
svoji realizaciji, se pa avtorica tega zaveda. Sam tem pomanjkljivostim ne bi dal prevelike teže. Nekateri se namreč še spominjamo Feyerabendovega epistemološkega anarhizma, v skladu s katerim se novonastajajoče teorije ob soočenju s starimi, že uveljavljenimi in dobro izdelanimi družboslovnimi teorijami in paradigmi sprva nerodno opotekajo, dokler ne shodijo, stečejo in na koncu s starimi teorijami (vsaj z nekaterimi med njimi) lahkotno opravijo. To pa je tisto, na kar tisti, ki sledimo kognitivni sociologiji in sociologiji telesa oziroma njenemu povezovanju, še čakamo.

Janja MIKULAN

Fakulteta za uporabne družbene študije v Novi Gorici / School of Advanced Social Studies in Nova Gorica

Zenonas Norkus

On Baltic Slovenia and Adriatic Lithuania: A qualitative comparative analysis of patterns in post-communist transformation

Apostrofa, distributed by Central European University Press, Vilnius 2012, pp. 375, US\$ 60.00 (ISBN 978-615-5053-50-4)

This impressive comparative analysis of the transformation of post-communist societies begins by revealing the author's ambition to provide a "*building block for the Vilnius (Lithuanian) school of the post-communist studies which would be a worthy successor to the first academic*

research institute in Soviet Studies in the world" (p. 12) also located in Vilnius where the author lives and works.

The focus of the book *On Baltic Slovenia and Adriatic Lithuania* is on explaining the causes and significant differences of the post-communist economic and political development of Eastern societies. In the book, post-communist transformation is understood as a changeover to a liberal democracy and rational entrepreneurial capitalism. However, the book tries to promote post-communist transformation as an "exit from communism" that can take different paths where not all end up as liberal democracies and rational entrepreneurial capitalism. Norkus undertakes a comparative analysis of 29 countries, where special attention is paid to the Lithuanian case of transformation in comparison to transformations in other Baltic countries and Slovenia. The book covers the patterns of political and economic change during the first decade of the post-communist transformation.

The volume is very clearly structured and logically divided into two parts with respect to its two main goals. Zenonas Norkus aims to construct a strong theory of post-communist transformation with predictive power and to provide an in-depth account of post-communist transformations. The book seeks to clarify the entire spectrum of orientations, modes of exit, and economic and political outcomes of post-communist transformation. The author searches for generalisations/patterns that

would build a post-communist transformation theory applicable to the majority of post-communist countries (29 observed cases).

Norkus formulated these patterns by applying the multi-value Qualitative Comparative Analysis (mvQCA) and TOSMANA software. This methodology enabled a systematic comparison of all paths of post-communist transformation and the elimination of those variables with no casual relevance. The selected methodology therefore allowed Norkus to identify 64 possible pathways of post-communist transformation. However, 29 of the observed countries fall under 17 pathways so there are 47 conceptually possible forms of post-communist transformation with no observed cases. QCA can limit its range only to observed instances or allow the software to make counterfactual assumptions about unobserved cases. Norkus decided on the latter approach and came up with interesting counterfactual assumptions about logically possible but empirically unobserved cases. As mentioned, the theory was also developed as a tool for analysing the unique political, economic, social and cultural features of Lithuania. It is thus appropriate that the exploration in the second part of the book goes beyond the needs of the general theory presented in the first part. The book is not only innovative from the theoretical perspective, but from the methodological one, too. Most transitologists whose focus of analysis is on democratisation and

marketisation use quantitative methods that have proven insufficient for explaining the different transitions. Accordingly, Norkus makes an important contribution to the literature dealing with exits from communism. At this point, we must also mention that there are some other exceptions among authors applying qualitative approaches in the study of post-communist transformation such as Schneider and a group of Slovenian sociologists including Adam, Makarovič, Rončević and Tomšič who are employing fuzzy-set analysis.

In the first part, which consists of four chapters, the author presents the general theory of patterns of post-communist transformation. It is crucial that the book stresses that the intended time scope of the general theory is limited, especially when it comes to explaining the outcomes of the post-communist transformation in Slovenia after 2008. The limitation of the theory derives from the fact that the outcomes of post-communist transformation are determined by the initial conditions and other factors that are unforeseeable or only appear later on. The author presents Slovenian developments as an example of an ideal post-communist transformation with the very best outcome. However, since the financial and economic crisis Slovenia has been facing significant challenges in all domains introduced and analysed in the book – cultural, social and especially political and economic. It would therefore be incredibly interesting and valuable to see what kind

of an approach the author would use to construct a theory that could address the development of Slovenian society after 2008, again in a comparative perspective with the other post-communist countries.

