

Post-Panslavismus

*Slavizität, Slavische Idee und Antislavismus
im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert*

*Herausgegeben von
Agnieszka Gąsior, Lars Karl
und Stefan Troebst*



Wallstein

Post-Panslavismus

Moderne europäische Geschichte

Herausgegeben von Hannes Siegrist und Stefan Troebst

Band 9

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Herausgegeben von
Agnieszka Gąsior, Lars Karl und Stefan Troebst
unter Mitarbeit von Wiebke Helm

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Vorwort

*Jméno i prach svojich mužů hlavních
ctí Vlach, Němec, Francouz, Anglové,
i my, vlastenci a bratrové,
slavme slavně slávu Slavov slavných.*

Jan Kollár 1824¹

Die Vorstellung eines sämtliche Slavischsprachige in Raum und Zeit verbindenden kulturellen, gar biologistischen Elements hat viele Gesichter: Slavizität fungiert periodisch als politisch wirksames Mobilisierungsinstrument, sie leitet das Erkenntnisinteresse kulturwissenschaftlicher Forschung und sie ist bis heute ein höchst produktiver Mythos in bildender Kunst, Musik und Literatur.² Als transnationales Identifikationsmuster in verschiedenen kulturell-politischen Kontexten erlebte dieses in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts in Gestalt einer demokratischen Slaveneuphorie, später dann in Form eines großrussisch-expansionistisch-autokratischen Panslavismus aufgekommene Phänomen auch im 20. und beginnenden 21. Jahrhundert seine Konjunkturen. Diese nahmen verschiedene Formen der Identitätsbildung sowie geschichtskultureller und politischer Orientierung durch Bezugnahmen auf »Slaventum« an und firmierten unter Rubra wie Messianismus, Austroslavismus, Neoslavismus, Südslavismus, Tschechoslovakismus und Jugoslawentum.

Im Zweiten Weltkrieg reaktivierte die sowjetische Führung den russozentrisch-patronisierenden Panslavismus, und 1946 installierten Stalin und sein jugoslawischer Partner Tito gar eine die Hegemonialbereiche beider kommunistischer Diktaturen sowie die slavophonen Diasporen in Übersee umspannende Organisationsstruktur, das Gesamtslavische Komitee mit Sitz in Belgrad. Aufgrund des Tito-Stalin-Bruchs von 1948 war dieser Neugründung

1 »Den Namen und die Asche ihrer großen Männer / ehren der Italiener, der Deutsche, der Franzose und die Engländer, / und auch wir, Patrioten und Brüder, / wollen festlich den Ruhm der berühmten Slaven feiern.« Kollár, Jan: Slávy dcera, Lyricko-epická báseň w 3 zpěvích [Slavas Tochter. Lyrisch-episches Gedicht in 3 Gesängen]. Budín 1824, 88, Sonett des zweiten Gesangs (http://zlatyfond.sme.sk/dielo/142/Kollar_Slavy-dcera/3 [11.10.2013]).

2 Troebst, Stefan: Ansätze. Post-Panslawismus. In: Mitropa 2013. Jahresheft des Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrums Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas (GWZO), 62 f.

nur eine kurze Existenz beschieden. Auch bewirkte dieser erste Riss durch den »Ostblock« eine neuerliche Stärkung ideologischer Kohärenzkonzepte wie dasjenige einer nun nicht mehr primär »slavisches«, sondern »sozialistischen Staatengemeinschaft« sowie einer Bewegung der Blockfreien. Zugleich blieb der »Südslavismus« der jugoslawischen Kommunisten von nun an auf den eigenen Staat beschränkt; Pläne einer Inkorporierung des südslavischsprachigen Nachbarstaats Bulgarien und/oder des slavophonen Nordens Griechenlands, des Südens Österreichs oder von Teilen Italiens waren damit hinfällig.

