things that we had planned. The number of users was much smaller, some participated only out of hardship [...]. They saw this as something imposed on them and not a need, and that was how they experienced the people who came to them. They simply thought they were doing a favour to somebody, that it is not as good for them as it was presented. They thought because of them somebody gets paid and then like, alright, then letôs do them the favour (tI, Zorana, 23.5.2012).

That it took a while until the care relationship became satisfactory for both sides was connected to three factors: the newness of state senior care in central Serbia, its ambiguity with relation to the family ethos of care, and the popular discourse on state help which supposedly was only received by the most needy, the greedy, or the well connected. But over time the elder people began to feel that the service also meant something positive for them.

We will see now how intimate, reciprocal relationships developed in the ensuing long-term care practices on the example of care giver Ljiljaôs relations with Maja and Veljo, and Marija.

6.3 The emergence of a care network

I first accompanied caregiver Ljilja (b. 1971) on 16.2.2010, by which time she had two years of experience as a senior caregiver. She had already overcome a number of difficult work and life situations. As the single child of a family from Creek Town, Ljilja had gone to River City to study agronomics. At the end of the second year, in 1991, the war broke out and society was in chaos, on top of which she quarrelled with a Montenegrin professor. After the end of the summer break she did not resume studies and began working in PIK Creek Town (her fatherôs workplace) in agricultural production schemes. In 1996 Ljilja married Janez, an ethnic

Slovenian, against the wish of her parents. In 1998 their daughter was born. By 1999 Janez and Ljilja bought land near Creek Town and were about to start pork production for the Slovenian market, when the NATO bombardments made the plan appear absurd and dangerous. Ljilja stayed in PIK. In the early 2000s, her work situation went from bad to worse when the company was privatised. In 2005 Ljilja quit to set up a private advertisement agency with a cousin. They successfully managed a dozen bill boards on the highway, but by 2007 Ljilja was crowded out of the firm. She now took out a newspaper advertisement as a private cleaning lady. Later she found clients by word of mouth.

In 2008 Ljilja was one of the first care workers who joined Help at Home. Because of the initial difficulties to find users, Ljilja activated her networks to look for interested old people herself.[182] This is how Marko, a widower for whose recently deceased wife Ljilja had regularly cleaned, was included in her care schedule. Furthermore, Ljiljaôs father told his acquaintance, a truck driver at whose yard he sometimes slaughtered, about Ljiljaôs new work. The truck driverôs parents were Maja and Veljo. Maja, a former nurse, immediately understood the use of the service and convinced her husband to participate. Maja was to become an important relation for Ljilja, shaping her care practices.

Majaôs mentoring

This was what one of Ljiljaôs visits to Maja and Veljo looked like in February 2010:

> It was 8 am on a chilly winter day. Caregiver Ljilja and I met at the hospital pharmacy, where she bought some medicine for a client. Together, we walked 15 minutes uphill to Maja and Veljo. Here we drank a coffee and had some biscuits. Maja, who sat in her wheelchair, explained to me the various medications she took. As a trained nurse she still gave herself injections. Later Ljilja cut Majaôs hair. In between, she did the washing up, chatted about events in town and shared stories from the lives of other users and herself. Veljo had waited for the right moment to congratulate Ljilja on her birthday with a mock speech: He handed her a box of chocolates, emphasising that the packaging had cost 20 dinar [20 eurocents] alone. At ten we walked in the melting snow down to the Polyclinic to obtain prescriptions for several senior care users (D, 16.2.2010).

Ljilja walked to all her users regardless of the weather, in torrid heat or in the icy cold. Thus she saved the transport money the care workers had eked out from the CSW. She brought to the elder homes food and medication, and where no family was near also firewood. She exchanged information, sociability and gossip, brewed coffee and cleaned the dishes, and even cut Majaôs hair or plucked a few white hairs from Veljoôs eyebrows so that he ñlooked impeccableò (tI, Veljo and Maja, 30.8.2011). Ljilja also received care in return. Thus, Maja and Veljo had made efforts to organise a token present for her birthday. Another time, as they reminisced amidst

[182] Besides the six senior households in state care, Ljilja continued to clean privately for two other households.

laughter, Ljilja had ñreplacedò Maja and went with Veljo and another old woman to a promotional show in the óNorwegian House.ô[183] Ljilja recalled: ñMe and Veljo, he somewhat older and I younger and now everybody looking at us. We were a big attraction thenò (tI, 16.2.2010).

Amidst laughter and smiles, confessions and tears in the home and outside a non-rigid, social daughter time-space ósurfacedô that made Creek Townôs care practices distinct from Lutzô Swedish ones. The way the social daughter gave care to the elderly, who in turn cared for and about the caregiver revealed an emotional, trusting process. Although her family was close by, Maja was grateful for the care she received from her social daughter. The public-private relationship was highly valued and led to a cooperation that spilled over from the caregiver-care receiver dyad and formed a wider network over time, especially concerning medical care for the elderly. Arguably Ljilja took inspiration from the effects of Majaôs former care practice: ñAh, Maja has many friends here, everybody loves and cherishes her. Maja gave everybody injections here in the street, as long as she could.ò Maja added that until 1962, when the first nurses (*medicinske sestre*) finished their specialisation, she had been the only orderly (*bolniļarka*) far and wide (tI, 16.2.2010).[184] In the 1950s Majaôs care practices had even led her to kin increasingly significant others. At the time Maja had worked in a village ward of the hospital. Here she cared for an older woman over a period of three months. The womanôs son was so fond of Maja that he treated here like a sister (*on se posestrimio sa njom*).[185] The ónew brotherôsô wife was Veljoôs sister, and that is how Veljo and Maja came to know each other (tI, 16.2.2010).

In 2010 Maja was still in good contact with the medical practitioners. The health system was so underfinanced that these medical practitioners sometimes took harsh decisions about whom to care for. It emerged in several interviews with Ljilja that her clients above the age of 80 sometimes waited in vain for the emergency medical service. This is how Veljo, who had worked as security guard in the Polyclinic, explained it: ñShe [Maja] worked in Health. They all know her well, her situation and they know me and they come for every intervention. Otherwise they rarely go if it is an older personò (tI, 30.8.2011). Indeed, the emergency medical service team not only cooperated in emergencies with Maja. Her free medication had to be re-

[183] Creek Town and its Norwegian twin town built the Norwegian House in the 1970s together, to celebrate the Serb-Norwegian friendship and brotherhood in arms against Nazi Germany. The building in the shape of a Viking ship housed a museum of World War II, a restaurant, and since 2011 the office of Creek Townôs voluntary centre funded by the Norwegian embassy and by the Norwegian-Serbian friendship society.
[184] *Bolniļarke* were medical aid personnel trained on the job after World War II by e.g. the Red Cross. *Medicinske sestre* were high-school educated nurses. I thank Ļarna Brkoviĺ for this information.
[185] Such kinning was widespread after WWII, when new kin relationships were formed often outside of state regulated family forms. The process appears to have included solemn, ritualised vows of respect and assistance.

prescribed every half a year, and since it was difficult for Maja to move, she should have obtained her prescriptions by a visit from the emergency medical service.[186] However, in practice Maja simply phoned the team and suggested her diagnosis. Veljo or Ljilja then picked up the prescription from the polyclinic, and fetched the medication from a pharmacy.

In 2009, the emergency medical service lost the power to write prescriptions, and Ljilja had to find a new way to obtain the standard medication for Maja and other users. Ljilja now focused on a waiver in medical institutions. The beginning of this waiver system, according to Ljilja, was the following. One day an old doctor in the polyclinic ñchasedò Ljilja out of her office because there was no official letter about the existence of the new Help at Home service by the CSW. Ljilja called Goca, who sent a letter to all relevant medical units (the general hospital, the polyclinic, private doctors) in which she asked for preferential treatment for the caregivers. Ljilja did not want to ñstay indebtedò to the doctor, and asked her the next day if she had a paper now. Answer: ñA paper I have.ò Ljilja: ñSo what is now debatable (*sporno*)?ò Doctor: ñNothing.ò Since then Ljilja had safe conduct in medical institutions (tI, Maja and Veljo, 16.2.2010).

Ljilja directly learned from Maja about dedicated care, as became obvious in spring 2009 on the death of Duġan, one of Ljiljaôs users who had called her daughter. The next morning Ljilja went beyond duty and within three hours organised his funeral, which was scheduled customarily for the second day after his death (see Thelen, Thiemann, and Roth 2014, 18).[187] Indeed, it was Maja who had encouraged her to go, as Ljilja explained:

> [Duġanôs son] came here and doesnôt know what to do [é] He called me around nine, I was at Maja and Veljoôs. And Maja says: óGo immediately.ôI went at once and didnôt work for the next three days, you know here it is the custom that somebody stays at home (tI, Milica and Ljilja, 25.2.2010).

The support of Maja who told Ljilja to go and help, and thereby express her care for Duġan beyond death, was striking. Maja could have insisted that Ljilja first fulfilled her work schedule, but she encouraged Ljilja to perform her role as a daughter of Duġan and organise his funeral. No jealousy resulted when Ljilja could not immediately resume her work round because she catered for three days to the condolence visits at Milica and Duġanôs flat. After the fact Goca authorised the exception that Maja and Ljilja had initiated.

[186] Because of her status as ñdisabled personò Maja received all prescribed medication for free. Velja, who was still relatively able-bodied had to pay 50 eurocents equity contribution for ñfree drugs.ò

[187] In the winter of 2009, Ljilja had already buried another user, a lady who lived alone, and whose son was in River City. The lady fully trusted Ljilja ï when she went to hospital for the last time, she asked Ljilja to accompany her in the ambulance, rather than her best friend whom she had known for 40 years. The son later wrote to the CSW to praise Ljiljaôs dedication (tI, Milica and Ljilja, 25.2.2010).

