Europe: East and West
Undergraduate Research Symposium 2003

Sponsored by
The Center for Russian and East European Studies
and
The Center for West European Studies/
European Union Center

On April 4, 2003, 15 undergraduate students from a variety of majors and schools presented their research papers on Europe or Russia as part of the second annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, a competition modeled after graduate-level conferences. In addition to students from the University of Pittsburgh, this year's symposium included the participation of students from Mercyhurst College and the College of Wooster. All students were selected to participate based on abstracts of their papers by a committee of faculty affiliated with the Centers for Russian and East European Studies and West European Studies. The committee also placed each student on one of five panels (Foreign and Development Policy, European and National Identities, Culture, Economies in Transition, and National Context) according to research topic. The students then had six weeks to revise their papers for submission and prepare their presentations. They were assisted by two doctoral students with experience in presenting research and teaching undergraduate students.

For each panel, a team of three judges, consisting of two faculty members and one graduate student, evaluated both the students' papers and their presentations. A First Prize was chosen for each panel, and one student was awarded the Grand Prize for overall best paper and presentation. The awards and cash prizes were presented to the students at the closing reception. Members of the University of Pittsburgh community attended the presentations and the closing reception, all held in the William Pitt Union on the University's main campus.

The Grand Prize and First Prize papers are included in this publication.

Grand Prize

Culture Panel

Dane Roberts for “Themes in Comedy: Russia and the West”

First Prizes

Economies in Transition Panel

Igor Voloshen for “European Union Enlargement: Challenges for the Czech Financial Sector”

European & National Identities Panel

Brandon Boyd for “Eastern Europe as a Distinct European Region: National Identity vs. NATO Integration”

Foreign & Development Policy Panel

Heidi Mawby for “STABEX: The Stagnation of Diversity and Advantage Lost”

National Context Panel

Susan Hicks for “Headstrong Women and Timid Men: Social Marginalization of Males and Female Empowerment in O’Connor’s Ireland”

The Center for West European Studies/European Union Center and the Center for Russian and East European Studies would like to express their appreciation to Ms. Samantha Hryciuk for her work on editing these research papers for publication.

We would also like to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations for helping to make the first Undergraduate Research Symposium a success:

Selection Committee:
Dr. Paul Bové
Dr. Bob Donnorummo
Dr. Ilya Prizel
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Panel Judges:
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UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 2003

PROGRAM

Panel 1: Foreign and Development Policy

Heidi Mawby: *STABEX: The Stagnation of Diversity and Advantage Lost*

Mia Javier: *Development Assistance Policy*

Timothy Krysiek: *Jekyll & Hyde: A Strategic Approach to 21st Century Relations with the Russian Federation*

Panel 2: European and National Identities

Stephen Bonko: *Nazi Propaganda and the Ethics of the Electorate*

Brandon Boyd: *Eastern Europe as a Distinct European Region: National Identity vs. NATO Integration*

Jenna Creighan: *The Future of East Europe*

Panel 3: Culture

Katherine Matson: *"This Kiss for All the World": Nietzsche's Effect on Klimt's Beethoven Frieze*

Patricia McNeill: *The Presence of Homosexual Desire in Renaissance England as Demonstrated by Shakespeare's Sonnets and Twelfth Night*

Emily J. Raike: *The Aesthetics of Horror in Elizabethan and Jacobean Theater: Scaring the Renaissance Audience*

Dane Roberts: *Rule-Breaking in Comedy in Russia and the West*

Panel 4: Economies in Transition

Jeremy Hicks: *Economies in Transition: The Case of Eastern Europe*

Aaron Rusz: *Cross-Disciplinary Analysis: Slovak Republic and the EU*

Igor Voloshen: *The European Union Enlargement: Challenges for the Czech Financial Sector*

Panel 5: National Context

Robert Fuller: *Opportunistic Memories: The Role of Political Opportunity Structure and Collective Memory in the 1953 East German Workers' Uprising*

Susan Hicks: *Headstrong Women and Timid Men: Social Marginalization of Males and Female Empowerment in O'Connor's Ireland*

Margaret J. Rencewicz: *The Polish National Catholic Church: The Beginnings, or Accounting for the Revolution*

The Center for Russian and East European Studies

For over a decade, the region that includes the former Soviet Union and the states of Central and Eastern Europe has been undergoing fundamental and, at times, tumultuous change. Societies are being transformed, and economic and political systems are being rebuilt under a variety of models and conditions. But even as new dynamics are emerging and new alliances are being formed, long-standing traditions persist. In the United States, a new generation of scholars, familiar not only with the area and its history, culture, and language, but also trained in social science approaches and methods, is addressing these issues in sophisticated and increasingly integrated ways. The Center for Russian and East European Studies (REES) plays a vital role in forging these new directions of research and teaching, thanks to its faculty, dedicated staff, strong commitment to crossing traditional cultural boundaries and active partnerships with institutions and scholars in the region of study.

Established in 1965, the Center for Russian and East European Studies is designated by the U.S. Department of Education for Title VI funding as a National Resource Center. This distinguishes REES as one of the nation's strongest language and area studies centers. The Center is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the University of Pittsburgh in teaching, research, and public service related to the former Soviet and Central/East European world region. The 71 faculty members affiliated with REES are based in 14 arts and sciences departments and five professional schools. This diverse and highly accomplished faculty allows REES to embrace a broad, multidisciplinary teaching and research mission.

The Center for West European Studies / European Union Center

The Center for West European Studies (CWES) promotes the study of Western Europe at the University of Pittsburgh by coordinating existing departmental activities and by developing new courses, lectures, symposia, and conferences with international participants. Through its outreach efforts, the Center also builds relationships among the University, the business community, policy-makers, and community organizations. Since 1984, CWES has built an international reputation for excellence in research on the European Union and its Member States. Other Center research foci include comparative public policy, social and intellectual history, questions of identity, and Europe's historical and contemporary role in the world.

In July 1998, CWES was selected in a nationwide competition as one of only 10 European Union Centers (EUC) in the United States. In 2001, the EUC at the University of Pittsburgh was re-designated as one of the U.S. network's 15 centers. The goals of the EUC at the University of Pittsburgh include promoting research and teaching related to the European Union, developing a regional outreach network to disseminate EU knowledge, and creating a transatlantic (EU-US) policy network to bring together academics and practitioners through policy conferences, distance learning education, and other collaborations with European institutions.

Themes in Comedy:

Russia and the West

Dane Roberts

In one episode of The Simpsons, Homer is abducted by aliens. Fearing the worst, he begs, "Please! Don't eat me! I have a wife and kids . . . eat them!" One reason this is so funny is the element of surprise. When he mentions his wife and kids we of course expect him to be appealing to the aliens' sense of mercy (or humanity, if you will). Instead, he offers his family in exchange for his life. The reason that this comes as a surprise, the reason we expect differently, is that there are certain *rules* governing human conduct. The father is *supposed* to live unselfishly, provide for the family, and sacrifice for the family if need be. This relationship between rules and comedy seems to have general applicability. We laugh when someone violates the rule that "people walk upright"—that is, when he trips. We laugh when people violate rules of speech—that is, when they bungle sentences or make slips of the tongue. And we even (and especially) laugh at the violation of ethical and social rules. In Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Dioneo's tale about putting the devil in hell is uproariously funny just because it is in such flagrant violation of the Christian creed. In this paper I will examine comedy as a form of rule-breaking. (By comedy, I mean "the stuff that makes us laugh." The other, more general, meaning of comedy will be considered later.) I believe comedy in the Western tradition is very often "anti-creedal" or anti-deontological in form—it gets its bite through the violation of rule or law. This is not an attempt at giving necessary and sufficient conditions for comedy. Henri Bergson is absolutely right that we ought not "aim at imprisoning the comic spirit within a definition" (471). I will argue that anti-creedalism is an important aspect of the comic spirit. I will then examine this principle in the light of the comic tradition of Russian literature.

Several examples of funny *and* unfunny literature will show the relevance of rules in comedy. In *Bisclavret*, the medieval tale, when the scammed and cuckolded husband (in the form a wolf) finally encounters his wife, he ferociously attacks her, ripping off her nose. In the story's happy ending, among the descendants of this unfaithful wife, "several women of the family / were actually born without noses, / and lived out their lives noseless" (in Wilkie and Hurt 1353). As the wise man says, "We've seen many strange things / happen in Brittany!" (in Wilkie and Hurt 1351). This plot element is an example of absurdity, a comic element which consists, in its essence, of the violation—or even disappearance—of rational order and law. Another medieval work, *The Art of Courtly Love*, is funny, too, but for its violation of another kind of law. To the contemporary Christian sensibility at least, Capellanus's treatise is humorous in its insistence on the violation of the conventions of marriage and traditional morality. If, after having read fifteen pages, the tract becomes far less amusing, it is only because the resistance to convention has become codified. The rule-breaking itself has become a rule. A framework of commandments, sanctioned by the God of Love, takes the place of what initially seemed subversive.

The Greek tragedy might be called the antithesis of comedy. What makes it so different? According to Aristotle, "comedy is . . . an imitation of characters of the lower type," who have some "defect or ugliness" (in Wilkie and Hurt 967). Nathan A. Scott, in his extrapolation of Aristotle's literary theory, claims, "this defect, presumably, consists in one or in some combination of the vices enumerated in the *Nicomachaean Ethics*, such as vulgarity or buffoonery or foolhardiness" (88). The tragic hero, on the other hand, must be "a man extraordinarily good and just, who yet brings misfortune on himself not by vice or depravity, but by some error or frailty" (in Wilkie and Scott 973). Henry Myers believes that it is not so much that the hero is better than us, but that he is more of an extremist: "To reach his goal, whatever it may be, he is always willing to sacrifice everything else, including his life" (qtd. in Scott 90). He cites Oedipus, Hamlet, and Ahab as men who are obsessed by one thing, absorbed by one principle—in other words, governed by one rule. (They are like the hedgehogs of Isaiah Berlin's dichotomy.) The buffoons of the comedies surely have no such predilection. By their indulgence in vulgarity and vice they demonstrate a ready willingness to violate any principle set before them. It is no coincidence that Shakespeare's Falstaff is one of both the funniest and most rule-bending characters in literature.

Thus, is it any wonder that comedy often is, and has been, seen as irreverent and subversive? Chaucer, with his hilarious depiction of the corruption of the Friar and Pardoner, surely was not helping maintain church authority. Any medium that habitually makes light of the violation of moral rules will be opposed by whatever institution is charged with the preservation of order. And Martin Grotjahn agrees that "the spirit of irreverence is *necessary* for laughter" (273 emphasis added). Governments are also usually conservative entities, having a great stake in the maintenance of mores and the rule of law. It is no surprise, then, that comedy has "never flourished under a dictatorship" (Corrigan 361). If comedy thrives on the violation of rules, then it must always take aim at the establishment, the source of those rules. C. L. Barber points out that "the clown or Vice, when Shakespeare started to write, was a recognized anarchist who made aberration obvious. . . ." (364) This antinomy will naturally set young and old against each other, subversive versus conventional, son against father. Northrop Frye confirms, "Comedy often turns on a clash between a son's and a father's will. Thus the comic dramatist as a rule writes for the younger men in his audience [this was definitely true of Machiavelli, who will be discussed later], and the older members of almost any society are apt to feel that comedy has something subversive about it" (142). And Ludwig Jekyls (the psychoanalysts have a heyday with the father/son idea) found that in classical comedies "the feeling of guilt which, in tragedy, rests upon the son, appears in comedy displaced on the father; it is the father who is guilty" (264). Even if it is not specifically a father/son relationship, the idea of role inversion is always comic to Bergson (qtd. in Jekyls 267). So the comedian is a critic and destroyer of the establishment—a vulgar, libertine, rule-breaking, role-inverting threat to order. Or is he? Could comedy be so uni-dimensional? And could something so destructive continue to thrive as a near-constant cultural institution?