Im Zuge des Zerfalls der slavisch(sprachig)en Bundesstaaten Sowjetunion, Jugoslawien und Tschechoslowakei nach dem Epochenjahr 1989 flackerte ein »gesamtslavisches« Sentiment hier und dort in historisierender und nostalgischer Form wieder auf, ohne allerdings nennenswerte politische oder kulturelle Wirkung zu entfalten. Auch die »ostslavische Karte«, welche die neue Russländische Föderation periodisch mit Blick auf Belarus', die Ukraine und die separatistische Dnjestr-Republik in Moldova spielt, sticht bislang nicht – mit der Folge, dass derzeit nicht das »(Ost-)Slaventum«, sondern »Eurasien« den Fluchtpunkt aktueller geopolitischer Konzeptionen Moskaus bildet.

Keinen politischen Ausdruck hat bislang bemerkenswerterweise die Tatsache gefunden, dass mit Polen, der Tschechischen Republik, der Slowakei, Slowenien, Bulgarien und Kroatien mittlerweile sechs slavophone Staaten Mitglieder der Europäischen Union sind, dass auch in Deutschland, Österreich, Litauen und Ungarn slavische Sprachen Amtssprachenstatus genießen wie überdies Griechenland, Finnland, Estland, Lettland und Rumänien Heimat autochthoner Slavophoner sind. Die Entstehung eines Euroslavismus zeichnet sich dennoch nicht ab. Der Panslavismus ist gleich seinen Gegenstücken auf anderen Kontinenten wie dem Pantürkismus, Panarabismus, Panafrikanismus oder Panamerikanismus also nur situativ als transnationales Identifikationsmuster wirksam. Hauptgrund für diese Schwäche ist, wie bereits beim Panslavismus des 19. Jahrhunderts der Fall, die Asymmetrie zwischen Russ(ophon)en und anderen Slavischsprachigen. Hegemonialer Anspruch und »slavische Wechselseitigkeit« passen wenn überhaupt, dann nur in Krisen- und Umbruchsituationen zusammen.

In diesem Kontext sind als zentrale Gegenlager »gesamtslavischer« Konzeptionen die Reaktionen seitens nicht-slavischsprachiger Gemeinschaften und Nationalgesellschaften zu nennen, deren Antislavismus die Idee einer Zusammengehörigkeit der Slaven nicht anzweifelt, sondern vielmehr aus deren negativer Umwertung ein eigenes integratives Potenzial bezieht. Im Kalten Krieg wurde dies in Frontgesellschaften wie Griechenland und Italien in die Bedrohungsvision eines »Slavokommunismus« gegossen. Besondere Bedeutung kommt überdies der latenten und somit leicht reaktivisierbaren

»slavischen« Vorstellung eines teutonisch-germanischen »Drangs nach Osten« zu. Dieser fungiert einerseits als Gegenstück zum dadurch als defensiv gekennzeichneten Panslavismus samt Nachfolgebewegungen wie andererseits als ideologische Begründung für die Notwendigkeit »gesamtslawischer« Koordination und Kooperation gegenüber einer feindlichen Welt der Nicht-Slawen. Die im Zuge des NS-deutschen Überfalls auf die Sowjetunion von 1941 in der Propaganda Stalins eingeführte »allslawische« Argumentationslinie belegt dies deutlich. Der (Pan-)Slavismus, so könnte man apodiktisch formulieren, braucht zu seiner Begründung den »Drang nach Osten«, wohingegen der Antislavismus dazu den (Pan-)Slavismus benötigt.

In Preußen-Deutschland sowie im Deutschen Reich der Jahre 1871-1945 kann zwar nicht von einem Antislavismus, jedoch von expliziter Polenfeindlichkeit – bezogen sowohl auf die eigene große polnische Minderheit als auch ab 1918 auf den östlichen Nachbarn – gesprochen werden. Auch der von dem polnischen Zeithistoriker Jerzy Borejsza postulierte »Antislavismus Adolf Hitlers« war im Kern ein Antipolonismus,³ denn nicht nur waren Staaten wie Bulgarien, die Slowakei und Kroatien Verbündete des »Dritten Reiches«, sondern auch Wehrmacht und SS verfügten über russische, ukrainische, serbische und andere slavophone Hilfstruppen.