Given their intimate mentoring relation, Ljilja was worried about Majaôs failing health. In December 2011, Maja was in intensive care for 20 days, and as usual Ljilja regularly visited her in hospital. When Maja passed away, Ljilja was upset that she did not hear about it from Veljo or his family, but from a fleeting acquaintance in the hospital. Ljilja went with her mother to express condolences and was again embarrassed when Veljo showed her cell phone pictures from Majaôs deathbed, on Majaôs wish as he said. Meanwhile social worker Zorana did what in her eyes was best to support Ljilja and decided that she should work for another elderly person more in need of care than Veljo. Ljilja had now no state obligation to visit Veljo, and because she felt saddened by what she experienced as her exclusion from her social daughter role of properly mourning and burying Maja, she tended to avoid seeing him privately. Veljo was hurt by this, and started to comment how Ljilja did not visit him anymore, after all the ñfood and drinkò she had had at his home. ñAs if I had not [also] worked there,ò Ljilja remembered this new sting. Veljo in turn óforgotô to invite Ljilja for Majaôs *parastos*, and so she refrained from attending (tI, Ljilja, 23.5.2012).[188] In the end, the cutting off of the formerly intense care relations between Veljo and Ljilja was reciprocal.

What can we learn about the nexus between care and death when comparing Ljiljaôs continuing relation to Duđanôs widow Milica with her cutting of ties to Majaôs widower Veljo? First, the old peoplesô decisions to overcome possible distrust towards a state employed care giver, and to intensify the bonds by naming and experiencing their emerging relation as kin, often created an intense and emotional interaction. Death was a crisis situation threatening to upset this relation. In Duđanô case, his wife and son had quickly invited Ljilja to actively care after death, and the relation was also supported by Ljiljaôs mentor Maja as well as by her social worker (Milica was deemed needy of future care by the CSW). In the case of Majaôs death, Veljoôs family failed to invite her to care beyond death. The need was not felt by the numerous family members, who lived nearby, knew how to perform all rites, and who always cooperated with Ljilja somewhat reservedly. Furthermore, the CSW had decided to end the elder care relation with Veljo. When Ljilja and Veljo reciprocally cut their ties, they did this largely privately, and like families and intimate relations often do, in a highly emotional way.

However, Ljiljaôs caring relation for Maja remained unbroken by these trials. On 22 May 2012, for the half-year remembrance of Majaôs death, Ljilja decided to go on her own and invited me to come along. After we bought candles at the shop of Ljiljaôs new care user, we

[188] The *parastos* is the Serb-Orthodox commemoration at the grave 40 days after death. This important rite of passage is attended by the closest family members and invited guests. Ljilja, feeling she was not treated as a family member, stayed away with deep regret.

walked up to the graveyard. We had difficulties finding the grave that was still in a very provisional shape, a sign of neglect according to Ljilja. Ljilja expressed her deep admiration once again: ñMaja died on 26 December 2011 on *Materice* (Holy Motherôs Day). Mothers buy some bits and bobs for children, and the children bring strings, bind their mother so that, to make them take the strings off, she gives them something. And I made that association ï a great woman died that dayò (tI, Ljilja, 23.5.2012).

Declarations of inter-dependence ï Marija and her daughters

Despite the setbacks that occurred in her most intimate care relations, it impressed me how Ljilja continued to actively seek out ways to deepen her relations to the seniors. She continued to ask them for events, encounters and ties of the past in order to find anchoring points for present interactions and future relations.

For instance, Ljilja established early on that the niece (*sestrí**ć**ina*) of Marko, one of her elder care users, had been the deceased first wife of Maja and Veljoôs son. Since then Ljilja used to weave in new stories concerning this past relation in the respective households, thereby creating a sense of reconnection, but also including herself in a new discursive triad. A similar move was made by Ljilja, after she had lost Duđan, to include her new care user Marija into her emerging care network. In 2009, one of Ljiljaôs colleagues who had cared for the sophisticated and demanding user Marija (b. 1935)[189] left the care service to work as a personal assistant of a disabled boy in Belgrade. A second colleague who took on the care duty soon wanted to switch again. Ljilja stepped in. It did not take long before Ljilja heard from Jovan ï another elderly man who she gave care to ï that Marijaôs daughter had been his neighbour for years and that he knew Marijaôs family well. Stories of different kinds of relatedness (neighbourly and affine ties) were over time interweaved into a ócarpet of relatednessôthat helped Ljilja to arrive at more intimacy in her care relations.

Apart from the newly shared common stories and ties, Ljilja also performed her care and cleaning work diligently. The result was that the sophisticated Marija became one of her most reciprocally beneficial care relations. When I asked Marija how she and her family got along with their *gerontodomaćica*, she replied:

> Marija: Excellently, Elena appeals to them very much, and Elena is very sociable and good...
> Ljilja: é I am Elena, the first colleague [who had worked at Marijaôs] was Elena.

[189] Marija had worked as the long-time seamstress for the celebrated folk ensemble óKUD Abrađevoô and developed a strong work discipline and high accuracy that she also looked for in others.

> Marija: There you go, Elena, Ljilja. And so I became kin with the child as if she were my own.[190] And if I esteem somebody, then I really love and esteem them. I would never do anything against anybody, they are all good and merciful [*dobre i ģalostive*], they would never do anything bad, they are educated this way, and so am I (tI, Marija, 16.2.2010).

Although Marija was quite frail and already a bit forgetful, so that she confused here Ljiljaôs name with that of a previous care giver,[191] her esteem for Ljilja seemed genuine. Naming their care relation as kin, both through the reflexive verb *sroditi se* (to become kin with each other) and through the use of the noun *ļeljade* (a household or family member), she attempted to convey her trust in Ljilja. The praise was mutual. Ljilja lauded how Marija had, after she was heavily injured and widowed through a car accident in the 1970s, managed to pull herself up and put her three daughters on the right track (tI, Marija and Ljilja, 16.2.2010).[192] Even though Ljilja used second-degree kin terms, i.e. óauntô [*tetka*] and ópaternal uncleô [*ļika*] when talking about ñher elders,ò and Marija also addressed Ljilja with the second person plural *Vi* (denoting a polite and a bit formal style of address), the positive evaluation was marked by kinning. Ljilja also said that the care work ñsuited herò and emphasised her learning from the elder generation:

> All kinds of things you can learn from these people, you take from them. Different crafts in the kitchen and what you can do to save [money], when you maybe have to keep silent in marriage. All kinds of their experiences. You talk about everything with these women, what I did not do with my own mother [é]. *Ļika* Jovan is a story for himself, he is a great person ï reminds me of my father (tI, Ljilja, 31.5.2012).

Besides personally learning from the elderly people she cared for, Ljilja used their kin-like intimacy to extend her relations to their óbiologicalô family and other relations if possible. In Marijaôs case this led to valuable ties into local state health services (the Health) through two of her daughters who lived in Creek Town. Recent changes ï the introduction of a general practitioner system ï had suggested to Ljilja to go with her users to those doctors who helped her when she needed prescriptions (see above). Including Marijaôs daughters in this network of trusted and collaborating family doctors and pharmacists made it possible to unify, simplify, and stabilize her care network. By early 2010, Ljilja cooperated with three medical doctors, one of which was Marijaôs daughter, who wrote prescriptions for Maja and Veljo, and Jovan. Marijaôs other daughter, who ran a private pharmacy next to the polyclinic, sold Ljilja the medication for Maja and Veljo, and Milica. Ljilja explained:

> I donôt sit in the polyclinic for two hours, I canôt sit there, for me that it is a waste of time. It would be shameful for me. Instead I leave [a list of medications], she writes the prescriptions ï I can also go to other doctors [é]. They write me the prescriptions, I donôt

[190] ñ*I tako sam se srodila sa detetom kao da je moje ļeljade.*ò
[191] Marija had been under medication since a car accident in which she had lost her husband, then aged 39.
[192] Marijaôs daughters (and several grandchildren) finished medical studies at the university and became doctors or pharmacists.

> wait, and I come back later at 1 pm, when I return from somewhere [é] (tI, Ljilja, 23.5.2012).

The doctors did the favours not because of return gifts, except for the assurance that Ljilja cared well for their patients, in the case of Marijaôs children their mother. The cooperation also went further: Ljilja privately cleaned for one daughter of Marija, and for the daughter-in-law of Marijaôs other daughter. Ljilja earned up to ú 10 for six hours of cleaning, a very good side income. In fact, early in 2010 Ljilja was fond of joking that she ócared for the eliteôï partly to explain to the elderly people why I shadowed her (and them), but also reflecting the fact that a majority of those she cared for were actually better off and better educated than average. Given the intense and multiple ties ï medical, caring, and cleaning ï between Marijaôs family and Ljilja, it is likely that their relations will outlast Marijaôs eventual passing away.

Marija in turn would not easily change her carer any more, a fact viewed ambivalently by the social workers.