In the first chapter, Norkus presents a short description of communism as the point of departure of post-communism transformation, develops a concept of exiting from the communist state, and classifies the pathways of post-communist transformation. He points to four aspects of an exit from communism (orientation, economic mode, political mode and outcome). Although the author describes several possible outcomes of post-communist transformation, not all outcomes are equivalent. One possible outcome of a post-communist transformation is understood to be the most optimal – a combination of rational entrepreneurial capitalism (REC) and a liberal democracy – without the author questioning whether such an outcome is in fact truly ideal. The second chapter focuses on the orientations and modes of post-communist transformation. Norkus details the variables used to describe the initial conditions of a post-communist transformation in cultural, economic and political domains. The author assigns four values of these three domains or initial conditions variables to 29 empirical cases of post-communist transformations. For the cultural conditions or so-called orientation of post-communist transformation, Norkus distinguishes four values, namely: continuation,

restitution, emulation (imitation) and innovation. He classifies Slovenia as the only country displaying an innovative orientation in the economic and political domains. For the economic conditions, he differentiates minimal, partial, gradual-incremental and radical (shock therapy) values or market reforms. He describes Slovenia as a clear case of a gradual incremental form of an economic mode of exit. Further, he also assigns four values for the political mode of exit: continuation of the authoritarian regime, democratisation from above, anti-communist revolution from below, and “refolution” (a pact of ex-communist and opposition elites). According to Norkus, Slovenia encountered the latter mode of political transformation. The third chapter explains the concepts used to describe the outcomes of post-communist economic and political transformation and applies those concepts in the explication with the intention to classify specific post-communist countries. The fourth chapter is the book’s central chapter since it moves from a conceptual analysis and description of cases by key variables to a presentation of ten final patterns explaining the causes of the emergence or non-emergence of liberal democratic capitalism, rational entrepreneurial capitalism, political oligarchic capitalism, state capitalism and a liberal democracy. These patterns represent the post-communist transformation theory. A special value of this chapter and the book in general lies in the author’s analysis of patterns that cover

both actually existing and only potential (counterfactual) pathways for all cases of post-communist transformation. Therefore, the volume offers rich calculations and explanations of all ways of post-communist transformation.

If we are to make a conclusion regarding the first part of the book, Norkus meets the high criteria of a good theory since the author not only explains the outcome of the observable cases of post-communist transformation, but also elaborates different varieties in the outcomes of transformation and formulates specific scenarios about unobserved but theoretically possible cases. In one table, Norkus presents a classification of 17 empirically observable pathways of post-communist transformation. As already mentioned, this is far less (17) than the number of all possible pathways (64), which means that the empirical reality is quite poor. Since Norkus classified 29 observed countries into 17 pathways of post-communist transformation, this means that certain countries had very similar pathways.

In the second part of the book, which is made up of three chapters, Norkus' goal is to apply the general theory of the post-communist transformation of Eastern European countries developed in the first part to an analysis of the state and trends of the development of post-communist Lithuania, also in a comparative perspective. In addition to the orientations, economic and political modes of transformation, Norkus uses the

extra variables explained below in the presentation of the fifth chapter and also extends the time frame since the analysis in this part is not only limited to the first post-communist decade but also covers certain developments in 2009 and 2010. In the fifth chapter, he takes up a question which is repeatedly tackled in the Lithuanian mass media by concerned citizens and analysts: why was Estonia less affected by the transformational recession of the early 1990s, recovered first and performed best among Baltic states. He concludes that the alleged ex-communist misrule was not the main cause of Lithuania's underperformance, but geostrategic (Baltics) and cultural (Protestants vs. Catholic) factors. The analysis in this part also includes Latvia and Estonia. However, in the sixth chapter, his in-depth comparison is extended by adding the case of Slovenia. This chapter is probably the most interesting part of the book for Slovenian readers. It directly addresses the title of the book *On Baltic Slovenia and Adriatic Lithuania*. Norkus argues that the implementation of the Sachs-Peterle-Umek Act (a Slovenian plan of shock therapy) in 1992 would most probably not have made Slovenia an "Adriatic Estonia". Due to the different cultural tradition (Catholic religion and its influence on Slovenian society) and political power balance (influential ex-communist political parties), it would instead have made Slovenia an "Adriatic Lithuania" with an economic performance superior to that of

Lithuania, but inferior to the present. In addition, he concludes that if there had been a real chance for Slovenia to become an “Adriatic Lithuania”, there were no real possibilities for Lithuania to become “Baltic Slovenia”. Although the author’s macro and micro description of the Slovenian transitional economy is correct, he does not recognise the importance of the “economics of development” for the development of the country. This includes development factors such as developmental strategies, the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, investments in human resources, elevation of the idea of a society of knowledge, the stimulation of research and development, the stimulation of innovations and use of IT technologies etc. In recent years, Slovenia has definitely been lagging behind in most of these domains and, from this angle, the situation and prognoses for Slovenia are not as good as they are presented in the book. Detailed analyses of the Slovenian situation from this standpoint could also offer a partial explanation of the current economic situation. In general, such results definitely put the gradualist approach in a different perspective and make us wonder if Slovenia really (still) belongs to the

“capitalist world system core”, as seen by Norkus. And, last but not least, we would like to briefly address the Slovenian political transformation presented as “innovative and ingenious”. Although the descriptions in the book are correct, I believe they are too general and do not offer a deeper analysis that would reveal various deficiencies of the Slovenian political domain and provide a fruitful platform for understanding the political crisis in the country. In analysing and understanding the Slovenian political results of the post-communist transformation, special attention should be also given to various stakeholders (political parties, public administration, judiciary, mass media, civil society etc.), policy-making processes, political participation, readiness to carry out different reforms etc.

The final chapter of the book is devoted to questions of the consolidation and quality of the liberal democracy in Lithuania. Norkus concludes that Lithuania is a unique example of a post-communist society because the pact with the ex-communist and anti-communist elite was never really abolished and he points out the institution of presidential impeachment as a stress test of the Lithuanian liberal democracy.