Der im Titel verwendete Neologismus »Post-Panslavismus« erscheint uns mit Blick auf die Beiträge dieses Bandes aus mindestens drei Gründen angemessen: Erstens der zeitlichen Dimension wegen, also bezogen auf das 20. und 21. Jahrhundert und nicht auf das 19.; zweitens wegen der Parallele zum Spannungsverhältnis zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne – statt unifizierender Pan-Bewegung multivektorielle Slaventumsbezüge; und drittens aufgrund der Allusion zu anderen Phänomenen, welche die sozial- und kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung mit dem Präfix »Post-« versieht, darunter Postmaterialismus, Postfeminismus und Posttheroismus, aber auch regional-spezifisch-osteuropäischer Postsozialismus, gar »Post-Postkommunismus«.⁴

Der vorliegende Sammelband ist Ergebnis eines im Zeitraum 2011 bis 2013 vom Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung geförderten interdisziplinären Projekts am Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas an der Universität Leipzig (GWZO), dessen Titel mit dem Bandtitel identisch war. Projektleiter war der Historiker und

3 Borejsza, Jerzy: *Antyslawizm Adolfa Hitlera* [Der Antislavismus Adolf Hitlers]. Warszawa 1988.

4 King, Charles: *Post-Postcommunism. Transition, Comparison, and the End of »Eastern Europe«*. In: *World Politics* 53 (2000), 143-172.

Slavist Stefan Troebst, Projektkoordinatorin die Kunsthistorikerin Agnieszka Gąsior, Projektbearbeiterinnen und -bearbeiter zu unterschiedlichen Zeitpunkten Jenny Alwart, Martina Baleva, Ruža Fotiadis (geb. Tokić), Lars Karl, Adamantios Skordos und Elena Temper. Als Gastwissenschaftler waren im Projekt zeitweise auch Zaur Gasimov (Mainz/Istanbul), Alexander Maxwell (Wellington), Ol'ga Chavanova, Konstantin Nikiforov, Konstantin Tsimbaev (alle Moskau) und andere tätig. Die Genannten sind mehrheitlich im vorliegenden Band vertreten wie eine Reihe weiterer Kolleginnen und Kollegen, mit denen die Leipziger Projektgruppe eng zusammengearbeitet hat, so Jovo Bakić (Belgrad), Jan C. Behrends (Potsdam), Andriy Portnov (Kyiv), Rüdiger Ritter (Bremen), Irina Sirotkina (Moskau), Susanne Spahn (Berlin), Jolanta Sujecka (Warschau) und David Williams (Auckland).

Unser Band knüpft an eine Reihe veröffentlichter Forschungsergebnisse der Leipziger Projektgruppe an. Zu nennen sind ein umfangreiches Themenheft der Zeitschrift »Osteuropa« mit dem Titel »Gemeinsam einsam. Die Slawische Idee nach dem Panslawismus« aus dem Jahr 2009, das auch mediale Aufmerksamkeit gefunden hat,⁵ vier projektbezogene Monografien, die auf Dissertationen zurückgehen,⁶ eine Reihe einschlägiger Aufsätze der Projektmitarbeiterinnen und -mitarbeiter,⁷ eine vorbereitende Ringvor-

5 Gemeinsam einsam. Die Slawische Idee nach dem Panslawismus. Hg. v. Agnieszka Gąsior u. a. Berlin 2009 (= Themenheft der Zeitschrift Osteuropa 59 [2010] 12). Vgl. die Besprechung von Croitoru, Joseph: Robin Hood und die Sozialrebellent der Karpaten. Verbrüderung der Slawen: Die Gegenwart des Panslawismus in der Populärkultur. In: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 18.1.2010, 27, und eine Rezension von Julija Bentja in der Kiever Zeitschrift »Krytyka« (2010) H. 9/10 (155/156), 32.

6 Alwart, Jenny: Mit Taras Ševčenko Staat machen. Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik in der Ukraine vor und nach 1991. Köln-Weimar-Wien 2012 (Visuelle Geschichtskultur 8); Baleva, Martina: Bulgarien im Bild. Die Erfindung von Nationen auf dem Balkan in der Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts. Köln-Weimar-Wien 2012 (Visuelle Geschichtskultur 6); Temper, Elena: Belarus verbildlichen. Staatssymbolik und Nationsbildung seit 1990. Köln-Weimar-Wien 2012 (Visuelle Geschichtskultur 7); Skordos, Adamantios: Griechenlands Makedonische Frage. Bürgerkrieg und Geschichtspolitik im Südosten Europas, 1945-1992. Göttingen 2012 (Moderne europäische Geschichte 2).