6.4 Initiatives to improve

Tania Murray Li (2007, 12) has suggested to differentiate between the ópractice of government,ôñin which a concept of improvement becomes technical as it is attached to calculated programs for its realizationò and on the other hand the ópractice of politicsôñthat shapes, challenges, and provokes it [technical government].ò One dilemma of street-level bureaucrats, related to their internal struggle between professionalism and red tape (see Chapter Five), was how much to govern, and how much to politicise. Social worker Zorana found herself in this ambivalent position concerning the future of Help at Home, which she cautiously valued as a mixed success:

> Now all [of the seniors] would like this kind of service every day, but there is no realistic possibility for that. On the other hand they rely much more on the *gerontodomaĺice*, they have a kind of trust in them and simply perk up. From one angle this is not good, because after all every one of us must get used to alterations and include oneself and change as much as that is possible. Well, at the beginning, when this project started, it was perhaps not defined [precisely enough] what is all the work of the *gerontodomaĺica* ... (tI, Zorana, 23.5.2012)

Zorana alluded to three problems in this quote: financing, dependency by the seniors on ótheirô *gerontodomaĺica*, and the passivity of the users. Saying that there were ñno realistic possibilitiesò to expand the programme, Zorana ambivalently ñgoverned and politicisedò in the sense that she was reluctant to completely exclude ñquestions about control over the means of production, and the structures of law and force that support systemic inequalitiesò (Li 2007, 11). Redirecting her attention away from political-economic questions, Zorana then stated that

the emerging trusting relationships created too much ñrelianceò by the elderly users. Zorana ambivalently evaluated the ódeclarations of inter-dependenceô that I analysed in the previous section as both positive (building trust, perking up) but also as somewhat ñódiscomýting to [é] the emancipatory liberal mindô which ñequate[s] human dignity and value with autonomy and independenceò (Ferguson 2013, 224) ï i.e. life-long learning and fitness for change in Zoranaôs case. Since she preferred relations of solidarity and did not want to cut them, Zorana decided to ñimproveò the quality of care, as I show next. In her democratic politics of disappointment, of ñconstant reinterpretation, reframing, uptake, and co-opting,ò in which ñdisappointment becomes the beginning and not the end of politicsò (Greenberg 2014, 187), Zorana needed allies. Among the care workers, Ljiljaôs interest in improving the service met halfway with Zoranaôs.

Ljilja, who ñperked upò the elders and liked her care work, was also ambivalent about it. Sometimes she was sick and tired of it all, as she told me in 2012. She knew the stories of the old ones already by heart, and her pride of work was deeply hurt by gossip that ñthe *gerontodomaí ice* only sit around and drink coffee.ò Ljilja was eager to discuss how to improve the service, but found it difficult to exchange ideas with Goca or the older carers: ñIt doesnôt interest them.ò She also criticised that the *gerontodomaí ice* were treated like ñwomen of a second orderò in the CSW, but said she would ñnot capitulate, and always dressed upò when going there (tI, Ljilja, 31.5.2012).[193] Ljilja ruminated whether it was better to become her own boss again and establish a care agency.[194] She felt that Zorana was more open for cooperation than other social workers, and that it was good that she took over the service in 2011 and tried to ñraise the level.ò[195] One day Ljilja suggested to join me in meeting Zorana after work. This is how they debated on the terrace of a café for an hour:

We sat on the terrace where Zorana had waited for us, indulging in a cigarette and coffee. Ljilja disclosed that she liked Zorana better as a boss and that she hoped Zorana would continue managing the service when Goca returned from maternity leave. Zorana remained factual and defended Gocaôs work, clarifying that the latter would continue to manage the service. Ljilja opined that something had gone wrong with the senior care service from the start. She said that the long duty list that Goca had provided with the care contract was unfortunate [it contained 14 points, including heavy work like washing the curtains, chalking interior walls, etc.]. These provisions had made caregivers vulnerable to onerous demands from the elderly, Ljilja thought. She could not be fully convinced by Zorana that the list had been necessary to win the confidence of the seniors to participate in the first place. Rather, Ljilja

[193] Social worker Lazo joked one day about a prospective carer, a friendly woman in her early 50s, strong, rotund and dressed in neat, but old-fashioned attire: ñShe is a real *gerontodomaí icaò* (D, 11.8.2009).
[194] The self-contributions for the care service lay at a maximum of ú 14 per month, i.e. a third to half of the amount private cleaners received. Due to the low self-contributions, the state service could not function without subsidies.
[195] Goca married in May 2010 and was on maternity leave when I visited the CSW in 2011 and 2012. Zorana took on the management of the service; while the project in the village was run by an intern.

maintained, it was when their first users started to tell their friends how happy they were with the service that it gained momentum. Ljilja did not hide that she was of a good mind to leave the project and work privately again. Zorana in turn expressed her hope that Ljilja would contribute her ideas in a possible project of the voluntary centre financed by the Norwegian government [Zorana was on its executive committee]. Thus encouraged, Ljilja began to submit her ideas about how to avoid being seen as ñonly drinking coffee.ò She proposed to stop coming twice a week for two hours, because each time half an hour was lost for chitchat. Instead she envisioned a visit once a week for a long bloc of concentrated cleaning. Zorana replied that drinking coffee and chatting were very important parts of their work, with a positive psychological impact for the elderly (D, 6.9.2011).

In this encounter Zorana communicated to Ljilja that she took her criticism seriously, without allowing Ljilja to personalise her frustrations. Zorana emphasised the utmost importance of ócoffee-socialisingôto Ljilja, while also alluding to the possibility of co-organising a senior care spin off with the voluntary centre in the Norwegian House.[196] She left Ljiljaôs role open, but implied that she might train volunteers and manage their care schedule.

After Ljilja left, Zorana told me that in order to get a clearer picture of the older peoplesô wishes she planned to use her remaining days of vacation to make a small survey. However, other plans interfered so that this happened only in May 2012 when Zorana and Ljilja organised a round visit to each of Ljiljaôs users, taking me along. This mini-survey enabled the seniors to perform their hospitality, but Zoranaôs suggestion to participate in an excursion was met with hesitancy. Similarly, Zoranaôs hopes to motivate the elders to share ideas about how the programme could be developed further, e.g. by including voluntary work and mutual help, were not met. The elderly praised Ljilja but evaded answering such questions (D, 21.5.2012).[197]

Nonetheless, by 2012 Ljilja thought that the level of care had improved a bit. For instance the contracts of the carers were now open-ended. While Ljilja still contemplated organising her own senior care service, she had incorporated new ideas about organising spare time activities, mutual aid, and romance by the CSWôs service:

> I think that these [old] people deserve to be heard [é]. If you go to Belgrade, [there] they have organised excursions, organised socializing (*druženja*) in the coffeehouse in the evening. Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays there is even music in the coffeehouses. The old people come, those who are divorced, widowers and widows. They pay 200 dinars, or 300 dinars [ú 2-3], have a drink. I think why Marko, Jovan, Marija é There are people that are mobile, our users that could do something different. Masters, at least for these women. Someone around electricity, water [installation]. Somebody who is constant, and men are missing. For instance, when you prepare a feast, that he carries [food], not you. For instance, if you go to the green market, and he has a caré . That you drive them to the grave of a friend. They all go with a taxi, pay for it. For instance, that they go to some spa. That they feel something [é] (tI, Ljilja, 30.5.2012).

[196] Zorana did not believe that Help at Home could be organised on a strict for profit basis (the last private venture of that kind had failed in 2010).

[197] Nonetheless, several times the elderly users did cooperate in solidary actions. For instance social worker Lazo collected clothing from them for needy people in care homes outside the municipality.

However, the times were unfavourable for starting a private firm or for engaging in voluntarism and raising the level of senior care. Potential users were financially strapped and had little money to spend. Ljilja herself had no start-up capital for a business venture. Her daughter had plans to study architecture in Vienna, and Janez and Ljilja were trying to save for this. Therefore, in the summer of 2012 Ljiljaôs husband Janez went with acquaintances to earn money on a construction site in Moscow. Unfortunately, he was tricked. Not only did he receive no salary, but the food rations were insufficient and heating non-existent. As winter set in, Janez was lucky enough to borrow money for a return trip. In 2013 he found employment as an informal mini-bus driver to Germany, and by 2015 he was driving goods vehicles to and from the UK. Ljilja meanwhile worked extra hours for Marijaôs family and put the idea of her own business on ice.

In 2013 Goca had returned to manage Creek Townôs senior care service. She made plans to enlarge the programme to 20 carers, with proper training for all. Yet her project was shelved around New Year 2014, when a new bout of austerity negotiated between finance minister KrstiĆ and an IMF team included a significant reduction in local state employment. In January 2014 Ljilja became unemployed. A month later Help at Home resumed, but on monthly contracts again.[198] In September 2015 Ljilja and I had a short Facebook message exchange. She wrote: ñI am still with grandmothers and grandfathers (*babe i dede*). How long I can still carry on I donôt know myself. Psychically they drag me down all of themé ò

Conclusion

Dramatic lines like these were typical for Ljilja, but she did not easily give up her strong ethic of care. In the same vein, Zorana continued to be engaged as a social worker, to volunteer for the Norwegian House, and to care about her town-wide relations. Zorana knew that not everybody could care the same, her situation after her children left and her mother died in 2012 was a special case.

The future of the programme remained precarious. There were now fewer, but very experienced caregivers who had more elderly users to care for. Despite the mental strain, psychological support was not provided beyond group meetings, and plans to make up for the lack of initial training were halted. Career opportunities remained negligible, too.

[198] Finance Minister Lazar KrstiĆ left office in July 2014, after less than a year in government. He indicated as his reason that the reforms, e.g. to dismiss 160.000 out of 800.000 state employees, did not proceed fast enough, because ñthe President had a soft heartò (Naminova 2014).