In the realm of politics, comedians need not be anarchists. Neither need they be anti-establishment progressives. Robert W. Corrigan in fact argues that "comedy is by nature conservative" (353). What does this mean, and what does it do to the thesis that comedy is anti-creedal? The false conclusion of the previous paragraph was partly based on a conflation of form and meaning. That the form of comedy is often rule-violation does not imply that the comic writer advocates rule-violation. Laughter at comic vice is, as often as not, the laughter of scorn. Corrigan asserts that the purpose of this scorn is "always corrective. In showing us the immensity of our follies, the satirist is either seeking to restore values and patterns of behavior… he is urging us to discover new ideals and ways of living" (354).[1] Corrigan's argument is largely based on the comic plays of Aristophanes, father of comedy and staunch conservative. "In each of his plays," Corrigan writes, "Aristophanes is attacking the manifestations of political, social, and moral corruption which he believed were the direct result of the Athenians' shift away from an agricultural to an artisan and mercantile economy, their adoption of a more imperialist 'foreign policy,' and their willingness to accept the validity of new forms of thought and art"

[1] Incidentally, here, by admitting that comedy can urge us to find *new ways of living*, Corrigan contradicts his earlier claim that all comedy is conservative. It doesn't if "conservative" is glossed so broadly that it refers to anything that wishes to "conserve" human life, which is the definition that Corrigan sometimes seems to be using, and which would include progressive ideologies; but Corrigan earlier used "conservative" to mean what Barry Goldwater and William Buckley are.

(354). In Aristophanes' *The Lysistrata*, presumably the conservative political message is that Athens should be more isolationist and get its armies disentangled from conflict with Sparta and the other Greek states. This is indeed a conservative message. But the way in which it is delivered is by no means straight-laced. *The Lysistrata* employs some highly interesting, rule-violating comic forms. First of all, there is absurdity by the bushels. And there is surely enough raucous behavior to warrant an indictment of indecorousness. Further, the whole premise of the plot (if "plot" is the right word) is role-inversion. The women shed their normal domestic roles and take up the civic role normally reserved for men. In addition, there is inconsistency in their very plan. David Konstan points out that "The women's urgent appetite for sex is not entirely compatible . . . with the motive of humbling the men by withholding sexual intercourse" (47). They want sex so much they give it up— seemingly irrational, yet highly pragmatic. Finally, even though their possession of power was only ever meant to be temporary, they seek to replace masculine social values with "the specter of a communal identity that…clashes with the norms of Athenian social life" (Konstan 53). The women of *The Lysistrata* are undoubtedly subversive, yet through them Aristophanes expressed a conservative hope.

If comedy and government can agree, then maybe comedy and religion can as well. This seems plausible when considering that one of the greatest expressions of religious faith is Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Yet, the *Commedia* is not much fun at all. It exhibits that attachment to law (here, Christian law) that seems to preclude humor. Some opportunities do arise, though, when, in Hell, all law is turned on its head. For instance, in a fine example of the comic possibilities of role-inversion, in the *Inferno*'s Canto XIX, Dante scolds the pope for twenty-seven lines, beginning, "Alas, now tell me, how much treasure / did our Lord ask of St. Peter / before he put the keys in his hands?" Surely he demanded only, 'Follow me!' And just a little later on, in Canto XXI, the demons nearly violate their pact not to harm Dante: "They lowered their hooks, one saying to another, / 'Should I nick him on the rump?' / and being answered, 'Yes, let him have it!'" Although these episodes are amusing, they are not, of course, the reason the trilogy is called a "comedy." It is a comedy because of its general form of moving from despair to triumph.

In this sense of the word, Christianity has much to do with comedy. The Christian eschatology is nothing less than a cosmic comedy, beginning with Adam's (or perhaps Satan's) fall, moving to Christ's redemption of mankind, and ending with eternal bliss for the righteous. The story of Job also takes this form. And a case could be made for Job being a comedy in the more colloquial sense. If we detach ourselves from emotion (as Bergson says is requisite for laughter), Job's situation is very funny. He is continually being punished for no apparent reason. It is much like Punch and Judy. God is Punch, repeatedly and senselessly visiting violence on Job's head. Job's suffering and this unexplainable violation of the "rules of justice" point to what Christianity and comedy most essentially share: a recognition of the mystery and imperfection of human life. This is a point Scott makes best: "The Christian imagination does not shrink . . . from the tangibility, from the gross concreteness, of our life in time, and it is not afraid to face the limited, conditioned nature of human existence" (112). "The finiteness of the human condition is, of course, never minimized; our human nature remains creatural, even in the highest reaches of its freedom and self-transcendence, and we never cease to be involved in the relativities of historical existence" (Scott 110).

The plays of Aristophanes already showed that comedy can have a social role as political criticism. If comedy has another social role it is surely this: its ability to help us recognize this conditioned, difficult, and complex nature of human existence. For imposing deontological rules on human behavior is nothing less than an attempt to simplify the human situation, and comedy allows us to reject these rules in a safe environment. Comedy is a kind of social laboratory: fiddle with this rule, throw out that law and see what happens! It allows us to set our rigid principles aside (it puts them aside for us), let our moral guard down, and take things a little less seriously. Compare, by contrast, tragedy. Remember the tragic heroes, Oedipus and Ahab, with their intense, unconditioned acceptance of a single principle. "Most of them die early and never enjoy the felicity of a long and complete life. For they soon exhaust themselves in the effort to gain release from the restrictions that are a consequence of their finitude" (Scott 91). The function of the comic man, though, is "simply to be an example of the contingent, imperfect, earth-bound creature that in truth we all really are. . . . He asks us not to be afraid to acknowledge that we are only humans and that our residence is not in the heavens" (Scott 93). This goes a long way in explaining Bergson's observation that "the comic does not exist outside the pale of what is strictly *human*" (472). The realm of the human mind is the only realm where law *can* be rejected because there is no hard and fast law. The human mind is the realm of freedom. All else is part of the Realm of Nature, where there is no nomological flexibility. This unique feature of human life leads to what Lionel Trilling calls its "variousness, possibility, complexity, and difficulty." It resists easy moralizing. It resists any imposition of *law*. It is the reason philosopher Leszek Kolakowski pleads for "moderation in consistency."

The Italian thinker Machiavelli provides an interesting study of the principles laid out above, especially in getting straight the relationship between comedy and politics, for, though he is better known for his political writings, Machiavelli was also a comic playwright. And his politics and comedy both display, above all else, flexibility of principle. In the *Mandragola*, the comic hero Callimaco uses any means he can to seduce Lucrezia, a woman of absolute honesty and chastity. In his political treatise *The Prince*, Machiavelli advocates that the ruler use any means necessary to secure power. Callimaco's rule-bending seduces the audience to laugh; the prince's rule-bending seduces the people to follow. The political scientist Samuel P. Huntington calls "celerity and surprise those two ancient principles of war" (qtd. in Kaplan 78). They are equally the ancient principles of comedy.

Bergson explores an idea related to my thesis but concludes that it does not get at the root of comedy because it "would equally apply to a host of cases in which we have no inclination whatever to laugh" (475). This is certainly true. People, unless they are perverse, do *not* laugh at most cases of rule-violation. Hearing of rape and homicide on the ten o'clock news is emphatically not amusing. Deviation from moral rules usually affects us adversely, and we are not wont to look upon it with affection or delight. So there must be some other principle at work. I think Aristotle got it right when he points out that, though the characters in comedies have some defect or vice, "it is not painful or destructive. To take an obvious example, the comic mask is ugly and distorted, but does not imply pain" (in Wilkie and Hurt 968). So the constraint is that the rule-violation cannot be ultimately threatening. And usually it is not when presented on the stage. We sit in our chairs knowing that it is not *real*, that we will not be hurt. Psychologists point out that this is the form of our very first experience of laughter: the feeling of danger with the assurance of safety. A baby, after all, giggles when its father's hands loft it into the air, catching it before it meets the fatal ground. And is this not the form of the great cosmic, existentialist joke? We instinctively fear an absurd universe, void of meaning, yet that same prospect guarantees that we have nothing to lose. If there were no meaning to life, then we could all—with Job perhaps—enjoy a good laugh.

An examination of Russian literature provides some interesting developments of, and contrasts to, the theme of rule-breaking found in Western comedy. The first thing to be noted is the very strong connection between Russian and Western literature. If rule-violation were found to be an important element of Russian literature, it would by no means give “cross-cultural” evidence for the universality of the theme; for Russia’s literary tradition is widely held to have begun with the influence of the West in the 18th century. And although it quickly developed some distinctive national traits, Russian literature continued to be heavily influenced by the literary forms and intellectual currents of Western Europe. For a simple illustration of this point, remember that I began my discussion with an example from the medieval tale of *Bisclavret*, in which, as punishment for her unfaithfulness, a woman's nose is bitten off by her husband. Her progeny, as a result, are born without noses. This comic situation is picked up by Nikolai Gogol, the greatest of Russian comic writers. In his story “The Nose" a Major awakes to find "instead of a not unbecoming nose of moderate proportions, a ridiculous, empty, smooth space" (41). But Gogol's development of the situation reveals one significant difference between Western and Russian literature.

Not only in comedy, but across the media, Russian artists are known for their "maximalism", their propensity to develop themes to their most extreme conclusions. Gogol takes the idea of "noselessness" way beyond its simple mention in the Western tale, giving the missing nose a mind of its own and relating the Major's wild goose chase through St. Petersburg, trying to capture the strangely anthropomorphized nose. When he encountered the nose in a church, it "had entirely concealed its face in its stiff collar, and was praying with an expression of utmost piety. 'How can I appoach him?' thought Kovalyov. 'To judge by his uniform and hat he must be a state councillor'" (43). Nearly every development is more absurd, more rule-violating, than its predecessor, yet it is all related with utmost sincerity and, by the heavy use of digression, a seeming concern for the accuracy of every detail. And just as the wise man in *Bisclavret* announces that "We've seen many strange things / happen in Brittany!" Gogol summarizes by saying, "Whatever you might say, such things do happen—rarely perhaps, but they happen all the same" (61).

This penchant for maximalism manifests in another way. Though, as Aristotle said, comedy often focuses on some human frailty or vice, Russian comic writings often magnify the defect to tragic proportions. The "Insignificant Man" is perhaps the most important character in Russian literature, and he is often so weak, pathetic, and even neurotic that the boundary between comedy and tragedy is very fluid. The reader is unsure whether laughter or tears is the more appropriate response. This genre is sometimes said to have begun with Gogol's "The Overcoat"; it continues with the grim psychological tales of Dostoevsky (e.g., "Notes from Underground", "The Double"), and is even present in the theatrical comedy of the Soviet playwright Nicholai Erdman. In his play *The Suicide*, various representatives of Russian society who learn of the main character Semyon's impending suicide try to convince him to do it on behalf of their cause. With all the attention, of course, Semyon feels renewed purpose and decides not to do it. Wherever the Insignificant Man occurs, the primary comic effect derives from his aberration, his exaggerated weakness and fragility, even his neurosis. In one of the more extreme permutations of the Insignificant Man, Vsevolod Garshin's "The Red Flower", the main character, an insane man confined to an asylum, decides he can redeem the world from evil if he only manages to destroy a red flower growing in the yard. This story perhaps represents an extreme point on the comedy-tragedy continuum. Our recognition of the comic ridiculousness of the character and plot are almost entirely buried by the painful, realistic account of his psychological sufferings. Thus, from Erdman and Gogol, to Garshin and Dostoevsky, the comic element tapers off and tragedy becomes more pronounced. The distinction, though, is sometimes hard to identify. This, perhaps, is a significant difference from Western comedy, where, as far as I can tell, such a close relationship between tragedy and comedy (the Insignificant Man, in particular) only truly developed in the 20th century.