7 Karl, Lars/Skordos, Adamantios: Panslawismus. In: European History Online (EGO) 2013-06-06 (<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/karll-skordosa-2013-de> [20.10.2013]); Skordos, Adamantios: Das panslawische Feindbild im Griechenland des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts. In: Südost-Forschungen 71 (2012), 78-107; Tokić, Ruža: »Traditional bonds between Orthodox brothers«. Notions of Greek-Serbian Friendship. In: Südosteuropäische Hefte 1 (2012) 1 (<http://suedosteuropaeischehefte.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/tokic.pdf> [20.10.2013]); Gąsior, Agnieszka: Die Kunst, die Slawen und der Weltfrieden. Alfons Muchas Slawisches Epos. In: Mitropa. Jahresheft des Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrums Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas (GWZO)

lesung im Wintersemester 2008/09 über »Die ›Slawische Idee‹ im langen 20. Jahrhundert« (mit Hans Lemberg, Jan C. Behrends, Tatjana Petzer, Markus Krzoska und Ludwig Elle als Referenten)⁸ sowie ein Panel »Post-Panslavism« auf der 43rd Annual Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies im November 2011 in Washington, DC (mit Jenny Alwart, Agnieszka Gąsior, Lars Karl, Adamantios Skordos, Ruža Tokić und Stefan Troebst).⁹

Die Herausgeber danken den Übersetzern von Bandbeiträgen aus dem Russischen, Ukrainischen, Polnischen und Serbischen, namentlich Jenny Alwart, Ruža Fotiadis, Andreas R. Hofmann und Sarah Seidel, desgleichen Wiebke Helm für die umsichtige Redaktion sowie Hajo Gevers und Florian Grundei vom Wallstein Verlag für die bewährte gute Zusammenarbeit. Hannes Siegrist vom Institut für Kulturwissenschaften der Universität Leipzig, der zusammen mit Stefan Troebst für die Buchreihe »Moderne europäische Geschichte« verantwortlich zeichnet, sei für die Aufnahme unseres Bandes in eben diese Reihe gedankt. Bezüglich der Übernahme der Lektorats- und Druckkosten gilt unser Dank dem Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung sowie dem GWZO, hier vor allem Antje Schneegeß und Anja Fritzsche.

Der literaturwissenschaftlich arbeitende Potsdamer Slavist Norbert Franz hat 2009 in dem genannten Themenheft unserer Leipziger Projektgruppe mit Blick auf seine eigene Disziplin angeregt, »[f]ür die slawistische Kultur-

1 (2010), 21-27; Troebst, Stefan: Slavizität. Identitätsmuster, Analyserahmen, Mythos. In: Kakanien revisited 2010 (http://www.kakanien.ac.at/static/files/51162/OE_12_2009_III_S_7-20.pdf [20.10.2013]).

8 Vgl. dazu die Vorankündigung: Vortragsreihe »Die ›Slawische Idee‹ im langen 20. Jahrhundert« in: H-Soz-u-Kult, 29.8.2008 (<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/termine/id=9827> [20.10.2013]), sowie die in: Gemeinsam einsam (wie Anm. 5) veröffentlichten Fassungen der einzelnen Vorträge: Lemberg, Hans: Hej Slované! Die Slawische Idee bei Tschechen und Slowaken, 21-39; Behrends, Jan C.: Die »so-wjetische Rus'« und ihre Brüder. Die slawische Idee in Russlands langem 20. Jahrhundert, 95-114; Petzer, Tatjana: Figuren der Einheit. Rhetorik und Realität der südslawischen Integration, 237-249; Krzoska, Markus: Historische Mission und Pragmatismus. Die slawische Idee in Polen im 20. Jahrhundert, 77-94, und Elle, Ludwig: Unter Brüdern. Die Sorben und die slawische Solidarität im 20. Jahrhundert, 125-137.