Nonetheless, the senior care innovations in Creek Town can ï with qualifications ï inform the feminist ñethics of careò advocated by Joan Tronto. The Serbian social workers, who translated Scandinavian models of care, did not implement the NPM inspired management approach. Therefore, the emerging practices were more personalized, long-term, and intimate. Mutual giving and receiving of care allowed the seniors to become mentors, while the carers ñperked them up.ò Furthermore, tight state resources in the realm of medical care were rearranged into a newly emerging social-medical-care network. These aspects of the care practices evolved because of the programmeôs under-regulation, and despite its under-financing.

It was symptomatic of the strategic selectivity in post-socialist Serbia that initiatives of local state actors, especially those inspired by socialist humanism, socialising over coffee-time, and solidary bonding, were under-recognised and under-institutionalised. Bob Jessop (2008, 239) recently gave a semiotic turn to the strategic selectivity argument in state relations, proposing that ñcomplexity reduction involves discursively selective imaginaries and structurally selective institutions.ò[199] Under-recognition of local state programmes represented such complexity reduction across several scales of the state. At the local scale, state actors were aware of a óbad state-good kinshipô dichotomy. In contrast to Mikuġ and DokiĹôs (2015) view that the hegemonic position in Serbia was that the state should end the crisis, more often than not social actors saw the state itself as ñthe crisis.ò This moralising proposition was shared by speakers across the social fields of class, gender, age, and so on (see SpasiĹ and Bireġev 2012, 146). This óbad-stateô discourse had a strong source in the trans-national scale of the state, i.e. the ñsemi-peripheralò location of Serbia óbetween the West and the Rest.ô The semi-periphery, following BlagojeviĹ (2009, 99ï 101), was characterised by de-industrialisation and re-traditionalisation, coinciding with adjustments that were meant to approximate the ñmodernò West. Weak structural constraints ñopenedò the semi-periphery to recurrent political and policy interventions from actors like the EU, the World Bank, and the IMF. Through diverse media outlets, they presented as their goals the overcoming of state efficiency problems, the reduction of state involvement in the economy, and so on. Ironically, the very ñlack of structurenessò of the Serbian state that the trans-national actors postulated also limited ñthe scope of their [interventionsô] effectivenessò (BlagojeviĹ 2009, 101; cited in Stubbs 2015, 72) on the ground. The trans-national crisis talk was moreover appropriated by the national policy elites to legitimise their practices of government, and ï for very different reasons ï by the population to

[199] With institutions Jessop meant more or less powerful ñmechanisms of embedding experience in broader social relations and, perhaps, rendering it consistent across different social spheresò (Jessop 2008, 239).

articulate their grievances with an increasingly less responsive state. A popular rooting for romanticised alternatives to the ôbad state,ô such as the ógood familyô was one of the outcomes of the confluence of these discursive and structural selectivities. Thereby, in the long run the transnational-scale policy interventions to strengthen the state doubly undermined it ï diminishing or cutting the funding for small, labour intensive local state programmes, and causing local state actors to disguise the óstatenessô and emphasise the ófamilynessô of their initiatives.

With these observations we have arrived at the end of the empirical part of the thesis. In the concluding chapter I will bring together the lessons learned.

Conclusion:
Contours of a relational anthropology of the state

> Here is the man who moves among the subjects and who is involved in their day-to-day difficulties and struggles; yet who has to represent the state against them ï he sees they pay their taxes and perform state-labour, he reports them if they break the law, and so forth. Thus the village headman [é] is the centre of a constant struggle, both in terms of backbiting and intrigue, and of a war in the mystical world. [é] Among the Barotse, I remember a headman who kept tapping an ulcer on his face and saying, ótôs the government, itôs the government, itôs the governmentô ï meaning that because of his position under the government he had been bewitched with the ulster (Gluckman 1956, 51).

In his popular BBC radio lecture series óCustoms and Conflict in Africa,ôMax Gluckman (1956, 51ï 3) likened the village headmanôs ñconflict between the dual pulls of political representationò to a myriad of ñunresolved authority conflict[s]ò of for instance the trade union organiser, ñthe non-commissioned officer, hospital ward-sister, and the poor school prefect.ò Political authority conflicts have not disappeared, but rather seem to have proliferated throughout the 20th century. Thirty years on, Michael Lipsky (1980) would talk, in relation to (US American) public services, of the ñdilemma of the street-level bureaucrat.ò Another thirty years on, Julia Eckert et al. (Eckert, Behrends, and Dafinger 2012, 14) observed that ñ[i]ncreasingly new agents of governance share in the administration of everyday life, in the organisation of access to and provision of services and goods.ò Meanwhile, in (West-African) public services, the different (re)forms of statehood have ñsedimentedò and fragmented each other to the extent that ñnormative double bindsò proliferate in a ñcomplex normative universeò (Bierschenk 2014).

Given the width and complexity of the problems of political authority, this thesis addressed the theoretical question of why the growing Anthropology of the State has so little to say comparatively about how states actually work. It also considered what could be done better. I set out to study the local stateôs workings in a rural-urban region in central Serbia ethnographically in a theoretically informed, concrete-complex and processual way. I followed Thelen et al.ôs (2014) observation that the US-American dominated ónew Anthropology of the State,ôwith its strong focus on representation and its weaker focus on practices of the state had difficulties to identify the mediating link between both. Because of the gap between the representations and practices of the state, this strand of theorising almost ritually reproduced

observations of an increasing fragmentation of the state, while constructing rather monomorphic images of it. Seldom did the New Anthropologists of the state thoroughly lay bare the power relations involved. More fruitful if less dominant approaches were offered by the European tradition of British social anthropology of the state, the *anthropologie de lôétat* in France, and of the *Ethnologie des Staates* in Germany. Here, the researchers tended to produce more fine grained analyses of the ñstate at workò (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan 2014a), looking at the quotidian efforts by public servants to construct the state out of material and discursive elements within multiple scales of power relations.

As part of an international team of researchers based at Halle, Germany, I took my cues from Gluckman and the classic Manchester School who had pioneered the anthropology of modern governmental practices, and qualitative network analysis. Fusing these inspirations with the focus on images of the state, out of the project emerged the proposal to concentrate on social relations as the missing link between images and practices (Thelen, Vetters, and von Benda-Beckmann 2014). Methodologically, Thelen et al. suggested three axes for a relational approach to the state. Proceeding from personal agency to group ideologies and practices, I regrouped these interpenetrating axes in the following order: (1) the embeddedness of actors; (2) the negotiation of the boundaries between the state and society/kin; and (3) the relational modalities of state practices. Based on my readings of relational analyses of class power and the state by heterodox Marxists, I added (4) the strategic selectivity of the state.

In order to fulfil my ethnographic objective to study the local stateôs workings in post-Yugoslav Serbia relationally and processually, I decided to move beyond the classical question of the ñlegitimate monopoly of violenceò of the state posed by Hegel, Weber, and mainstream institutionalist political scientists (see Poulantzas 2000, 129). In post-Yugoslav studies, (il)legitimate violence has received much attention, for good reasons related to the militant dissolution of the First and Second Yugoslavia throughout the 20th century (Lampe 2000; Halpern and Kideckel 2000). However, affectively charged topics like violence have tended to deflect attention from similarly central domains of state activity, like regulation, organisation, and distribution. I therefore concentrated on the negotiations and translations of three less-violent but central strategic fields of state action: local politics, infrastructure work, and welfare.

For the purposes of my ethnography, and in order to capture the sedimentations and fragmentations in the local arena, I have defined the local state not as a bounded, but as a grounded, complex network of relations from the sub-local to the trans-national scale of the state. I conducted my ethnographic research between 2009 and 2013 as a small regional study. The research arena encompassed two villages and two cities in two Municipalities in Central

Serbia, which allowed me to compare my findings. Countering the presentist bias of much of anthropology, I followed a tradition in political and economic anthropology and worked in a historical or óprocessual modeô (Wolf 1982; Vincent 1986; Zitelmann 1994; Thelen 2003; Narotzky and Smith 2006). That means I included the most recent history ï before and after the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s ï and the near future in my analysis of the emerging state relations. Indeed, in my field site the local state underwent several political transformations and ruptures, especially during early socialism (1944-56), from late socialism (starting in the mid-1970s) to early post-socialism, and leading into an advanced liberal phase after 2000. A phase of authoritarian liberalism has been well under way since May 2012. I touched on the latter in shorter outlooks. Importantly, this was not history for historyôs sake, but a history of the present ï the earlier phases were not completely superseded, instead they have influenced later moments, events, and the overall situation through material condensations, experiences, expectations, images, and social relations.

In what follows I review my main research findings along my four axes of relational analysis ï embeddedness, boundary work, relational modalities, and strategic selectivity ï and consider their contribution to the Relational Anthropology of the State.

Embeddedness

In the first ethnographic chapters I studied how state action was embedded in a shared feature of many Central Serbian localities ï football enthusiasm and sports voluntarism. In Lower Village, football became institutionalised as a main community activity during socialism, with the founding of the club ó*Zadrugari 1961*.ô Out of a game among friends, relatives and neighbours, football turned into a means to ñknow the world.ò As a site of social organization, village football facilitated the re-formation of male sociality beyond villageô factions, and led to solidary cooperation, e.g. finding work for fellow villagers according to a ósocialist ethos of care,ô as sketched on the example of refugee Pero in Chapter Four. However, sport activism also led to the re-emergence and deepening of conflict within the community, and the periodical opting out by club factions. Importantly for the embeddedness of state (and non-state) actors, football produced political change. It played a role in the career of a rising Municipal politician in 2008, and generated a new setup of sub-municipal Local Councillors between 2009 and 2013.