The relationship between comedy and politics in Russia is also very interesting. The above discussion pointed out that comedy can be both subversive and conservative. In the former case, its propensity to exhibit the violation of behavioral rules is seen as a threat; in the latter, its attention to rule-breaking invites the laughter of scorn and a renewed commitment to those rules. The anti-establishment nature of comedy has perhaps been more pronounced in Russia, for comedy has usually had a strained relationship to the government. There is at least one exception, though. Interestingly, one of the first Russian comic playwrights was none other than Catherine the Great. But, though she was the absolute monarch, the "enlightened" Catherine had progressive hopes for Russian. She was especially concerned to eliminate superstition, and comedy was one of her vehicles, writing a trilogy of comedies aimed at making fun of freemasonry and shamanism (O'Malley). Catherine was hopeful that comedy could encourage the elimination of traditional, superstitious practices. "You ask me why I write so many comedies . . . *Primo*, because it amuses me; *secundo*, because I should like to revive the national theater, which has been somewhat neglected for lack of new plays; and *tertio*, because it is a good thing to give a bit of a drubbing to the visionaries, who are becoming quite arrogant" (qtd. in O'Malley). Thus the progressive tendency of comedy was in perfect accord with Catherine's goals.

But not all governments looked so kindly on comedy. During the reign of Nicholas I (1825-55) comedy (along with much else) was heavily censored—before printing and before theatrical production (Senelick ix). "Attacks on personalities were proscribed, as well as anything which might reflect negatively on the workings of the government, the Church, the bureaucracy, the legal system, serfdom or the upper classes" (x, op cit). Obviously comedy could not flourish under such circumstances. But perhaps because of such restrictive circumstances Russian authors had to be more inventive in their comic forms. In 1851, Aleksei Tolstoy and Aleksei Zhemchuzhnikov (under the pen name "Kozma Prutkov") wrote *Fantasy*, a play which took aim at what must have been one of the few things the Nikolaian censors would allow: other plays, vaudevilles in particular (Senelick 59-81). In the process they created what might be a genuine precursor to the absurdism and surrealism of the 20th century. The play is "sheer nonsense" (xiv, op cit), a loose collection of absurd vignettes barely revolving around a ridiculous plot. The degree to which one finds it funny is the degree to which rule-breaking and comedy are related, for few rules of form or logic are left intact.

Finally, like Nicholas I, the Soviet regime had little patience for comedy. Erdman's *The Suicide*, written in 1928, was banned and never produced on a Soviet stage. Erdman himself, after his play was banned, disappeared (though he was apparently rediscovered, for we know he died in 1970; see Introduction to Erdman). What did the Soviets find objectionable about *The Suicide*? The difficulty of this question is representative of the difficulty of understanding the ultimate meaning of any comedy. First, Semyon is unemployed and this is suggested to be the cause of his effete self-pity. The censors, then, may have seen the play as, in part, a criticism of the failing Soviet economy. One of the proposals given for the cause on behalf of which Semyon is committing suicide goes as follows "life is unbearable, in the event of my death no one is to blame except our beloved Soviet State" (31). If this is what the Soviet censors disliked then they would surely having been missing the point, for all the excuses and motives alike for Semyon's suicide are made subject to the laughter of scorn. In the end we recognize that Semyon is simply pitiful and weak, and almost as pitiful are those who want a life to be taken on behalf of their cause, but who would prefer to pay someone else to do it. Yet, the censors may have recognized that, even if the play is not directly critical of the government; even if it, in fact, mocks those who would blame the government, it is difficult to see where the criticism stops. For comedy never draws a clear boundary between what is laughable and what is noble; it never announces what it is in *favor* of. It sometimes seems to indict everything it touches. And the ambiguity is a result of its form. For it doesn't, like the hedgehog, insist on any single principle. It is the fox, sly and indeterminate. It bends rules and expectations wherever it can in the pursuit of a good laugh.

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The European Union Enlargement: Challenges for the Czech Financial Sector

Igor Voloshen

Introduction

The past decade has been one of evolution and transformation for the European Union (EU) in general and its member states in particular. The successful implementation of the European Monetary Union (EMU) and the successful launch of the euro within the Eurozone on January 1, 2002, have marked a new beginning for the EU and its members. After the successful launch of the euro, enlargement remains the biggest challenge facing the EU; it will in fact be the enlargement policy that will cause the transformation and evolution of the EU institutions and policies in the future years. Dr. George Bermann of Columbia University believes that enlargement will provide a useful challenge for the European Union: "With this enlargement, the European Union truly crosses a threshold. The way in which the Union copes with it will be a fair indication of its capacity to handle subsequent enlargement that I can envision even one that might include such large Eurasian entities as Russia and Turkey" (Bermann 1). The accession of ten new members during the first wave will enlarge the EU to twenty-five members, and test the efficiency of the EU rotating presidency. Enlargement will create challenges in the allocation of sustainable development funds and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) funds, as well as create new challenges in addressing environment policy in the new member nations. On the other hand there are many challenges that are facing the ten candidate states undergoing rapid transition to implement all the criteria for accession, outlined in the thirty-one chapters of the *acquis communautaire* (*acquis*; accession treaty), in order to meet the projected 2004 accession date.

In this paper I will more closely look at the challenges faced by one candidate country, the Czech Republic. I will start by looking at the current state of the financial sector in the Czech Republic through an examination of the banking system. Furthermore, I will examine the EU financial sector criteria that must be met by each candidate state before accession and evaluate how compatible the current state of the Czech financial sector is with the *acquis*. Throughout the paper I will ask what barriers for accession still exist within the Czech financial sector.

By closely examining and analyzing the nature of the present barriers, we can better understand the nature of the EU enlargement criteria, and the hard process of transition facing the Czech Republic. As the projected 2004 date of the first wave of accession approaches, I believe this research project will provide insight into the ways in which the current fifteen EU member nations will have to help the new members improve their finances and transform and liberalize their economies to a level which can compete with the union as a whole. This case study will serve as a microcosm of the larger issue of EU enlargement and the capacity of the EU to handle subsequent enlargement in the future.

Current State of the Czech Financial Sector

As in other economies in transition in Eastern Europe, the financial sector of the Czech Republic has undergone dramatic changes since 1990. From a former fully state-owned and highly concentrated sector with low productivity and sophistication, it has emerged as a relatively advanced financial sector. Although privatization has been advanced, the financial system is still directly, and indirectly, quite heavily controlled by the state. The Czech Republic has a relatively large financial sector for a middle-income country – total assets off roughly 122 % of GDP, according to the 1999 figures of the World Bank. The present difficulties in the Czech economy leave some repercussions in and are aggravated by developments in the financial sector. The financial services industry is gradually developing competitive and efficient market structures. Total financial services contributed in 1999 around 3.7 % to the GDP. This share has risen slightly since 1996, after it had fallen until that year, reflecting to some part the overall movement of interest rates. In terms of employment, however, Czech financial services amounted, in 1999, to 2 % of the total economy, as compared to 1 % in 1992, or 1.8 % in 1996 (Agenda 2000, Commission).

Czech banking has made considerable progress over the past twelve years on its way from a single-bank system subordinated to central planning, to a self-contained banking structure providing conventional commercial financial services. In the past two years, the Czech banking sector has gone through a considerable development phase. It could probably be called a phase of organizational maturing. Between 1990 and mid-1994 Czech banking was being referred by many as an "infant explosion", in which new banks were cropping up at a rate of twelve a year, but as of 2001 many of the banks were forced out of the market due to the inability to compete. Many theories exist as to why many banks failed in the market. The most important, however, is the fact that a number of banks did not manage to become sufficiently strong and failed to cope with the risk of exposure so as to avoid heavy losses, including even the loss of their liquidity (The World Bank). There were many reasons for this, in particular the unavoidable difficulties accompanying the financing of privatization and the crediting of the operation of new and transforming firms, and inadequate skills, especially in managing the credit portfolio, as well unexplained generosity of financing bodies linked with a particular bank. The estimated loss of twenty-four billion crowns (US dollars equivalent), sanctioned by the twelve banks that had to be liquidated or financially backed from the end of 1993 up to 2001, is probably not exaggerated (International Monetary Fund 2001).

The heavy loses suffered by the Czech banking sector persuaded national politicians to begin formulating a consolidation plan which would revive and support a successful banking industry in the Czech Republic. After having accumulated large amounts of under performing loans, the Czech banking system has been relatively successful in the completion of a comprehensive program of restructuring and privatizing its banks. The main features of this process are: elimination of a significant part of the large non-performing loan portfolio and its consolidation in the Konsolidacni Banka Praha, the sale of four large state banks to strategic foreign investors and the merger of the business of two of these banks, and a reduction in the number of smaller banks (International Monetary Fund).

European Union Membership Criteria

Membership in the EU requires that the acceding countries accept in full the current and potential rights and obligations arising from the EU system and its institutional framework (EU *acquis*). The *acquis* develops constantly and includes: the contents, principles, and political goals of the primary treaties (i.e. Treaty of Rome, Maastricht Treaty etc.); secondary legislation and precedents of the European Court of Justice accepted on their basis; joint actions, common positions, signed conventions, resolutions and other acts accepted as part of co-operation in the areas of justice and the interior; international agreements entered into by the Communities and those entered into by member states in respect of the Communities' activities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic). The current *acquis* is estimated to be more than 80,000 pages of text, one half of which covers agriculture. The simple deduction that whenever a candidate state meets the accession criteria it can join the EU is however misleading. The EU reserves considerable discretion in deciding whether the accession criteria have been met. In the Agenda 2000, created for the purpose of laying out the criteria that must be met by all candidate countries, the EU lists several distinct and key provisions that must be met before accession:

- Equilibrium between demand and supply should be established between the free interplay of market forces; and prices and trade should be liberalized;
- There should be no significant barriers to market entry or exit;
- The legal system should be in place;
- There must be a broad consensus about the aims of economic policy;
- The financial sector is sufficiently developed. (42)

In recent assessments of the candidate states, conducted by the European Union on an annual basis, the EU Commission has displayed uncertainty about the Czech Republic meeting the criteria of the legal system and a sufficiently developed financial sector. The Commission documented their assessment of the Czech Republic in 1997 by saying, “it is not clear that all market institutions are as yet sufficiently strong or completely operational. Two main examples are the financial and capital markets” (EU Commission, Pre-Accession). The *acquis* addresses the issues regarding the conditions affecting the national financial markets; in two chapters of the *acquis*, financial control and financial and budgetary provisions. The Commission points to the financial sector in the Czech Republic as a weak aspect of the Czech transition due to the variety of problems that have arisen in privatization and corporate governance.

Compatibility

Concerning financial control in the Czech Republic, progress has been made in legislative alignment with regards to public internal financial control and external audit, although further efforts are needed to develop a comprehensive system of control. One of the most critical elements of financial control that remains to be developed is a proper legal environment that can foster and support fair banking practices. Before the Czech Republic can join the European Union it has to address the sharp necessity of changing its legal environment as a whole (The European Union Commission, Enlargement).

International organizations including the European Commission and the World Bank have been highly critical of the Czech laws that enable debtors to avoid their obligations. Czech laws and the judicial system do not protect the interests of creditors and minority shareholders and allow loss-making companies to survive.