9 Vgl. dazu Kunakhovich, Kyrill: Tagungsbericht »Post-Panslavism« at the 43rd Annual Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. 17.11.2012, Washington, D.C. In: H-Soz-u-Kult, 9.3.2012 (<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=4163> [20.10.2013]).

wissenschaft könnte die Thematisierung des Slawen-Diskurses ein Feld sein, das – der Sprache ähnlich – eine das Fach einende Klammer bzw. einen Fluchtpunkt für Forschungsanstrengungen bildet«. ¹⁰ Zu dieser forschungsstrategischen Neuausrichtung will der vorliegende Band einen Beitrag leisten.

Leipzig, im Oktober 2013

Agnieszka Gašior, Lars Karl, Stefan Troebst

¹⁰ Franz, Norbert: Slawen(dis)kurs. Die deutsche Slawistik und ihr Gegenstand. In: Gemeinsam einsam (wie Anm. 5), 251-262, hier 259.

Wissenschaftshistorischer Prolog

Post-Panslavism?

Political Connotations of Slaviness in 21st Century Europe¹

Some twenty years ago, the US-Czech historian Milan Hauner published a book with the intriguing title »What Is Asia to Us? Russia's Asian Heartland Yesterday and Today«. ² Unfortunately, there is no similar book on our topic, none entitled »What Is Slavdom to Us? Europe's Slavic Heartland Yesterday and Today«, despite the fact that in 1791 Herder had already pointed out that Slavs were inhabiting »den schönsten Erdstrich Europa's«³ – »the most beautiful part of Europe«. Such a book does not exist yet. Until the ultimate monograph on the topic is written, the present volume as well as a topical issue of the German monthly »Osteuropa«, entitled »Gemeinsam einsam. Die Slawische Idee nach dem Panslawismus«⁴ – »Lonely together: The Slavic Idea after pan-Slavism« – may serve as surrogates.

Now, what is Slavdom to us today? In 2008, this question figured prominently on the agenda of the editorial board of the US-American journal »Slavic Review«. The reason was the decision by the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies – an umbrella organization founded back in 1938 – to change its name by adding two more components: American Association for the Advancement of Slavic, *East European, and Eurasian* Studies. Naturally, the question arose whether also »Slavic Review« should be

- 1 Presentation at the 21st International Congress of Historical Sciences, Amsterdam, 22–28 August 2010, Commission Internationale des Études Historiques Slaves, Section »Slavic Solidarity Today«. For an extended German version cf. Troebst, Stefan: Slavizität. Identitätsmuster, Analyserahmen, Mythos [Slavicity. Identity Pattern, Frame of Analysis, Myth]. In: Gemeinsam einsam. Die Slawische Idee nach dem Panslawismus. Eds. Agnieszka Gąsior et al. Berlin 2009, 7–19 (= topical issue of Osteuropa 59 [2009] 12) (http://www.kakanien.ac.at/static/files/51162/OE_12_2009_III_S_7-20.pdf [15.10.2013]).
- 2 Hauner, Milan: What is Asia to us? Russia's Asian Heartland Yesterday and Today. Boston, MA 1990.
- 3 Herder, Johann Gottfried: Werke. Vol. 3: Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit. 1. Text. Darmstadt 2002, 643 (Pt. Four, 16th book, chapter IV).
- 4 Gemeinsam einsam (cf. n. 1). The title is adapted from Kohn, Hans: Von der Einsamkeit und Gemeinsamkeit der Slawen [Of the Loneliness and the Togetherness of the Slavs]. In: Die Welt der Slawen. Vol. 1: Die West- und Südslawen. Ed. idem. Frankfurt a. M. 1960, 9–20.