I followed the rise of the football clubôs ósport workersô (club organisers and officials), especially the local veterinarianôs way into Municipal politics. In 2008 and 2012 he ran for Municipal election on the ticket of a locally unpopular economic-liberal party. His repeated electoral success was thus attributable to his personal standing in the community. Soon the

veterinarian became an important figure in Municipal politics, collaborating across party lines. In other words, he successfully negotiated the double pull of political authority ï representation and governing. His ascent was characterised by several normative double-binds, both concerning his embeddedness in hierarchical relations to superiors in interfaces of type III (to parties and municipal offices), and at the interfaces of type I with village factions and networks. I concentrated on the ótype Iô relations. The football faction that ran the club supported the veterinarian-politician and he supported them, while disenfranchised footballers who had left the club rallied against him. Football opposition was located e.g. in the household of the immediate neighbours of the vetôs parents.

In Serbia after 2000 (as in the 1980s in India) a potent weapon in local politics was corruption allegations. Corruption charges could take the form of slander and gossip, or official accusations and complaints to a local politicianôs superiors (Gupta 2012, 170ï 4). Local politicians, therefore, needed to negotiate backbiting, intrigue, and possible impeachment within multiple interfaces.[200] Cognisant of their complex normative universe, local politicianôs tried to prevent the criticism spilling over from one interface to another.

I compared the reactions of the vet-politician, of the president, and the supervisor of the Local Council when facing criticism in the football club. Each navigated differently ñthe frailty of authority,ò i.e. the ñinevitable ideas of shortcomings on the part of leaders [that] will weaken loyalty to them, and even lead to an attempt to overthrow or replace them ï to rebellionò (Gluckman 1956, 38). The vet-politician rose by his culturally intimate handling of the male irony, as he reasonably represented what I called the ñsocial rebellionò type, meaning that he tried to work in the interest of the wider community. The president seemed little affected by criticism of his alleged ñself-interest.ò The supervisor, finally, ñconformedò to demands to work harder and to organise better. In the Local Council (in Chapter Three), the president and supervisor fared similarly. First, they weathered external criticism, but later caved in. At the end of their mandate, they did not stand for re-election and óresigned.ô Here we have the four modes of dealing with the contradictory demands of embeddedness: resign, conform, rebel in self-interest, and socially rebel in the wider interest.

The same person could act differently depending on the interface. In Chapter Four, I followed how the supervisor of the Local Council, far from conforming like in previous chapters, ósocially rebelledô in favour of the social security of others. Concretely, he convinced

[200] Their householdôs multiple friendship ties unravelled following the corruption allegations.

the Local Council to help his neighbour, a former refugee, on humanitarian grounds.[201] However, a mode of action could, under certain circumstances, also remain remarkably stable across time and space. In Chapter Six, I traced a stop-and-go and turn-about tactic in social rebellion, when a social worker initiated a senior care programme and moved into a socially and culturally quite productive position within the Centre for Social Work (CSW) and her community. Then the difficulties started: she had to deal with financial shortages, dissatisfied carers, old people who were reluctant to cooperate in raising the quality of the service, and moments when the funding was cancelled and the service had to be revived. It was fascinating to follow how the social worker persisted in her social-rebellion-mode of defending and expanding her vision of the public good, while using ever new tools and practices where these seemed appropriate.

These examples show the importance of the embeddedness of state actors and their critics. Oppositions arose situationally in specific interfaces, and it was of vital interest for protagonists to activate their relations to participate. How they did so opened up the question of the negotiation of the boundaries of the state, i.e. where to draw the line between us and them.

Boundary work

The negotiation of the internal boundary between the state and (civil) society/kin was a major operation in the construction of a óstate interface.ô Social actors reified the state with a specific interface and then at one moment they positioned themselves inside it, at another outside it. Other actors accepted or challenged the reification ï as well as their positionality towards the boundary. Chapter Three provided a rich case study of such boundary work.

In that chapter I argued that the self-government of the Local Council sustained its political continuity through contradictions and struggles. In these struggles, material demands for infrastructure development and the criticism of its failures were intertwined with calls for state responsiveness and allegations of state corruption. I focused on a road dispute, in which the village opposition pushed the Local Council ï including its President who was inclined to favour his factional interests ï into conforming to more representative (if no less factional) demands. The SMZôs responsiveness to criticism and its reversing of unpopular decisions emerged as a continuity of the Local Councilôs government.

[201] The vet-politician was adept at switching the mode of action even within one situation, depending on his interpretation of the interface. Thus, during his election campaign in town in Chapter Two our chat started (and ended) as a neighbourly interaction marked by allusions to social rebellion (his gifting of a ówell bouncing ballô). In between he took defensive positions of mistrust of neighbourly backbiting, and competitive election rhetoric.

In the chapter we encountered a sort of musical chairs. Former Presidents sometimes called in the police to investigate their successors, and councillors quit their job because former Presidents attacked them as not mature enough. Put differently, local politics in Lower Village was a process in which people replaced each other, crossing the internal boundary between the villageôs social factions and the Local Council. Policy on where and how to build the road changed, but the type of policy ï infrastructure development ï was reproduced. Budgetary allocations were revised, and the budget plan gained and lost its appeal as a boundary object. Nevertheless, the budget remained an important base of government, and its replenishment remained an important aspect of councillorship. Boundary work condensed the line between the SMZ and the village and generated internal solidarity among the Local Councillors to endure in a mandate. Seen from the outside, the boundary also hardened sufficiently to continuously rekindle rebellion. Political process, then, ñwas built into an elaborate series of councilsò (Gluckman 1956, 133).[202] In sum, the Local Council was always already a site, an aim, and a result of the cyclical negotiations (during elections and in disputes) of the internal boundary between the local state and the village-society.

An initially more clear-cut boundary was marked with regard to the Bosnian and Croatian refugees who came to Lower Village in the mid-1990s. Villagers saw a clear difference between themselves and the refugee fathers ï who had a family, but no land, house, work, or future ï and who therefore needed to be helped by the local state. For eight years the Local Council acted on behalf of the municipal branch of the committee for refugees, by running a local refugee centre. Furthermore, many villagers ï Councillors and non-Councillors alike ï acted on behalf of the village when collecting food and items for the refugees. Here distinctiveness between the ñestablishedò old village families and the refugee ñoutsidersò (Elias 1994) marked eligibility for humanitarian aid. However, over time the boundary became less meaningful, as outsiders became more like the established families, or simply moved on.

The boundary became reactivated, when the social and physical security of a neighbour of the SMZ supervisor became endangered. Later the boundary was redrawn again when the old/new refugee received social aid by the CSW. Now, he was put into another ñoutsiderò category, that of the ñmaterially endangered personò or ñsocial case.ò A social case who was 53 years old appeared as a morally dubious (corrupted) character either by virtue of having received the privilege of state aid without need, or by having become destitute by being work-

[202] While Gluckman emphasised the spatial series of councils of different territorial span in colonial Barotseland, I refer here to temporal series or cycles within one SMZ.

shy and thus not deserving it. The boundary here was drawn by now self-professed non-state people *against* a person who lived *off* state money, and was thus a state-dependant.

Other examples of boundary work abounded ï for example in the arguments about whether the veterinarian was a morally dubious politician or an affable neighbour, depending on the situational drawing of the boundary. A comparable process also lay at the very heart of the problems of the senior care service in Creek Town. Here the deeply ambivalent boundary was that between the state and kin. Much depended for the carer on whether she was regarded as a state person forcibly intruding into the family realm, or as a social daughter whose care was good and merciful. People often showed remarkable flexibility in drawing the boundary and locating themselves and others in relation to it. However, once a boundary was drawn it could also be locked, framing the relational modality of future interaction.

Relational modalities

Protagonists of the New Anthropology of the State often ñfocus on the modalities that enable the state (and, simultaneously that which is not the state) to be discursively constructed in a particular cultural and historical conjuncture [é] looking at everyday practices, including practices of representation, and the representations of state practice in public culture [é]ò (Gupta 2012, 106ï 7). Treading that path, Akhil Gupta unearthed a dazzling array of narratives of corruption as his (still rather monomorphic) ñlens for understanding the meaning of the state in the Indian context. For example, it helps one comprehend how state violence enacted on the poor is constitutive of its developmental missionò (ibid, 78). In Chapter Two, I similarly unearthed an arsenal of corruption motives and allegations wielded at ï and by ï the modern day ñheadmen.ò Undoubtedly, corruption narratives tickle the sociological imagination. But this only brings us so far. Like magic, corruption has certain material referents in the world and if it cannot be proven, nor can it be disproven.[203] When read as discourses that perpetrate violence against the poor, ócorruptionô affectively overshadows other relevant relational modalities. In my study, I therefore decided to back away from corruption clichés to unearth a variety of other relational modalities of state action directed towards the poor.

Thus, in Chapter Four I showed how villagers oscillated in their views of one extended case between blaming the victim for alcohol abuse, pitying him as a duped husband, understanding

[203] The question of religion might be dealt with in a different way. The issue was not easy to penetrate for several reasons. Orthodox Christianity has no entrenched traditions of missionizing, and while I was not discouraged from attending Christian community rites, the remote integration of the village within its parish brought with it only infrequent occasions for observation of religious practices. Given that a study project focuses by necessity on some issues and leaves others out of focus, I do not regret my treatment of religion here.

his plight as a refugee, and looking down on him as an undeserving social case. Each of these images activated a different relational modality of state action. The image of the ôalcoholicô suggested a medical or health problem, for which the state hospital provided emergency detoxification but limited prevention, counselling, and abstinence programmes. A person in need had not long to live in this constellation ï as both a professional social worker and a former President of the Local Council suggested. The ôduped fatherô image made the situation seem a family affair and off limits for the state ï though the predicament helped the hapless divorcee to find women to care and cook for him. The refugee image conjured the spirits of humanitarian reason of the 1990s, on which the supervisor of the Local Council organised help, such as free use of a state flat. Finally, the image of ômaterial endangermentô required the CSWôs social workers to extend social aid and counselling, but diminished the worth of the man in the eyes of his neighbours. Only in the last case do we have a corruption charge ï against an impoverished ôsocial caseô for being a parasite that befell the body politic (see above).