The responsibility for financial liabilities is not regulated satisfactorily in the Czech Republic. The institutions responsible for the enforcement and payment of liabilities have not been effectively created and integrated into the government and the economy. This problem applies not only to banks and the bank market, but also to the non-banking sphere and the capital market. It is one of the factors helping the present situation (when firms owe each other large sums of money) to survive. Inadequate securing of financial liabilities is making banks reluctant to initiate bankruptcy proceedings, as there is justified doubt about their effectiveness (Takla 23). Another weak spot of Czech legislation is that the requirement of cautious behavior is applied exclusively to the professional managements of banks, while the need for the discreet behavior of the owners is disregarded. The result is that the owners themselves put the professional managements under pressure, forcing them to behave imprudently in granting credits or making undue allocations of funds, causing some banks to seek bankruptcy or liquidation. A better handling of these issues by tougher legislation and stricter intervention by the courts probably could have prevented some of the financial failures.

Areas Requiring Further Change

In the next two to five years Czech banks will face the requirement to adjust themselves to the changed conditions in three main spheres: 1) the legislative and regulation framework, which will have to be modified to fit the shape required by the harmonized legislation and regulations of the European Union, 2) dedicated competition on the Czech market, the perfect mastering of financial/banking transactions on foreign markets. The possibility of autonomous regulation and supervision over the Czech banking market will be practically eliminated by the application of four basic requirements on the part of the EU: 1) recognition of a uniform banking license, 2) full harmonization of prudential standards, 3) recognition of control by national supervisory bodies, and 4) principle of control by the nation in which the bank operates.

Considerable further efforts are required to accelerate the development of a wide-ranging and reliable system of public internal financial control that is compatible with internationally accepted and EU-compliant standards, as well as the establishment of parallel institutional structures. In particular, the new public internal financial control legislation should be followed up closely by the enactment of secondary legislation providing for the implementation of new internal audit capabilities, in particular on functional independence of internal auditors. The Czech Republic needs to put in place the necessary legislation to allow the competent EU agencies to carry out on-the-spot checks and develop adequate administrative capacity to implement the *acquis*, including the ability of the Czech law enforcement bodies and judiciary to address cases where EU financial interests are at stake (The Directorate General for Financial Affairs). Bilateral, inter-agency agreements are also needed between the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Interior in order to define the roles of the different authorities involved in protection of the EU financial interests.

With regard to administrative capacity in the Czech Republic, the newly passed 2001 budgetary legislation should be fully implemented thus providing assured transparency. It is crucial that the Czech Republic strengthen its ability to mobilize the human and administrative recourses that are essential in following the Commission's operations and instructions concerning payments of its own resources. Great emphasis should be placed on the need for better efforts to be made in the area of tax collection. Further, the Czech Republic must establish a system that would provide for effective measures of collection and monitoring payment and control of funds to and from the EU budget (International Monetary Fund).

Conclusion

In this paper I examined the financial sector of one candidate country for EU accession in 2004. I focused my research on the financial sector of the Czech Republic due to its unique complexity and challenges compared to the other nine candidate states. My aim at the beginning of this research project was to examine the current state of the financial sector in the Czech Republic and compare it to the criteria set forth by the European Union in the *acquis* and Agenda 2000. I have searched to understand better the enlargement criteria of the European Union, the required changes that the Czech Republic needs to undergo before entering the EU, and the existing barriers exist in the Czech financial sectors that are not compliant with EU law.

I have pin pointed several key issues that currently serve as barriers to Czech accession. The absence of the necessary legal framework that would regulate the banking industry, protect creditors and provide for a competitive banking industry in today's Europe is still in the developing stages in the Czech Republic. The privatization of banks in the early 1990s has led to a large number of inefficient banks that cannot compete, therefore requiring a continuous consolidation of the banking industry. A large amount of legislation must be implemented to ensure a regulated and competitive financial sector. A system of financial monitoring of funds is further required in order to ensure proper spending and budgeting. However, with diligence and dedication as well as assistance and mentoring from the EU, the Czech Republic can meet all of these criteria in a timely manner.

The enlargement of the EU to Eastern Europe is a new phenomenon and challenge for the EU. A great deal of work will be required of both the current and potential members, yet the benefits that will be derived from hard work will be well worth the effort.

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Eastern Europe as a Distinct European Region: National Identity vs. NATO Integration

Brandon Boyd

Ask a typical native of an Eastern Europe country what their ambition for their nation is and they will likely say that they hope to “return to Europe.” This seemingly paradoxical statement means simply that the vast majority of East Europeans want their nations to join Western organizations such as NATO and move further away from their Soviet pasts. This is a laudable goal for people in transition to new economic and political systems but the stark reality is that five or even ten years from now, Eastern Europe will still be a region distinct from the Western half of the continent. Although there are many factors that will contribute to this continued division of East and West, the struggle between newfound national identities and integration into well-established alliances will be a prominent factor. As Eastern European states integrate into NATO, questions of sovereignty, common defense strategies, and military capabilities will arise that will cause tensions between the Eastern newcomers and the powerful status quo forces in the West.

Sovereignty & NATO

Following the Prague Summit of November 2002, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is now comprised of almost every European nation (www.nato.int). But with this integration comes a host of difficulties for the East European states themselves, particularly since NATO is shifting to a peacekeeping focus. Each sovereign nation will effectively have less of a say in its own defense and foreign policies. NATO’s integrated strategy is heavily influenced by Western powers such as the United States and the United Kingdom. As the West pressures Eastern Europe to expand democratic processes, East European states will likewise have to acquiesce to the defense strategies and foreign policy decisions made in Washington and London. Ironically, this structure of NATO command and control parallels the way in which Moscow dictated defense strategies to the Eastern Bloc states. This is very much a mixed message for nations that historically were under the thumb of imperial powers and who have struggled to create for themselves truly sovereign and independent states like those of the West. It is in instances such as these that disillusionment and resentment are bred among populations. Eastern Europe is not without its history of reactionary nationalism in response to the overbearing influence of foreign powers.

Possibly the most vexing of the integration problems in that it will cause long term problems for East Europe is the Soviet-style composition of the various officer corps in that region. As it stands now, most, if not all officer corps in Eastern Europe are bloated with senior personnel. This is problematic because these officers are trained to have "absolute reliance on top-down, centralized authority" (Selden and Lis 4). Western NATO members, and most other democratically controlled militaries, have a much greater reliance on junior and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) to carry out routine duties. Also, junior officers and NCOs of Western Alliance members have incentive to make decisions on their own – East European officers have not been trained to think independently or adaptively as a means of promotion (or combat survival for that matter).

One way, in which Eastern European states hope to solve this problem of "top-heavy" officer corps, is to move away from conscription and adopt completely volunteer, professional militaries (Selden and Lis 5). However, this transformation will not be easy. Although professional armies are generally smaller than conscription forces and morale is generally higher, the total cost of operating professional forces is usually higher as volunteers require greater pay and better benefits for their service. For the cash strapped states of Eastern Europe, such a transition is expected to consume a sizable portion of their defense budgets leaving relatively small amounts for upgrades and NATO integration programs. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that people of Hungary, and to a lesser extent Romania and the Czech Republic, have a negative view of their armies, which they see not as protectors but as "accomplice[s] in the Soviet domination [of those states]" (Selden and Lis 6).

This all leads to an intriguing focus. The new professional soldiers of East Europe are likely to be those individuals who have a favorable view of the military and who are probably nationalistic or "patriotic" to some degree. It is highly questionable how effective junior officer or NCO training would be if conducted by the Soviet trained officers. It is also difficult to predict how these young soldiers would react if NATO foreign advisors were used to train them as they struggle to (re)build their national militaries. American advisors would probably be received better than European advisors from Germany for example. However, training officers in East Europe is not a high priority for the US military, and probably will not be for a significant number of years. A factor to the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe was the want of the citizens of that region to do things in their own way, not the Soviet way. As they stretch their national legs and experiment with sovereignty, the elites and soldiers of East Europe may feel that the Western way is not necessarily the way in which they want to build their armies. And armies are a key ingredient in the mix of national pride and sovereignty.

The militaries of East Europe are undergoing another radical change that seeks to alleviate one hindrance to integration into NATO: they are being brought, very slowly, under civilian command chains – something very necessary for democratic states. This means replacing the defense ministers and advisory and analytical personnel with non-military individuals. (Poland has the unique case of having two distinct chains-of-commands within its military: one from the Defense Ministry and the other from the general staff (Selden and Lis 4).) However, because of the Soviet model of placing military personnel in these important positions (another reason for a bloated senior officer corps), very few qualified civilians exist in East Europe to fill such posts. Furthermore, the countries of East Europe have few institutions to produce such qualified personnel; a lack of civil society under Communism has left East Europe without colleges or non-governmental organizations that specialize in defense and security concerns. As long as the defense ministries and advisory staffs are posted with career military personnel trained under the Soviet style, there will continue to be problems in coordinating and operating with other NATO members, who do have clear civilian commands and controls (Ulrich 38). Again, changes toward Alliance norms may require the use of foreign personnel, thus having the potential effect of aggravating the national pride of East Europeans, especially in a nation like Poland whose system is unique and whose military is seen as the historic defender of the country (Selden and Lis 6).

A Changing NATO

The future of Eastern Europe in many ways is linked to the future of NATO. As the Alliance adapts its policies and capabilities to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War world, Eastern European states will collectively be affected as new Alliance members. The key elements of a changing NATO that will directly affect East Europe are NATO's role as a European peacekeeper and the changing definition of the role of the Alliance.

The shift of NATO to a European peacekeeping entity has the potential to further aggravate the national pride of Eastern European populations. Support for joining NATO is high in Eastern Europe.

However, a United States Information Agency report showed that Central and Eastern European states had a negative attitude toward NATO “responsibilities . . . including routine exercises in their country, having NATO troops stationed in their county, having regular over-flights from NATO aircraft or sending troops to support another NATO ally” (Haerpfer, Milosinski and Wallace). Although these feelings can be explained, and justified, by half a century of Soviet troops garrisoned in their countries, the people of Eastern Europe seem to want a free ride on NATO security. This reluctance to fully accept NATO has the potential to be a hindrance to future NATO operations in the region. The East European states are truly the front lines for NATO’s new peacekeeping role in the former Yugoslavia. And the proximity of Eastern Europe to the volatile Middle East must not be forgotten.

However, the above are very much the reactions of a general public; the elites of East Europe have taken a different view. The governments of Romania and Hungary were very quick to offer their bases to the United States as a staging area for operations against the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. The public, whether they support the US’s operations or not may warm to their soon-to-be NATO ally as soon as the American servicemen, who are flooding into those countries, open their wallets (Applebaum). In fact, the support of the US and UK from the Eastern Europe states in the face of staunch opposition from continental powers France and Germany reveals a new vein in NATO politics that has the potential to define Eastern Europe more than any other aspect of integration.

The NATO campaigns in the former Yugoslavia seem to have taught Eastern Europe two things: 1) airpower is all important and 2) if you want to guarantee your security and enhance your status in foreign affairs, align yourself with the United States. The first point at present is tied to the second, so for now the second is the all-important matter for not just East Europe but also all of NATO. While America may not be invoking Article 5 in its build-up again Hussein in Iraq, Eastern Europe has taken the opportunity to secure itself the most powerful of advocates within the Alliance and a source of investment in military and civil infrastructure. The more the United States sees a need for access to bases in Poland, Romania, and Hungary, the more the US will spend to upgrade the sub-NATO-standard facilities of those nations. And, if the US is pumping direct and indirect funds into East Europe for upgrades, NATO will be less likely to pressure the new members on spending more of their own money and using their own resources to improve their facilities.

Next, East Europe most recently saw how the political prerogatives of Alliance members like France and Germany could undermine the security concerns of another NATO member. The debacle over defending Turkey in the event of war in Iraq undoubtedly spoke volumes to the East Europeans. It is they who are on the new border of NATO; it is they who are neighbors with Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia, Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. If the West European states balk at supporting a long time ally like Turkey in the face of danger, then the East Europeans, who currently lack the very same air-defenses and other support equipment being requested by Turkey, will question the relevance of the Alliance. While NATO may be an effective and expedient means of bringing in American cash, the elites and especially the general populaces of East Europe may feel that non-Article 5 operations are not in their interest, no matter how hard France, Germany or Belgium press an issue or threaten veto of EU membership.

There is another factor that may illuminate the divide between the East and West (continental) elements of NATO as well. President George W. Bush argues that containment of Saddam Hussein is no solution and the East Europeans were among the first to agree with him. While nations such as France and Germany prospered during the Cold War under the protection made possible by the United States, nations such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Romania suffered under the yoke of Soviet oppression. Memories are said to be notoriously long in East Europe, and there is no doubt that the citizens of the old Eastern Bloc remember when Roll-back did not come and containment became the order of the world for forty agonizing years. East Europe may see this as their opportunity to prosper under the blanket of security afforded by the USA and prevent a repetition of a history, which haunts them, for another oppressed people (*Prague Post*).

Capabilities

The disparity in capabilities between the current Western NATO members and the new Eastern members, both those invited to join in November and those invited in 1997, presents another problem with integration and sovereignty. As it stands now, the militaries of the former Soviet satellites are for all intents and purposes smaller versions of the old Soviet Red Army; they are outfitted with antiquated Soviet arms and equipment and trained in Soviet-style tactics, which have been shown to be incompatible with NATO. Although the end of the Cold War has made available Western technology and equipment, the price of such upgrades is prohibitive to the East European states. A large portion of GDP for East European nations is not spent on defense and the portion of GDP that does go toward government spending is spent on social services and infrastructure (www.worldbank.org). NATO membership will not necessarily bring about a closure in the capabilities gap. Although NATO has created programs such as Partnership for Peace to facilitate smooth transitions into the Alliance and promote cooperation, the fundamental problem of capabilities is not fully addressed.

From a cost-benefit standpoint, the procurement budgets of the East European Alliance members are not the most efficient use of limited defense funds. In extreme cases almost entire procurement budgets are spent on multi-million dollar fighter jets (Selden and Lis 5). The Czech Republic is building its own fighter while Poland is buying American F-16s. East Europe is also spending large sums of procurement money on air command and control devices such as radar and communications equipment in order to link up with the rest of the Alliance's integrated air defense capabilities. While these decisions were made before the debates about protecting Turkey, the East Europeans most likely feel justified in spending their limited funds on such equipment. In the new age of anti-terrorism where the fear is from rockets, missiles and rogue airplanes this makes good political and military sense, until the realization hits home that such procurements do little to benefit the Alliance as a whole. The decisions of East European elites to focus on purchases of "prestige," as Selden and Lis write, effectively limit the future capacity of their states to operate in peace-keeping roles – still very important to the Alliance – or even to further integrate into NATO (5).

Adding to the capabilities and integration woes of East Europe, a debate presently exists within NATO itself over the capabilities disparity between the United States and the rest of the Alliance. With the continuing War on Terror and US troops being deployed more and more to regions other than Europe, NATO, after this November's Prague Summit, chose to attempt to partially close the capabilities gap. One measure of this move is the introduction of a rapid reaction force, or NATO Reaction Force (NFR), consisting of upwards of 20,000 troops (www.nato.int). It has already been shown that East Europeans are not generally supportive of a large, omni-present NATO in their countries, which would cause them to balk at expanding their role within the Alliance. It would be very unpopular politically, given the economic consequences, if East European states attempted to play catch-up with their Western Alliance partners.

Such a gap between West and East Europe would only aggravate the situation; the West would feel that the East is not pulling its weight and the East would be resistant to the idea of foreign troops on their soil, even for exercises or defensive purposes. Finally, one phenomenon that should be mentioned is the myth of a German conspiracy. This (re)emerged during the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia, where Serbs felt that the NATO bombing was a result of German influence within the Alliance (Linden). Any attempt to close the capabilities gap between the US and Europe could be viewed by reactionary elements as a plot by Germany to intimidate or even occupy Eastern Europe. Regardless of this myth, the end result is that NATO, in the future will continue to be a Western dominated organization, a condition that could cause a spur in general resentment toward the West or, worse yet, East European nationalism. This is especially true if a situation arose that required a large build up of Western European NATO forces in Eastern Europe.

The Russian Factor

The very borders of NATO may determine the role of the Alliance in the future, or more precisely the perceived role of the Alliance by non-member states. Although Yugoslavia has been the only one of the former Communist states to be host to civil strife so horrific that the world community was forced to intervene, the former Soviet satellite states occupy their own unique place in international affairs. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic were invited into the Alliance in 1997. Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, and Bulgaria before being invited into NATO at the Prague Summit, joined the NATO Partnership for Peace program in preparation for full NATO membership (www.nato.int). Expansion of NATO will be answered by the Alliance's largest neighbor in a uniquely Russian fashion, which will take a form ranging from utter silence to participation in joint exercises to flatly questioning the role of the Alliance.

To the surprise of many observers, Russia voiced a relatively small protest after the entry of the first wave of former Eastern Bloc republics into NATO. This virtual silence should not be construed to mean that Russia has forever accepted the Alliance as a neighbor. Rather, this must be recognized as a necessary political move by Moscow. Now, after the NATO Prague Summit, Russia as expected remained relatively quiet again; implicitly, in exchange for not lodging a protest to NATO expansion, President Putin received Western recognition of the Russian action in Chechnya as an anti-terrorism campaign (Trenin). It would be foolhardy, however, for anyone to think that Russia will continue to quietly acquiesce to the enlargement of NATO. The sentiment of the average Russian toward NATO continues to be cold. This sentiment is quite pervasive in the foreign and defense ministries of Russia, still home to the old guard of the Soviet era (Trenin). When the time is right, Moscow will be able to make political hay out of the Eastern drive of the Alliance.

Old tensions aside, NATO and Russia have been able to work together on a number of programs, notably joint military exercises. Up until now, these exercises consisted of Western forces (US, British, German, etc.) and Russians. However, the inclusion of Eastern Europe in NATO opens up a new set of possibilities for problems of both integration and policy making. First, due to the long memories of Soviet repression, it is doubtful that East Europeans will be eager to have joint exercises with Russians inside their countries – they do not even want NATO-only exercises in their countries. On the flip side of the same coin, East Europeans soldiers would not be enthusiastic about training on Russian soil with Russian troops either. What this leads to is a further gap in capabilities training between Western and Eastern NATO states and a sticking point in intra-Alliance relations and cooperation.

Whether NATO exercises with Russia or not the fact remains that Russia is not a part of the Alliance. It is difficult for even the most optimistic of geopolitical observers to envision Russia joining the Alliance, ever, let alone in the next five plus years. Given this reality, the question of the purpose of NATO arises. The Prague Summit brought about a NATO focused more on peacekeeping and defending against terrorism. While on the surface, this would seem to assuage the fears of most Russians who view NATO as a threat; one is left wondering how the Eastern Europe borders of NATO will be received by the Russian citizens of Kaliningrad. An island amongst the Baltic nations and Poland, this region is sovereign Russian territory. Russia has reached a visa agreement with Lithuania and Poland, eliminating the problem of free travel by Russians to and from the Federation proper and Kaliningrad (www.eur.ru). But this does not address the anxiety of being surrounded by NATO, let alone the potential problems of transporting military hardware and troops over Alliance territory. And Russia has made it clear that though it will reduce the number of soldiers in Kaliningrad, troops will remain to prevent any possible attempt by the oblast to break away from the Federation (Trenin). For Poland and the Baltics, this is a dual problem. First, as members of NATO they will be part of the negotiations over transit rights and run the risk of alienating themselves from their Western partners if their fear of Russian troops rears its head. Or more likely, the national pride of these states will take a hit when the Western powers conclude an agreement with Russia in order to maintain warm relations. Secondly, the West will have difficulty allaying their phobia of the Russian military if Eastern Europe continues to resist NATO troops stationed in their country. Therefore, despite efforts to cooperate with Moscow, an enlarged NATO may find Eastern Europe more difficult to integrate than they appear on paper given the history the region has with Russia.

Conclusions

The majority of East Europeans believe that the future will hold a better life for them and that their "return to Europe" is imminent. On they whole, they want to enter NATO, even though there is a discouraging lack of knowledge about the organizations among the general populations. However, the road to full integration will be rocky and strewn with diplomatic, political, military and economic potholes. As East European nations practice their hard won sovereignty and express their national identity, they will clash with the well-established Western institutions deeply entrenched within NATO on matters of common defense planning, military capabilities, and command chains. This will cause Eastern Europe to remain a separate entity, apart from Western Europe, within the continental landscape.

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STABEX: the Stagnation of Diversity and Advantage Lost

Heidi Mawby

STABEX: An Introduction

STABEX, or the Stabilisation des recettes d'exportation, was created under the Lomé Convention of 1975, and was one of the few programs within the series of conventions between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific nations (ACP) which actually favored the latter. Throughout the quarter of a century duration of the system, flaws were noted, yet solutions were also proposed to remedy the concerns. However, after much review and debate and to the chagrin of the ACP states, the program was instead abandoned under the third and most recent set of conventions between these two groups, the Cotonou Agreement, which came into effect in 2000. In order to understand why the program was simply forsaken instead of being repaired, first the functions and anticipations of the program must be examined, followed by the criticisms of the program and the proposed remedies to it. The political and economic reasons for which the EU was unwilling to implement the changes must then be revealed, as well as the changing political and economic arenas surrounding the two groups, which have also influenced the outcome of the program. It is clear on the basis of this information that the price for reforms would have been at the expense of the EU's protectionist policies, and coupled with the evidence that the significance of the ACP exports is dwindling in the EU markets, it is clear that the advantageous situation of the ACP countries was compromised, and therefore the EU prevailed, evading the costly political and economical reforms and ending the STABEX program.

The History between the ACP and EU Countries

The Lomé Convention and the present Cotonou Agreement are the remnants of a long and turbulent history between the two groups. The history began with the colonial period of the European powers, when many of the ACP countries were exploited for their raw materials. These were sought after by the industrialized nations of the West and their acquisition contributed to the economical and political domination of these nations. The end of the Second World War, however, left this situation between Europe and its colonies untenable, and with it the colonial period came to a close. However, the relationship between the groups was far from over. The colonial period had devastated the economies and infrastructures of the ACP countries, leaving them the titles of developing or Third World countries.

Meanwhile, European powers felt compelled to maintain their cultural and historical ties with the ACP and to help lift them from their state of poverty. A series of conventions was enacted to accomplish this.

The first convention, Yaoundé, came into effect in 1963 with the signing of the Treaty of Rome (1957). This convention introduced the idea of trade and aid packages being offered to the ACP countries to alleviate some of their poverty and instability, and was renewed in 1969. The concept of the EDF, or the European Development Fund, the primary financial account responsible for the various programs was also introduced.