To obtain a better view of social policy, I approached the perspective of the CSW River City in Chapter Five. From the social workers point of view, social policy split into two ambivalent relational modalities: inclusive distribution for families in need, and exclusive protection of children. What united both modalities was that they were pioneered through bureaucratic erring in the spirit of the respective laws. Interesting in relation to Guptaôs thesis that corruption was the modality of wronging the poor, the law of 1991ôs socialist-humanist baseline of supporting the poor was translated in the early 2000s into an inclusive local policy/relational modality of inclusive distribution. However, a decade later the next generation of social workers narrowed their focus and developed, according to the new law of 2011, a liberal-humanist relational modality of exclusive protection. At that moment some older social workers began to ñresignò into retirement, while others struggled to maintain their stance on inclusive protection.

In the CSW Creek Town, inclusive distribution stood in an ambivalent relation to the multi-layered governance dependent on central state, but ultimately IMF support with strings attached (see Chapter Six). Returning to the vet-politician of Chapter Two, we can even discern three relational modalities: football activism, care for the agricultural economy (both helped him to find a common language with the President of the Municipal Parliament), and the socialist ethics of care through providing work. The latter modality was refined by the vet-politician into a ñtransversalò combination of the cultural and economic uplifting of his village. Was it

advantageous for the politician not to have more radical ideas? The answer can be approached via the fourth axis ï strategic selectivity.[204]

Strategic selectivity

Akhil Gupta has argued that ñ[i]n the context of the state, the dichotomy of collaboration and resistance is unhelpful in thinking of strategies for political struggle. The reason is that [é] the state is a formation that, as Stuart Hall puts it, ócondensesô contradictions (Poulantzas 1973; Hall 1981, 1986a, 1986b). It also conceals the fact that there is no position strictly outside or inside the state because what is being contested is ñthe terrain of the ideological fieldò (Gupta 2012, 108). Indeed, the strategic selectivity of state projects necessitates that social actors develop their strategies *within* the strategically selective field of the state. How has Social Anthropology positioned itself towards state power? A useful suggestion has been to ñstudy how strategies of agents are shaped and redefined in the local discourse [which] not only contributes to the understanding of specific local settings but, moreover, offers an approach to the configuration of transnational policiesò (Eckert, Behrends, and Dafinger 2012, 24). This does not imply that the configuration of the assembly of state relations is random ï ñits different apparatuses, sections and levels serve as power centres for different fractions or fractional alliances in the power bloc and/or as centres of resistance for different elements among the popular masses. Thus the state must be understood as a strategic field formed through intersecting power networks that constitutes a favourable terrain for political manoeuvre by the hegemonic fractionò (Jessop 2008 paraphrasing Poulantzas 2000, 136, 138). Therefore a social anthropological ñmicro-level study [can connect] with an analysis of trans-nationally produced policies and [é] describe specific governmental regimes as the result of intended and unintended consequences of the interactions of different actors within local, national or global political arenasò (Eckert, Behrends, and Dafinger 2012, 30).

In Chapter Six, I tackled this tension between micro-politics and macro-governance, linked by the strategic selectivity of state institutions and discourses. One puzzle was the widespread

[204] In the Local Council of Lower Village many conflicts that fragmented the society on different scales were condensed within the local state: the scrambling for scarce resources, asymmetries between men and women, between the established and the outsiders, and between the underemployed working classes that slid down the social hierarchy and self-employed entrepreneurs who rose. Not all conflicts could be attenuated or solved. Women did not attain parity in political representation, nor did the outsiders. Despite the veterinary-politicianôs aims to strengthen the productive role of local self-government, it never compared to the socialist phase when a local cooperative operated in the village. Attempts at finding work for the underemployed did not solve the general problem of rising economic inequalities. Attenuating while not radically unsettling the inequalities brought about by state organised privatisations, the organising talent of the vet was not a threat to the status quo but an asset to it and to the downtrodden.

image of the uncaring, absent state. It was so pervasive that even social work professionals draped their care for the population with discourses about its opposite ï the values of family care. I linked the image of state absence, so prevalent on the sub-local and local level, to negotiations a scale or two removed ï between the central nation stateôs representatives and international actors from the EU, the IMF and the World Bank ï and (as we saw in Chapter Five) the British DFID, a Norwegian Ministry, and the OSCE (see the Introduction). The status of Serbia as a semi-periphery in the world system ï characterised by state-led privatisation, de-industrialisation, and re-traditionalisation of gender roles ï made it receptive to diverse development programmes and debt repackaging with strings attached. Transnational actors, rather uniformly, mandated the state to reform itself and become leaner ï urging it, ironically, to perform a similar trick of organising its own withering away that had already outstripped the governing abilities of socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s-1970s (see Chapter Three). The situation of Serbia in 2009-13, however, more resembled Yugoslaviaôs in the 1980s, when it was in the grip of a sovereign debt crisis. Yugoslavia had become the first European state to accept a structural adjustment programme by the IMF. Donors urged for a leaner and more efficiently regulating state, with reduced state employment and operating on new technical principles.

In another ironic twist, the semi-peripheral status was premised on an ñopenò terrain, i.e. Serbian institutions were defined by the transnational actors as weak and unresponsive. The discourse became widespread through the national media covering the negotiations. Efficiency and leanness programmes therefore often had the paradoxical effect of reducing the flow of resources to street-level bureaucracies, while criticising the incapacity of the state. Some actors at the local scale of the state indeed tried to cooperate. It made profound sense for the vet-politician, for instance, to connect the failed infrastructure programme in Lower Village to state inefficiency, and to ñlobbyò for international donor money on his business trips e.g. to the Czech Republic (see Chapter Two). Similarly, the CSWs in River City and Creek Town adopted the liberal state idea of small is beautiful, by writing project proposals for small local initiatives like Help at Home for the Elderly. And again, the social workers operating on the relational modality of exclusive protection wanted to be more efficient in their regulation and organisation of society, and used the new tools of the law on social protection that had been, at least in part, prepared by foreign consultants (see Chapter Five).

On the other hand, I have also amply documented acts of ñresistanceò to the problematic effects of government downsizing. The most obvious example was the socialist-humanist inspired local politics of inclusive distribution. The social workers here worked against the

restricted, lean-efficiency objectives of the recent laws and regulations. As the amount of work rose exponentially because of increased poverty regulated by a continuously lean CSW, social workers reduced their policing of the incomes and property of the rural poor. This allowed the social workers to use their limited resources for more pressing and useful work.

Gupta has a point in implying that resistance and collaboration should not be dichotomous, because the complexity of the assemblage of state institutions, projects and policies does not allow binary choices. Therefore, we need a more fine-grained vocabulary ï like negotiation and translation. To give just one example, senior care in Creek Town translated neighbourly solidarity into the framework of a ñleanò senior care project. On the surface, the project seemed to implement the NPM requirement of time-compartmentalisationï while under-implementing it in practice.

Let me now look at how my analysis can contribute to regional debates, public sociology, and a more general research perspective that I propose to call the Relational Anthropology of the State.

Value added

Concerning the post-socialist debate, my findings suggest that the history of the present needs to be very seriously incorporated into our analysis of representations, relations, and practices. Thus, my findings can be of interest to the comparative regional anthropology of the state. By engaging with the state as a concrete-complex process, the socialist history could be seen less as a legacy to be overcome (or restored), and more as a source of material and discursive building blocks. From it, elements are always already tactically and strategically selected by social actors, constructing a larger variety of state forms and practices than corruption (or other auto-orientalist clichés) suggest ï emancipatory, transversal, conservative, and otherwise.

Throughout the thesis, I have argued that each major historical moment in the development of post-socialist state institutions like the Local Council, the Centre for Social Work, and the Municipality, sedimented in strategically selective ways, influencing future state transformations. Stimulated by my investigation, further research might be conducted on voluntarist governing in infrastructure development and sport activism, ways of employment through social relations, professional socialist humanism, and bureaucratic over- and under-implementation ï but also, in contrast, a longing for supposedly more rational Western bureaucratic procedures.

On a comparative plane, my research should be of interest for the general Anthropology of the State, of policy and of bureaucracy. The material might inspire renewed interest in research

on the social life of basis-democratic state forms, on vernacular humanitarianisms and humanisms, and on social mobilizations through ‚beachheads of translation' in neo-liberalizing states. My research also suggests a new symmetrical approach to the spatiality of the state – studying more intensively the interrelations between the city and the country. That way, an embedded and updated rural anthropology could be taken up by urban anthropologists and help us to appreciate the situation of the regionally mobile majority of the world population.

If appropriately translated – and I hope I have contributed towards this aim – even the field of public anthropology might take up some stimulation from the professional practices of post-Yugoslav social workers. I have two innovations in mind. First, what I called inclusive distribution can serve as a tacit form of a redistributive „new left art of government" as stipulated by Ferguson (2011). Second, the local ethics of senior care innovated by carers and social workers in Creek Town can give impulses for a feminist ethics of care developed by Joan Tronto (2011). Of special interest here might be their flexible space-times conducive of a more responsive care of the elderly.