A Partnership and the Goals and Functions of STABEX

The first Lomé Convention, signed in 1975, spoke of a partnership between the EU and ACP nations. It was this convention, and its successive extensions Lomé II-IV, that introduced the concept of non-reciprocity, and the major innovation of the STABEX program, an acronym for STABilisation des recettes d'EXportation, or stabilization of exports. This program functioned as a supplement by the EU to counter unexpected drops in export earnings experiences by the ACP countries. The desired result would be to stabilize the ACP markets and encourage their continued growth. In order for a country to qualify for STABEX funds, certain criteria must be met. First, the decline in export earnings must be the consequence of falling market prices or a natural disaster pertaining to an agricultural product from a list of 44 eligible products covered by the Agreement. This list had been increased from the original 26 products covered under Lomé I. Secondly, "in the year preceding that of application, the exports of an eligible product [must have] represented at least 5.5% of total export earnings from an [individual] ACP" (Aiello, *Stabilization* 73). In other words, the product in question must have represented a significant proportion of the nations' export economy, and this is known as the dependence threshold. If these criteria were met, then STABEX funds might be applied for. The actual text, Article 186.1of Lomé IV, Commission of the EU reads:

> With the aim of remedying the harmful effects of the instability of export earnings and to help the ACPs to overcome one of the main obstacles to the stability, profitability and sustained growth of their economies, to support their development efforts and to enable them in this to ensure economic and social progress for their peoples by helping to safeguard their purchasing power, a system shall be operated to guarantee the stabilization of export earnings . . . derived from ACPs' exports to the Community or other destinations . . . of products on which their economies are

dependant and which are affected by fluctuation in price or quantity or both these factors. (Aiello, *Stabilization* 72)

The significance of the stabilization of export earnings for a developing nation, and therefore the presence of a system such as STABEX, has been advocated in many works and findings. Two such findings by the Commission of the European Community extolled the advantages of this phenomenon. The first report states that "export instability impedes the supply of foreign currencies necessary to the ACPs to import capital goods" (Aiello, *Stabilization* 73). The second affirms "the difficulty of programming growth and economic development when export earnings are unstable" (Aiello, *Stabilization* 73). The critical dependence of many ACP states on one main cash crop is evident, for example Burundi's exports are nearly 90% dependant on the singular product coffee, and cocoa is responsible for 70% of Ghana's exports.

Importance of Diversity in an Economy

Within this one-crop environment, it is important to note how important the issue of diversity is and how it can help to alleviate the situation and reliance. In fact, export stabilization can help to realize this goal, by providing a stable base of economics while the country and farmers explore other crops and industries. It has been emphasized that in the highly risky environment menacing the households and producers in the ACP countries, the most common reaction to this high risk is to be highly focused on subsistence production, which is viewed as a reliable element and one that is necessary. However, this activity yields no high-earning potential, no opportunity to diversify products and thus cannot alleviate poverty, and maintains the cruel circle in which this crop is all that the ACP nation has to offer to the international market. Therefore, a system like STABEX can help balance measures because "by providing such support on a reliable basis, farm households can afford to adopt income-enhancing strategies which would otherwise be deemed too risky" (Collier et al 670). If they can receive a sort of insurance guarding their traditional crop, they will have more assurances when looking to expand their range of products.

The Shortcomings of STABEX: The Stagnation of Diversity

The failure of the STABEX program to promote this essential diversification in the economies of the ACP countries was among one of the traits most heavily criticized and the main one dealt with in this research. Although many reports expressed the need for balance between diversification and concentration: "Through excessive diversification the producer forgoes the gains from specialization while specialization in subsistence activities cannot form the basis for the escape from poverty," this was not to be achieved under the STABEX program (Collier et al 670). Diversification is essential to the ACPs' economies because it allows them to broaden their production foundation and have more viable options in the open world market. One European Community Commission report spoke of a "lack of supply capacity and competitiveness of most ACP countries which renders them unable to cope with external demand and competition" (Raffer 5). Despite all of these findings, however, experts found that the EU was rather unwilling to deal with the issue of diversification.

The EU's refusal to admit the importance of diversification in the ACP economies is evident in the observation "diversification strategies – necessary to enable many ACP countries to benefit adequately from preferential market access- are not seen as important enough to merit more attention. . . ." (Raffer 5) This criticism does not merely apply to the Lomé Conventions and the STABEX system. Although STABEX has been dropped from the Cotonou Agreements, diversification remains a topic largely ignored by the EU. In fact, even in the document of the new Cotonou Agreement, the "text uses the word diversification only twice" (Raffer 5). When this fact is considered, it comes as no surprise that the STABEX system under the Lomé Convention was ill-equipped to deal with the need for promotion of diversification in the ACP economies.

In practice, diversification under the STABEX scheme was thwarted in many ways. The actual dispersion of awarded STABEX funds not only hindered diversification of production in so far that it did not always reach those producers that were need of the funds (known as the problem of fungibility), but the EU also had strict conditions on how the money can be spent, and diversification was not a priority. The use of funds granted by STABEX had specific regulations and conditions attached. Under the first Lomé agreement, very few conditions restricted the ACP's usage of the funds, but with successive Lomé Agreements the controls were tightened and it became progressively difficult for the ACPs to use the money for any other sector except that which had warranted the funds in the first place. It has been pointed out that although "this hierarchy of objectives of Stabex interventions does not necessarily exclude the use of Stabex funds with the aim of product diversification . . . Stabex provides few incentives to vertical or horizontal diversification, . . ." and that "in the medium and long term, the best solution for problems of unstable export earnings is of course diversification" (Koehler 9).

Although it should have been the individual country's prerogative to decide which sector the funds should benefit, this was not the case, as: "Transfers must be used first and foremost to finance programmes and projects aimed at rehabilitating, maintaining or strengthening a struggling sector. . . . If funds are to be used in sectors other than those suffering earnings losses, the recipient country has to give reasons. The transfer agreement may be signed only once the Commission has received and checked this information" (European Commission). Allowing the individual country to decide whether or not it was economically viable to continue to pump money into the affected sector would have greatly improved chances of diversification, and, ultimately, of success in the open world market. Clearly, precious opportunities to provide burgeoning sectors with the means of flourishing were missed when diversification of funds to another sector was prohibited, both in terms of theory and practice of the STABEX scheme.

Another major criticism in the practice of the STABEX system was the list of eligible products for which ACP export declines can be compensated. The list expanded from twenty six products under Lomé one to forty four products under Lomé IV. However, even with this significant increase in eligible products, the critics have sharply criticized the list, labeling it as protectionist, self-serving, and once again as hampering diversification. It was clearly observed that "one of the most controversial and debated aspects of STABEX is its product coverage" (Aiello, *Effects* 1039). The reason for this is that "this basket of products could put ACP countries at a disadvantage . . . it is unclear what the economic justification is for excluding from the stabilization scheme various products (sugar, meat and tobacco) which are crucial for many countries" (Aiello, *Effects* 1039). This list also helped to stagnate diversity by exhibiting that if a nation were to diversify their crops and specialize in a new area, they would not be compensated for a loss if that crop did not appear on the list of pre-approved goods.

The Reaffirmation of the Importance of STABEX

Before examining their proposed alterations to improve the system, it is important to note that despite these criticisms, the experts were nearly unanimous in their convictions that STABEX was performing a vital task for the ACP countries' export economies, and nearly all recommended that, with the appropriate modifications, the STABEX system should continue. Some of the optimistic outlooks mentioned that "Stabex can . . . therefore play an important role in helping ACP countries to escape from the marginalization which now characterizes many of them" (Collier et al 671). Another expert who hoped that the STABEX scheme could be salvaged and merely improved wrote, "Stabex offers the best solution for developing countries facing instability of foreign exchange earnings at the present time and for the foreseeable future. Mechanisms have to be found which guarantee that the system can better meet its goals and objectives" (Koehler 80). Another vehement defender of the system claimed that despite the criticism it received and its generally accepted failure, "STABEX has achieved its primary objective, the stabilization of the nominal export earnings of the agricultural products covered by the scheme" (Aiello, *Stabilization* 74). Although the system was not yet perfected, the experts agreed that STABEX was worth maintaining.

How to Address and Correct the Criticisms

If the criticisms of the system have been established, then the focus must turn to what suggestions were made for improving the system, and ultimately why these steps were not implemented by the EU, and why instead it chose to discontinue the system in the new Cotonou Agreements. In order to promote more diversity within the export economies of the ACP countries, it was suggested that the EU look more carefully at the situation and heed the advice that their own Commission had given: diversification needed to become more of an issue. It was written that "cases of successful economic development through diversification are the exception to the rule that most ACP states have failed to take advantage of twenty five years of Lomé preferences" (Forwood 423). One simple way that the EU could have encouraged diversification could have been to reduce the ever-tightening regulations governing the use of the awarded STABEX funds, allowing the ACP nations to use the funds to develop means of diversification if they willed it.

To increase the scope of products for which ACP countries could claim compensation and again promote diversification of the ACP economies, it was suggested that the strict list of eligible products be eliminated or radically expand to include all products which featured heavily in a nation's export earnings. This suggestion, however, was also not implemented.

Why the Revisionary Steps Were Not Implemented: Domestic Protectionary Policies

To understand why the EU did not heed the suggestions given to it, and why instead it opted to simply discontinue the STABEX system, one must consider the corresponding political costs to the EU. First of all, as was stated previously, the EU simply did not come to terms with the evidence that diversification of crops and produce would be valuable to the ACP economies. In this instance the EU did not necessarily refuse to revise the laws towards the reimbursements of the funds for any certain political gain, but merely did not absorb the implications of their failure to do so.

In response to the second criticism, however, that of the severely limited list of products eligible under the STABEX program, the EU made a deliberate decision to refuse to enact changes. It was observed by one expert that "ACP exporters participated automatically in intra-EEC policies preserving European farmers' income," and this sums up the answer as to why certain products were protected by the STABEX scheme and others were not (Raffer 1). The list of eligible goods represents the most coveted imports for the EU, and therefore they do not wish to relinquish their access raw goods nor the cheap availability of their imports. "The aim of the EU-ACP agreement is to provide financial support to the exports of traditional commodities . . . upon which many ACPs, as exporters, and the EU countries, as importers, depend" (Aiello, Effects 1039). Therefore, this is the list of goods which are the most precious to the EU markets.

In addition, however, to this mere concern for access to their favored goods, however, another reason for the refusal to expand the list must be considered, one that had serious political consequences for the EU. The European Union's Common Agricultural Policy, or CAP, a protectionist program implemented to protect European farmers, was not to be compromised. It was admitted that "Stabex has a limited scope and does not cover all products expected by the ACP. By definition, it excludes . . . products covered by the Common Agricultural Policy as well as processed and manufactured goods, with some exceptions" (Koehler 9). The EU had a political duty to protect its own farmers and markets, and could therefore not adhere to the suggestions made by experts in this key issue. Unfortunately, in this instance, domestic political reasons won out over the ACP countries' needs: "Evidently, political reasons concerning the protection of the EU domestic producer have outweighed the economic factors which should have inspired the choice of products to be included in the scheme" (Aiello, Effects 1039). Simply put, the EU was unwilling to make these measures at the expense of their own farmers, and therefore instead of adhering to the proposed expansion of the STABEX lst and continuing to aid the ACP countries, the STABEX scheme was abandoned.

Another Reason for the Abandonment of STABEX:

The Dwindling ACP Exports to the EU Markets

In addition to the refusal to correct the obvious flaws in the STABEX program that would have resulted in a loss to the EU countries, another important factor must be examined in this research. Another politically and economically motivated reason behind the EU's unwillingness to make concessions to the ACP countries at the time of the negotiations for the Cotonou Agreement existed. The facts state that the importance of the ACP exports in the EU market has dwindled over time. From 1985 to 1994, a difference of merely nine years, the percentage of ACP exports in the EU market had dropped to one-third of what it had been, from 6.7% to 2.8%. While it is true that EU imports from all developing nations dropped 10% between the years 1976 and 1994, the largest decline came from the ACP nations. In contrast to the ACP, Asia's share of EU imports had tripled from the time span 1976-1994, and had doubled from the time period of 1985-1994. Obviously, the EU was becoming less dependant on exports from the ACPs, and this was a large factor in why the EU opted to abandon the system instead of rejuvenate it.