In sum, the new, relational approach to the state proposed and demonstrated here makes it possible to construct a nuanced and processual account which enables comparison across regions and fills the gap between representations and practices of the state. Anthropological research along the four axes of embeddedness, boundary work, relational modalities, and strategic selectivity opens a critical vista on the concrete-complex processes of the construction and the transformations of the state.

Local politics is everywhere

As my field research came to a close, political developments forcefully opened up new topics, both in Serbia and internationally.

The increasingly authoritarian neo-liberal reconstruction of the welfare state which was under way during my field research, took on a new dimension. In 2014 Aleksandar Vulin, the new Minister for Social Protection, Work and Veteran Questions (the former MWSP), envisaged to expand workfare measures for social aid recipients. The minister vowed to have all major programmes and laws reviewed (RTS 2014; *Blic Online* 2014). The policies he planned were inspired by German models of labour activation (see Roberman 2014). In future work I would like to trace how the changes put in motion by the ministry were translated by the social workers.

Since 2014 Serbia has dealt with hundreds of thousands of North African and Middle East refugees passing on the Balkan route to the EU. Although the record of dealing with the

transnational migrants was ambivalent and conditional upon EU policies, the Serbian state acted in a more humane way than some neighbouring EU countries (Apostolovski 2015; Ćerimović 2015; Hann 2015; Lyman 2015). In future I would like to conduct a relational study of the Serbian state's handling of the refugee situation, taking into account the impact of EU and regional conditionality, of the refugee question of 1995 and 2000, of socialist and vernacular humani(tariani)sms, and of the solidarity by Serb Muslims with the largely Muslim refugees.[205]

The relational approach to the state will grow and transform with the uses it is put to. Combining research into the embeddedness of actors, negotiation of boundaries, relational modalities, and strategic selectivity can advance our processual knowledge of the state. Here we have a comparative method to study how representations of the state are translated into practice by diversely embedded actors within complex, strategically selective social relations. Where people have to deal with major social and political transformations, including restructurings of the welfare state, posited care crises, and large scale displacements, new politics are innovated in often unplannable local encounters and negotiations.

A relational approach to the local state can help to elucidate this history in the making, from Damaskus to Dresden, from Halle to Helsinki, from Belgrade to Berlin.

[205] In summer 2015, three out of six refugee centres lay in the Muslim dominated south of Serbia (Bjeletić 2015).

Appendix: Dramatis personae

Except for central state figures all names in the text are pseudonyms. If not indicated otherwise, a person was resident in Lower Village.

Ana, the social worker (b. 1950), born in River City. Had obtained a high-school diploma in Belgrade and worked in the CSW River City until her retirement in 2014 (chapters 4, 5).

The Artist (b. 1954), born in a village in a neighbouring municipality. After a career as a professional football player he became a modernist painter and ñartist of national import.ò Divorced, one child. He lived in River City. Organised painting summer schools and art projects, including ñArt Dialogue,ò a network of four artists ñat the margins,ò including Ruđa (chapters 3, 4, 5).

Bogdan, the driver (b. 1950), lived in a village in *grad* River City. He worked at the CSW from 1997 and interacted with its users and social workers in a way that psychologist Siniđa found often revealing and entertaining (chapter 5).

BrodiĆ, Aleksandar (b. 1964). His parents moved to River City before his birth, but kept a week end house in Lower Village. After studying law, he worked in the Agency for Unemployment, then as advisor of the Mayor, in charge of Social Activities (2008-12). Subsequently he advised the Mayor on Local Council questions (chapter 3).

Dana (b. 1976), from an agricultural family that fled Croatia in 1995. After the local refugee camp was closed in 2002, her parents relocated to Smederevo. She married her fellow refugee Miđo. After living for six years in the SMZ building, they bought a week-end house after selling Danaôs Croatian property (chapter 4).

Dunja (b. 1954), social worker at CSW River City, divorced, one son. CSW liaison person for ñArt Dialogueò and friends with the artist. Lived in River City, piloted Ana to help Pero Krajišnik obtain MOP. Defended a socialist-humanist professionalism (chapters 4, 5).

ĻoliĆ, Dejo (b. ca. 1965), member of the SMZ (2009-13), married, two children, lived with his parents from agriculture. Since 2013 President of the SMZ (chapters 3, 4).

DeliĆ, Viļo (b. 1963), former technician in River City, grew vegetables and kept pigs, using NGO startup grants. Married, two sons, among them my field assistant Tomo (b. 1987). Critic, and since 2013 new supervisor of the SMZ. Neighbour of Çiko DeliĆ (chapter 3).

DeliĆ, Çiko (b. 1966), married, three children. Formerly a machine technician, he was an agriculturalist and hobby *rakija* producer. Ex-SMZ member, football player, and critical of Bane EriĆôs *rakija*. A cousin (MZS) of Slavo JankoviĆ (chapters 2, 3).

Duđan (b. ca. 1930, died 2009), a native of Creek Town who had lived and worked as a teacher in Kosovo. In Ljiljaôs care network, and buried by her. Married to **Milkica** (b. ca. 1935), a retired teacher originally from Kosovo. Their son was a doctor in Majdanpek (chapter 6).

ņ okoviĺ, Kamila (b. 1963), SMZ member 2009-13, shared the portfolio sports and culture with Tina Pavloviĺ. Helped with the protocols. Born in Vojvodina, she was a former seamstress turned agriculturalist who had married virilocally. Her husband **Saġa** (b. 1961), was a car mechanic in River City and a veteran goalkeeper. They lived with his parents and two children in a three-generation household (chapter 3).

ņ okoviĺ, Kojo (b.1969), long-time football player and club official. SMZ member in 2000-9 and 2013-, married, two children. A self-employed painter and decorator, he persuaded his neighbour Kamila ņ okoviĺ to join the SMZ in 2009 (chapter 3).

ņ okoviĺ, Pantelija (b. 1912, died 2010), my first host. Land rich, he had been Ļetnik commander of the village during WWII. He lost seven hectare of land during early socialism (his brother eight). Later accountant of the cooperative. His land was restituted after 1991. Survived by a daughter and six grandchildren, all living outside the village. One grandson was Bane Eriĺ ôs son-in-law (Introduction, chapter 3).

ņ okoviĺ, Zlatan (b. 1955), a friendly, cautious but dedicated MZ clerk from a ñCommunist family,ò unmarried. Worked in his native Lower Village MZ since 2005 (chapters 3, 4).

Eriĺ, Bane (b. 1946), President of the SMZ (2009-2013). Married, one daughter. Since the 1970s a construction entrepreneur. His business faltered when JNA defaulted on a contract in 1999. Since then he produced branded *rakija*. Through his son-in-law (a grandson of Pantelija ņ okoviĺ) he became a long-term football activist (chapters 2, 3).

Goca (b. 1979), special pedagogue, her first project in CSW Creek Town was implementing ôHelp at Home,ô since then she alternated duty with social worker Zorana (chapter 6).

Jankoviĺ, Dugġko ó*Buba*ô (b. 1948), unmarried car mechanic, SMZ president in the 1990s, who earned money with pig farming and informal repair services. Dedicated to public affairs but quarrelsome. Fiercest opposition of the SMZ 2009-13. A distant cousin of Slavo Jankoviĺ and Jovana Simiĺ (chapters 2, 3, 4).

Jankoviĺ, Ivan (b. 1932), a widowed agriculturalist caring for a disabled daughter Ceca (b. 1962). He lived with his son ï bus driver Mirkoï and his family at the very end of the Jankoviĺ road. Relatively well educated (six years schooling), he worked in Germany for two years in the 1970s. Received various kinds of state support, by ónervatingô interface bureaucrats (Introduction).

Jankoviĺ, Mica (b. ca. 1955), shop owner and pastry producer at the very beginning of the Jankoviĺ road (500 metres from Ivan Jankoviĺ), near the main road and the monument for the partisan fighters. Married virilocally to Zoran Jankoviĺ, mother of a son (b. 1978) and a daughter. Her shop was a dwelling place for the lone órefugeeô Pero Krajiġnik, who had an extended credit line with her (chapter 4).

Jankoviĺ, Mirko (b. 1954), the bus driver of ó*Autoprevoz*ô on the village route, son of Ivan Jankoviĺ, was married to Bilja (b. 1952) and had two sons, one of them Darko (b. 1982). Mirkoôs brother was married to the school director (Introduction, chapter 2).

Jankoviĺ, Rajka (b. 1953), my host. Born in Upper Village, she had married Slavo Jankoviĺ virilocally. An active agriculturalist, Rajka was formerly an AFĢ organizer, now in the

local Orthodox community. Had two adult children. Lived with their son **Slavko**, his wife, and two daughters (chapters 2, 4).

Jankoviđ, Savo (b. 1942), a ñreal agriculturalist,ò married, father of two, grandfather. Neighbour to Miro *supervisor*, commented indulgently on Pero Krajiġnik (chapter 4). Not directly related to other Jankoviđi, but in good relations with e.g. Rajka Jankoviđ.

Jankoviđ, Slavo (b. 1947, d. 2013), married to Rajka, my host. A retired driver with ó*Autoprevoz*,ô and agriculturalist who cooperated with his neighbour, former colleague, and affine Milivoje Simiđ (Jovana Simiđôs husband), before they fought over Mladen *Veterinar*ôs political career (Introduction, chapters, 2, 3).

Jankoviđ, Tanja (b. 1984), born in River City, married virilocally to the shop owners Zoran and Micaôs son. Two small daughters. She wrote several public work projects for the SMZ (chapter 4).