The Advantage Lost and the Revocation of ACP privileges

The situation has been keenly summed up in the following: "After a quarter of a century the EU has finally been able to move decidedly towards the situation it had initially wanted when signing Lomé I, but was unable to force on ACP countries then" (Raffer 1). This quote acknowledges that in 1975, at the start of the Lomé Conventions, the EU was concerned with the Cold War, the oil crisis, their lack of raw materials for their industries, and therefore willing to make large concessions in favor of the ACP in order to procure goods. That situation favored the ACP and allowed them to gain more advantages than the EU would have liked to afford them. However, the EU was desperate to hold onto the ACP markets, and created the Lomé Convention and with it the STABEX system, which was one of the only conditions of all the sets of conventions between the two groups that would actually favor the ACP. However, it has been posited, the economic and political situation has changed, and the EU no longer is willing to make as many concessions, especially in light of the fact the EU has opened themselves up to another new markets with the goods they desire, particularly those of the developing nations of Asia.

Conclusion: STABEX as a Testament of the Stagnation of Diversity and Advantage Lost

The Cotonou Agreement, the latest series of trade and aid packages offered to the ACP countries by the EU, neglected to include the export earnings compensation system of STABEX. This system had attempted to stabilize the export economies of the ACP countries when they were negatively affected by the poor performance or poor season of specific agricultural products. Although the system had received much criticism in the following areas: lack of encouragement to diversify products and the exclusion of certain products vital to the ACP economies, most experts were in agreement that with a few improvements, the system could become more successful. However, the price of these improvements was too high politically for the EU, and they opted to discontinue the system instead of administering massive reforms. The EU, motivated by protectionist policies, was unable to sacrifice their own markets and expand the list of eligible products, and was unwilling to forgo their conditionalities forced upon the ACP states, insisting that the awarded STABEX funds be used exclusively for the ailing sector, which in turn limited opportunities for diversification. These factors, coupled with the statistics that prove that the significance of ACP exports is dwindling in the EU markets, and added to the fact that the EU is in a much stronger position politically and economically than it had been at the start of the Lomé Era, brought an end to the program. The STABEX system, therefore, is testament to the advantages the ACP nations enjoyed under the signing of the Lomé Convention in 1975 but which were gradually reclaimed by the EU in the twenty-first century. It is also a testimony to the continued lack of diversity and opportunity in the ACP economies, and represents the perpetual marginalization of the Third World countries in the modern world market.

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Headstrong Women and Timid Men: Social Marginalization of Males and Female Empowerment in Frank O'Connor's Ireland

Susan Hicks

The feminist movement of the West has emphasized that female freedom is oppressed by domineering men who create submissive females answering to the beck and call of their fathers and husbands. The Western archetypal male is strong, proud and in control of himself and his family while the female is pious and loyal. Within this archetype, the mother is the nurturer, the father the discipliner and provider, the daughter mature and womanly, the son rebellious. Most young girls growing up in the West today understandably see such stereotypes as major obstacles to their cultural emancipation.

Rural Ireland, however, seems to present another case altogether. Irish writers, in particular, seem consistently to invert these themes. In this essay, I will take as a focal point the collected short stories of Frank O'Connor, an Irish writer from the first half of the twentieth century, and analyze them against the backdrop of Irish culture and Irish literary history. For O'Connor, Irish males are fragile, protected and petted by their mothers. Irish females are rebellious and strong. Time and again, the strong characters in these stories are women while the weak characters are men struggling with familial obligations and sexual guilt. It is males who suffer under protective and obligatory relationships to their mothers and females who have the self-liberation to run away to England or Dublin and sow their wild oats. It is the males who are timid and afraid when the females are brazen and rebellious.

Nancy Scheper-Hughes, winner of the Margaret Mead award for her ethnography of rural Ireland, *Saints, Scholars and Schizophrenics*, writes extensively on this theme, proposing it as a possible cause of the high incidence of male schizophrenia in Ireland. Indeed, this is a phenomenon worth investigating, for in the United States and other Western industrialized nations the most common schizophrenics are married women (Scheper-Hughes 69). In Ireland, it is male bachelors who comprise the bulk of hospitalized schizophrenics. She contends that in a society that ostensibly values strong males and submissive females the standard childhood socialization practices do not promote either. Instead, they produce sexually repressed males very often unable to muster enough courage to ask a girl out. This does not fit the Western ideal of the strong male provider. Coupled with a weak Irish economy and high unemployment, this causes extreme inner conflict among many Irish men, in a few cases producing schizophrenia or other illness. Where married women in other western societies feel trapped and inhibited, single men feel so in Irish culture. If Scheper-Hughes is right, then it is not surprising to see this trend reflected in Irish literature.

The paradigm of this conflicted male is Denis of O'Connor's "Bridal Night." He is the "quiet boy, no way rough or accustomed to the girls at all" (O'Connor 21). So unaccustomed to girls is he that, in fact, all he can do when he realizes his own interest in a long-time friend, the compassionate Winnie, is "[to lie] on his belly before her, chewing an old bit of grass…till she [gets] up and [leaves] him" (O'Connor 21). He loses all ability to talk intelligently with someone he once felt comfortable with. Denis follows precisely the pattern that Scheper-Hughes explains as both "a fear of and a longing after intimacy" characteristic of many males in Ballybran, the village she observes (Scheper-Hughes 117). In the end, Denis also follows the pattern of deviance that she finds characteristic of the mentally ill in rural Ireland as in the case of Seamus. Seamus, after being thwarted in his attempts to find a wife, exposes himself at a dancehall and is committed to a psychiatric institution. What is interesting is that his rebellion takes the form of "sexual deviance." Scheper-Hughes claims that he "rebels against the stereotype" of the "reserved, sexually timid Irish male" so common in his society (Scheper-Hughes 98). Denis, although not so extreme, is similar in his obsessive hunting of Winnie and when he is finally confined to his bed, just "raving" for her to come to him. Having all his life conformed to the typical pattern, Denis finally rebels against it in his madness. He plays the part of the strong male in insisting that Winnie come to him and then that she crawl into his bed. This is the only way he can find to reconcile his timidity and failure to win her heart with the ideal for which he strives.

Frank O'Connor is by no means the only Irish writer describing such sexually repressed and deviant characters. More bachelors like Seamus arrive in at the dancehall in William Trevor's story "The Ballroom of Romance." Bowser Egan, Tim Daly, and Eyes Horgan drop into the dancehall, all "middle-aged bachelors who [require] the watching" as their sexual antics often get out of hand (508). In Benedict Kiely's story "A Ball of Malt and Madame Butterfly," we see this pattern repeated again. Pike Hunter becomes obsessed with a prostitute (we can assume as a result of his inability to date females legitimately), eventually attempting to rape her but even failing in this. In the end, he "is persuaded to rest up in St. Patrick's Hospital," the psychiatric hospital endowed by Dean Swift, who himself "died there *roaring*" (441 emphasis added). Thus Hunter meets the same fate as Denis and Seamus. Eighteenth-century Irishmen differed little according to Brian Merriman's famous poem "The Midnight Court," which describes the torment of women without virile husbands:

> O weakened heart, if the men go on
> the way they are going we'll have to steal them!
> By the time it strikes them to take a partner
> there isn't a person left would have them
> —limp, sucked dry, exhausted ancients. (qtd. in Kinsella 226)

This, too, has strong echoes in Scheper-Hughes's observations in Ballybran as well as in O'Connor's stories. Few of the men can muster the courage simply to ask a woman out, much less proceed to marriage preparations, and the women typically don't want to wait around for them to develop the courage.

And so we have Jerry Moynihan in O'Connor's much anthologized "Judas," who tails Kitty Doherty for some time, terrified that he isn't dignified enough for this "well-educated superior girl," only to discover that she is like the "bad women in the books," "talking in cold blood about 'spooning' with fellows all over the house." Jerry is the paradigmatic Irishman here, as he cannot get up enough courage to take his relationship with Kitty any further than an occasional walk. When she asks him into her house, he is "too nervous," claiming to himself, "I knew I'd lose my head, break the china, use some dirty word, and then go home and cut my throat" (O'Connor 129). Similarly, O'Connor himself had such shyness as James Matthews notes, for in society he "was ill at ease, awkward, and naïve. From such shyness he talked too much and regretted most of it afterwards" (72). In his story he imbues Jerry with a similar fear of society. Jerry manages to inflate this girl to the stature of Dante's Beatrice herself, thinking that she was "above" going to the pictures. In the end, when he finally confesses his feelings to her, she clearly wants him to kiss her. However, to Jerry, that seems "a very sissy sort of occupation" and he refuses, telling her about his "prospects" instead. For some reason Jerry cannot come to terms with sensuality in relationships, and even the prospect makes him suicidal. After he thinks "how nice it would be if I only had a penknife handy to cut my throat with," he realizes "from the moment I met Kitty I was always coveting sharp things like razors and penknives" (O'Connor 130-134). Like Denis and Seamus, Jerry seems to be exhibiting some of the qualities of mental illness in contemplating suicide over such trivial things. And, indeed, Scheper-Hughes notes that "while the rate of reported suicide is lowest in Ireland of all western nations—the Irish Catholic Church is particularly severe in its public censure of suicide—the clinical experience of psychiatrists . . . indicates that attempted suicide is quite common" (Scheper-Hughes 56). Jerry follows a common pattern for Irish males in his flirtation, however comical, with suicide and thus with mental illness. He seems even more demented when he chases the tram that Kitty is on. In fact, he recognizes this himself when he says, “Then I must have gone a bit mad—really mad, I mean . . .” In the end, it is Kitty who appears to push the physical, who is willing to fill the idealized male role, and Jerry who waits, unable to fill that role. Interestingly, Jerry feels pressure from his friend Paddy Kinnane to go out with girls. He imagines Paddy at first as a great Don Juan, able to get any girl he wants. However, he says explicitly “It wasn’t until years after that I began to suspect that Paddy’s acquaintance with girls was about of one kind with my own,” that is pretty poor (O’Connor 129-31). Jerry is not the only male in his circle to have such poor relationships with women, and indeed he implies that his lack of success with women is the rule rather than the exception.

In James Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, a classic novel about growing up Irish, Stephen Dedalus has similar issues with women. He does flirt briefly with a more promiscuous life style in the red-light district of Dublin, but he emerges from this, regaining a sense of piety and reserve. Moreover, although he is sexually responsive to the prostitutes who boldly accost him, he is never able to act with any boldness himself in pursuing other women. For instance, after he renounces his promiscuity, walking along the strand, he sees a girl with her “skirts kilted boldly about her waist,” her “thighs bared almost to the hips,” who turns her eyes to him “without shame or wantonness,” a “faint flame [trembling] on her cheek.” This image might provoke sexual longing in many males, but Stephen imagines that “a wild angel had appeared to him, the angel of mortal youth and beauty . . . to throw open before him in an instant of ecstasy the gates of all the ways of error and glory” (171-72). Just as Jerry imagines Kitty, Stephen imagines this lusty girl as angelic, ignoring or not realizing the sexual come-on involved in her actions. Similarly, standing with his girl on the tram, he cannot kiss her. Like Jerry, he thinks, “She too wants me to catch hold of her . . . I could hold her and kiss her” (70). But, like Jerry, he does not. Thus Stephen, too, exemplifies the same pattern of timidity and reserve that O’Connor’s men do, despite initially seeming sexually more precocious. One can even see his promiscuity as simply deviant behavior as with Seamus and Denis and Pike Hunter, as this promiscuity is relegated solely to the realm of prostitutes and the underground of Dublin society.