Jankoviđ, Zoran (b. 1953), shop owner in the village centre. Pensioned milling cutter, married to Mica; father-in-law to Tanja, uncle of Miro *supervisor*, and neighbour and friend of Pero Krajiġnik (Introduction, chapters 2, 4).

Journalist (b. ca. 1970), a friend of SMZ president Bane Eriđ, was a week end house owner who ran a local TV programme on agricultural issues. Married, one son (chapters 2, 3).

Jovanoviđ, Boro (b. 1956), a ñreal agriculturalistò (dairy and meat production), married to **Olga** Jovanoviđ, two sons. Served in several SMZs and in Municipal Parliaments ñlike Tito.ò Instrumental in asphalting his neighbourhood road (chapters 3, 4).

Jovanoviđ, Goran (b. 1979), member of the SMZ 2009-10, married, three children. Left the SMZ after a fight with Duġko Jankoviđ. A nephew of Boro Jovanoviđ (chapter 3).

ó*Kafe Lj*ôja (b. 1982), unmarried, an opinion maker. He ran the villageôs restaurant with his widowed father. Captain of the first team of FK Lower Village in 2009 (chapter 2).

Krajiġnik, Pero, born 1960 in the Croatian borderlands with Bosnia. A welder by vocation, he came with his family as a refugee to Lower Village. His wife left him and took the sons, his sister cared for his elderly parents in another town. Underemployed since 2005. His best friends were welder Çeljko, the shop-owners, and Miro *Supervizor* (chapters 2, 4).

Lena (b. 1958), social worker with university degree from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Married, two daughters. Worked with her husband on his farm in a river plains village near River City before her employment in CSW River City in the late 1980s (chapter 5).

Ljilja (b. 1971), *gerontodomađica* from Creek Town. Married to Janez, one daughter. Employed since 2008 in the ó Help at Homeô project of Creek Townôs CSW. She cared for Maja & Veljo, Jovan, Ljubica & Duġan, Milka, Marija, and Marko etc. (chapter 6).

Lukiđ, Simo (b. 1934), good neighbour of Rajka & Savo Jankoviđ and the Simiđi, divorced, two children. His daughter was married to a grandson of Pantelija ņokoviđ, his son (d. 2006) had two daughters. Simoôs daughter-in-law and her children stayed in Simoôs house over the winter. Former driver for *Autoprevoz* and a one-time bar owner in Creek Town in the 1970s. He socialised frequently with neighbours over coffee (chapters 2, 4).

Maja (b. 1931), a retired nurse, severe asthmatic and diabetic. Confined to a wheel chair for 10 years, she was Ljiljaôs senior care user and mentor in her caring practice. Married to **Veljo** (b. 1934), a former driver for Creek Townôs hospital. Their numerous family lived nearby (chapter 6).

Marija (b. 1937), a pensioned tailor, member of Nataôs care network, widowed. She brought up three daughters who studied medicine. Two of them, a GP and a pharmacist, worked and lived in Creek Town and became part of Ljiljaôs care network (chapter 6).

Ex-Mayor Jankoviĺ (b. 1942), an engineer from the communist family of General Jankoviĺ. A Mayor of River City between 1989 and 1992 for the SPS, he retained a week end house in Lower Village while living with his wife (an urban planner) in River City (chapter 3).

Miloviĺ, Dejana (b. 1969), unemployed seamstress, wife of Rajko M. Had two grown-up children from a previous marriage. For her four children with Rajko she received child benefits until the three younger children were put in foster care in 2011 (chapter 5).

Miloviĺ, Rajko (b. 1951), former employee at the municipal greens, divorced and widowed. In his third marriage to his deceased wifeôs daughter Dejana, he had four children. They lived in a run-down former cooperative building in Upper Village. Recipients of social aid since 2003 (chapter 5).

Miro ó*Supervisor*ô (b. 1965), a self-employed small-scale painter and decorator, member of the football club (referee, janitor), and a friend of Mladen ó*Veterinar*ô Simiĺ. During his time as SMZ supervisor (2009-13), he helped Pero Krajiġnik (chapters 2, 3, 4).

Miġo (b. 1979), Croatian war refugee, arrived 1995 with his mother and grandmother, today a day labourer, e.g. night-watchman for Bane Eriĺ. His mother had married then MZ clerk Pavle. Miġo was married to fellow refugee Dana (chapter 4).

Nuġiĺ, Blagoje (b. 1946), from the Nuġiĺ neighbourhood. A former milk driver and respected agricultural family-father, he petitioned the SMZ to clear his freshly paved neighbourhood road after a landslide in 2010 (chapter 3).

Nuġiĺ, Boro (b. 1951), lived with his wife (a bank accountant) and two children in the Nuġiĺ neighbourhood. Neighbour of Blagoje Nuġiĺ. A former engineer turned agriculturalist, he offered harvest services with his tractor combine. Critical of the SMZ (chapter 3).

ó*Paliku**Ía**ô* (b. 1959), a stern master-craftsman, who professionally led the voluntary work action (*radna akcija*) at the football pitch. Unmarried, he lived in a compound with his sister, the last agronomic engineer of Lower Villageôs cooperative (chapter 2).

Pavle, ex-MZ clerk (b. 1942), a óCommunist,ô he worked as MZ clerk in Lower Village 1976-2002 (with a break of five years). Father-in-law of refugee Miġo (chapters 3, 4).

Pavloviĺ, Tina (b. 1974), member of the SMZ 2009-13, married with two children. She was born in Tuzla (Bosnia-Herzegovina) to a Muslim mother, and came to her fatherôs Lower Village fleeing the Bosnian War. Worked as a waitress, and was assertive and humorous. Her husband became a councillor in 2013 (chapter 3).

RankoviĆ, Radivoje (b. 1927) was a pensioned accountant and agriculturalist who lived with his sonôs family in a compound. He had been twice President of the SMZ ï in the 1980s and in the 1990s. He scented corruption concerning the piping works by Vojo VoloviĆôs SMZ, and alerted financial investigators and police inspectors (chapter 3).

Ruđa (b. 1964), an artisan, collaborated with the Artist as an outpatient of the Psychology Ward of River City Clinic. She lived with her mother Rada (b. 1947, died 2013).

Lazo (b. 1965), a resourceful, jocular social worker of the CSW Creek Town, until 2003 a DRC employee. Regularly drove his colleagues in the CSW car, organised donations of clothing for home patients e.g. among the ôHelp at Homeô users (chapter 6).

SimiĆ, Jovana (b. 1945), born JankoviĆ. First neighbour and childhood friend of Slavo JankoviĆ. Married uxorilocally to **Milivoje** SimiĆ (b. 1941), a retired Autoprevoz driver from the SimiĆ family. Mother of Mladen *Veterinar* and his sister, a kindergarten teacher (chapters 2, 3).

SimiĆ, Mladen ó*Veterinar*ô (b. 1967), the local vet and sports activist in the football club. Born to Jovana and Milivoje, he had studied veterinary medicine and married the Belgrade native Lica. They had two sons and lived in River City. Since 2008 repeatedly voted into the Parliament of River City on the ticket of G17plus/ URS, largely thanks to his Lower Village electorate (chapters 2, 3, 4).

Siniđa (b. 1974) in River City. He had studied psychology and had worked on temporary contracts in schools and CSWs of River City and Creek Town. His father (a teacher) and grandfather (a biologist) were dedicated communists, while he leaned more to social-liberal humanism and óexclusive protection.ô Married, two children (chapter 5).

Stanko (b. 1959), a former policeman and refugee from Croatia. Lived with his elderly parents in a week end house for free. He worked as a day labourer, and owned a mobile saw mill with which he offered firewood cutting services (chapter 4).

SPS politician (b. 1969), unmarried. Agriculturalist working with his brother and parents in the PavloviĆ road (neighbours to Tina PavloviĆ). Since 2010 he was employed as a driver in the Municipal refuse collection agency. A classificatory nephew of Slavo JankoviĆ and cousin of his political opponent Mladen ó*Veterinar*.ô He gave Pero Krajiđnik a house for free use (chapters 2, 4).

Taxidriver NuđiĆ, (b. ca. 1965), married, two adult children. Participant in paving the NuđiĆ road (chapter 3).

TodoroviĆ, Goran (b. 1967), a skilled metal worker and former pub owner. After marrying he became a small vegetable and fruit grower. Two children. His son played in the youth team of the football club, where Goran was club official. Member of the SMZ 2009-13 and friend of Mladen *Veterinar*, with whom he had plotted the rebellion (chapters 2, 3).

TođiĆ, Tadija (b. 1984), member of the SMZ and football player in the first team. Unmarried, son to a family specialised in home butchering and catering (chapter 2).

Vice-President of the SMZ Upper Village (b. 1953). A plumber and mechanic by vocation, married. His son was a professional footballer. Active in village and municipal politics

since 1992, he was instrumental in connecting Upper Village to the city water system, and helped Rajko Miloviĺ ôs family to move in into a two-container home (chapter 5).

Voloviĺ , Vojo (b. 1939), who as a pensioner moved to his fatherôs native Lower Village, where he became SMZ President between 2001 and 2009. Owned a construction firm (now defunct), and was Member of Parliament in River City for PUPS (chapter 3).

Zorana (b. 1965), divorced, single mother of two adult sons, lived in Creek Town. She was a social worker with high-school diploma employed until 2004 in a local enterprise, then at the CSW. A coffee ritual fan and driving force behind óHelp at Homeô (chapter 6).

Ćeljko (b. 1945), pensioned welder, married with one son. He still worked occasionally as a welder, often in cooperation with his friend Pero Krajiġnik (chapter 4).

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