In contrast we see a number of women in O’Connor’s stories who, like Winnie in “Bridal Night,” seem to have a beau wrapped around their fingers as well as a number of other men hanging around.

From the tomboy Nan in the “Ugly Duckling,” to the promiscuous confessor in “News for the Church,” O’Connor’s women are brazen, headstrong, and masculine. It is the women that run off to London or Dublin, have flings and keep their men waiting. Una is the one in “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” that “[slips] a disk . . . whenever Jimmy Foley [her beau of five years] [names] the day,” and who has an affair with a married man (O’Connor 345). It is Jimmy that waits patiently for her to make up her mind. It is the prodigal Evelyn in “A Masculine Principle” who runs off to London with her fiancé’s money and leads the wild life, while her fiancé waits patiently at home. Kitty in “Judas” turns out to not be the “angelic” girl that Jerry thinks she is, telling him that she “always had fellows, and . . . spooned with them all over the shop,” while Jerry is too scared to even kiss her when she asks him too (O’Connor 133). These are just a few of the numerous headstrong women that O’Connor portrays.

Not surprisingly this is the same pattern that Nancy Scheper-Hughes observes in Ballybran. She notes that “an average of twelve young women of marriageable age have left the village each year, contrasted to an average of four young men” (Scheper-Hughes 108-09). Indeed as Brown notes, by the mid-1920s, according to the census, nearly 43% of all Irish-born women were living abroad (18). Scheper-Hughes also observes that “women in Ballybran, by virtue of their scarcity, have achieved new independence and authority.” Not only are women more likely to leave, but if they stay they are much more likely to govern the terms of their lives. She gives the example of Jean, who dates a number of prosperous farmers before laying her eyes on Joseph, a village schoolteacher. Five years after she asks him to a dance, they marry and “Jean enters the family business and the village ‘wearing the trousers,’ as the villagers perceive it” (Scheper-Hughes 109-11).

Most of the women in O’Connor’s stories seem to have a similar upper hand. Nan, in “The Ugly Duckling,” despite her masculine attitude seems to have a number of men at her feet. She is not the stereotypically demure woman imagined by Western culture. She grows up as “an ugly, stocky little Amazon, leaping from rock to rock, hurling stones in an awkward but effective way, and screaming deadly insults at the enemy and encouragement to her own side.” Even when she turns to religion and gives up fighting, she does not lose the fierceness of her childhood. As she says, she’s “a fierce pray-er” (O’Connor 444-45). Of course, when her coarseness turns to beauty, there are a number of men ready to grab her up. Mick, Joe Lyons and Matt Healy all seem to be willing to wait around as long as it takes Nan to decide amongst them. In the end, however, she doesn't and goes unmarried, contentedly joining a convent and retaining her passionate inner life and independence.

A different sort of female impetuosity is evident in Deirdre in "The Lady of the Sagas." Having the name of a saga heroine, "she naturally thought of herself in terms of the sagas and imagined Connacht raided and Ulster burned for her" (O'Connor 250). She is a romantic, unrestrained in her imagination. She does not have the headstrong nature of Nan or the brazen rebelliousness of Evelyn in "A Masculine Principle," but she has this unrestrained romanticism that allows her a measure of freedom above that of her love interest, Tommy. Trying to retain romanticism in an unromantic world, her imagination transforms Tommy into a cunning cavalier, Don Juan for whose attentions she is competing with a number of other women. As the first line of the story states, however, "it is a terrible thing to have the name of a saga heroine and have no saga hero." Tommy is "built more for defense that attack," is "obtrusively pious" and "obtrusively pernickety about food," unfortunately not qualities that make for a saga hero or for the strong provider-male ideal (O'Connor 250-51). When he finally comes round and asks her to marry him, he also reveals that in truth he has had no romantic affairs. Deirdre, disappointed that he is just an ordinary man after all, follows the pattern of other women of O'Connor's stories and rejects him rather than give up her hope of finding a real saga hero. In desiring her beau to have had other affairs, she displays an independence and dignity that meshes entirely with Scheper-Hughes's interpretation of women in rural Ireland. Given her frustration at the end of the story, the reader can speculate that she will probably emigrate as so many others do, taking the job she was looking for in Dublin.

This female perspective is strikingly corroborated by the writer Edna O'Brien. Her novel *Country Girls* is one of the best examples of headstrong women in Irish literature, following the lives and loves of two young girls entering the world of womanhood. These independent young women have their own rebellious, often sexual exploits, and are willing to describe them in lurid detail. However, they like Deirdre have an unrestrained romanticism that allows them to become involved in situations not quite as romantic as they dream they will be. O'Brien goes further, however, than simply asserting that Irish women are strong and Irish men weak. She insists again and again through her character portrayals that the women's strength comes from the oppression that they endure at the hands of men. As Baba says, while being poked by a gynecologist in a sequel to *Country Girls*, *Girls in Their Married Bliss*, "Oh God, who does not exist, you hate women, otherwise you'd have made them different. And Jesus, who snubbed your mother, you hate them more. Roaming around all that time with a bunch of men, fishing; and sermons-on the-mount. Abandoning women" (qtd. in Eckley 29). O'Brien has no sympathy for the timid men who still have a semblance of control over women's lives.

In the same vein, Nancy Scheper-Hughes claims that this dichotomy between the headstrong woman and the timid man in Irish culture is created through attitudes of adults in relation to their children. Boys are the more valuable insofar as they, at least historically, have been expected to carry on the family line. Therefore, they are infinitely more protected as small children than girls. They "are considered more delicate and less 'thriving' than little girls" and are considered to "*need* more attention and comforts than little girls" (Scheper-Hughes 170, my italics). She describes the attitude toward girls much differently:

> Whereas girls are perceived as 'catty, sharp, and underhanded,' little boys are often described as helpless, innocent and guileless. Daughters are said to be more resistant and questioning of parental authority than boys . . . Because sisters are believed to be more *crabbit* (bold) and 'cute' (sly), they are expected to watch over their brothers and take care of their wants and needs. And where little girls as young as five and six are expected to take responsibility for real chores around the house and garden . . . little boys of the same age are assigned only make-believe tasks. (Scheper-Hughes 170-71)

She contends that this is the pattern of childhood socialization that produces the independent, rebellious women we see Frank O'Connor portray.

Indeed, O'Connor treats the young girls in his stories in the same fashion that Scheper-Hughes describes. Martha, Denis's sister in "Masculine Protest," he claims, "was born sly." Whether or not Martha is as "sly" as Denis claims she is, what is important is that the young narrator imbues her with this quality. Given Scheper-Hughes's claim that girls are generally seen as sly, one can intuit that he picks this characterization of her due to the acceptable cultural stereotypes that have influenced him. He is jealous of her responsibility and authority as the elder sister and thus saddles her with this conventional judgment that he has picked up with regard to girls, slyness.

We also have sly Nora Dooley in "The Man of the House," who acts as the devil on Gus's shoulder. The mama's boy Gus is deceived into disobeying his mother, and drinking all her cough syrup. She encourages him to lie to his beloved mother, but the darling boy of course goes home and tells her the truth only to be instantly forgiven: "'You poor child, going all that way by yourself, without a proper dinner or anything, why wouldn't you [drink the cough syrup]?'" (O'Connor 190). Here, it is the young girl who is portrayed as mischievous and sly and the "poor" innocent boy who is unwittingly duped but forever honest and guileless.

Finally, Jackie in "First Confession" perceives his sister, another Nora, as a "raging malicious devil" (O'Connor 178). At one point he exclaims, "God, the hypocrisy of women!," ludicrously categorizing all women with an attitude a boy of his age would not be able to develop from a wealth of experience with women (O'Connor 178). Therefore he must be gathering it from the attitudes toward women held by those around him. Indeed, the priest reacts to Nora with this attitude as well, calling her a "little vixen," a term connoting the guile and maliciousness ascribed to women in general.

Owene Weber in her essay "A Woman's Voice Speaking" points out a numbers of other such wily and dominating women in O'Connor's stories. She notes Josie Mangan in "The Flowering Trees," a female gang leader who tricks some "unsuspecting" male friends of hers into ruining a marriage between their mother and her father (124). She also points out that in "The Adventuress" Brenda Regan "threatens blackmail if the others do not help her buy their father a pen for Christmas." Guileful Brenda, then, slyly changes the price to make it seem that the cheap present is really much greater than it is (124).

Indeed, O'Connor and other twentieth-century Irish authors simply carry on a tradition in Irish culture that dates back at least as far as the introduction of Christianity into the island. Earlier Irish writers often conceived of women as an active threat to their relationship with God. Irish literature offers numerous examples of women painted as seductresses and poets trying hard to convince a woman that they do not want anything to do with her sexual antics. One pious medieval poet succinctly expressed the temper of the monastic tradition that marked Irish Catholicism so deeply:

> A sweet little bell
> struck on a windy night:
> I would rather answer that
> than meet with a wicked woman! (Kinsella 32)

When the Renaissance hits Ireland a similar phenomenon occurs. While other European poets were writing sonnets lamenting their unrequited love, Irish poets were formulaically rebuffing seductresses as in this segment of an anonymous poem from the sixteenth century:

> Lady with swanlike body,
> I was reared by a cunning hand!
> I know well how women are.
> I will not die for you. (Kinsella 133)

Reversing the typical Renaissance Petrarchan stance, this poem proclaims that he will not allow himself to be entrapped by her beauty. Many other examples from early Irish literature could be used to corroborate Scheper-Hughes's claim that women are traditionally regarded as sly and men as vulnerable.

Such are the attitudes that helped create the independent female of 20th-century Ireland (whose current president, like the previous one, is a woman). While seeming to marginalize girls at a young age, their elders actually provide them with an independence not accessible to their male siblings. The privilege given to the male child, on the other hand, serves to make him dependent, timid and weak, just the opposite of the strong male provider or saga hero that most men aspire to be. This creates a plethora of difficulties for the adult male who must find a wife to take care of him before his parents die but cannot muster the courage or even the charm to do so. However, Edna O'Brien makes it clear that this timidity does not necessarily make it easier for the women in their lives as alcoholism and depression can make men volatile and domineering. Certainly when a headstrong woman is expected by all around her to obey her husband passively, it might be even more difficult than if she were passive to begin with.

Nancy Scheper-Hughes explores these issues, mostly in the light of how they contribute to the enormously high rates of schizophrenia in Ireland, but she also mentions the socially acceptable form of mental illness that has been endemic to the Irish population for many generations: alcoholism. Stereotypically drunken Irishmen abound in world literature, and this stereotype reflects an acknowledged problem with alcoholism in Irish society. Frank O'Connor himself had severe issues with his alcoholic father, this theme emerging often in such stories as "The Drunkard" or "Christmas Morning." The same factors that Scheper-Hughes explores in depth as they relate to schizophrenia, she claims also may contribute to the high rates of alcoholism as well. Indeed, O'Connor himself, although normally abstaining from drink, "always took a drink or two whenever visiting strangers, to brace himself for the ordeal" (Matthews 72). It is no surprise, then, that alcoholism abounds in a society where a shy man is tempted to take a drink in order to deal with strangers.

The fact that Ireland is not remote from the rest of Western European culture is important because themes cross cultural boundaries. The strong provider male archetype is one that has existed in western society since classical times and one from which the typical timid mid-century Irish male could not escape. Faced with a society of strong women, only growing stronger as the feminist movement started to creep across Europe, Irish men could not help but feel disempowered and weak. In a society where alcoholism has long been recourse to those suffering from political and economic marginalization, in DeValera's politically empowered but economically impoverished Irish Free State, timid men who did not experience the most acute forms of mental breakdown still resorted in disproportionate numbers to this traditional comfort for social marginalization as O'Connor's stories suggest.

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