renamed, for example, into *Slavic*, East European and Eurasian *Review*. The editors unanimously decided not to do so but to keep the traditional title »Slavic Review« for two reasons: First, the journal's subtitle »Interdisciplinary Quarterly of Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies« made the geographical scope already clear enough.⁵ The second argument sounded a bit cryptic: »Slavic« has become a largely flexible, even empty, signifier (outside of linguistics), which the subtitle explains.«⁶ What the editorial board had in mind was obviously that in the humanities »Slavic« by now functions as a connotation of something which experts can decipher while the term itself has lost the very core of its meaning. This somewhat self-referential explanation resembles the answer of OSCE's High Commissioner on National Minorities Max van der Stoep who, when asked to define what a national minority is, replied: »I won't offer you [a definition] of my own. [...] I would dare to say that I know a minority when I see one.«⁷

But do we really recognize something as »Slavic« when we see it? Most probably not, unless it has a label on it saying »Slavic!«. If not, we tend to apply national or regional frames of reference like »Ukrainian«, »Slovak«, »Torbesch« or »Kashub« as well as transnational ones, like »Balkan«, »East-Central European« or »Eurasian«. Moreover, even the label »Slavic« can be misleading in the sense that it does not indicate a pattern of identification but a political strategy. In the post-Soviet realm, »Slavic« more often than not is used as a synonym for pan-Russianism; the Vatican employs the concept for ecumenical purposes; and in the mixed Christian-Muslim societies of the Balkans it stands for orthodoxy. New developments are the emergence of a medieval fiction of non-Christian, pagan »Slavicness« as well as of decidedly anti-Slavic currents in Slavic-speaking societies like Bulgaria, Croatia or Macedonia. Thus, as in the 19th and 20th centuries when the romantic idea of Slavic unity emerged and pan-Slavism, Austroslavism, Neoslavism, Yugoslavism and Czechoslovakism were conceived, in the 21st century too the nationalisms of the Slavophone societies of East-Central Europe, the Balkans and Eurasia prove to be much more viable in political terms than any all-Slav design.

Furthermore, nationalism (in the neutral sense of the term) is, in addition to religion, the main reason for the fact that there is no such thing as

5 Draft Minutes. Slavic Review Annual Editorial Board Meeting (Philadelphia Marriott). Friday, 21 November 2008, 2.

6 Ibid.

7 OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Max van der Stoep: Keynote address at the opening of the OSCE Minorities Seminar in Warsaw in 1994 (<http://www.osce.org/hcnm/13022.html> [15.10.2013]).

a political Euroslavism comparable to Eurocommunism, Euroislam and other pan-European movements, despite that beginning in 1981 numerous Slavic-speaking communities, and in 2004 also Slavic-speaking countries, became members of the European Union. By now some 70 million of the EU's more than 500 million inhabitants are citizens of Slavophone states, with another 3 million Slavophone minorities in non-Slavophone states: That makes roughly 14 percent of all EU citizens. In between 1991 and 2006, eleven Slavophone states were founded in Europe; thus currently a relative majority of European states are Slavophone.

The fact that there is no all-Slavic ideology today, not even a cultural equivalent to Francophonie or Lusophonie, is the reason for the almost complete absence of anti-Slavism in non-Slavic societies. I take the German-speaking countries as an example: While in the 19th century politicians, intellectuals and scholars like Karl Marx, Gustav Freytag, Georg von Schönerer or Max Weber were militantly Slavophobic on an ethnic, if not racial basis, most Germans, Austrians and German-speaking Swiss today would have tremendous difficulty in identifying Lithuanians, Bulgarians, Moldovans or Rusyns as either Slavs or non-Slavs. There still are, of course, negative stereotypes on ›Slavs as such‹, but they are, unlike Herder's positive stereotype of the diligent, peaceful and happy Slavs, regionally and culturally, not ethnically, connotated. ›Slavic‹ in this sense means ›East European‹, that is, not completely ›Europeanized‹. A good example is an article in the London ›Economist‹ of July 1999 entitled ›Setting Slavs free‹, with a quintessential subtitle: ›There is no reason why Slavs cannot be democrats‹.⁸ Here, ›Slavic‹ stands not only for ›East European‹ but also for ›post-Communist‹. And this is probably the most interesting phenomenon connected to our term ›Slavic‹ – that since 1989 it oscillates in a truly breathtaking way. According to David Laitin's findings on the post-Soviet realm, in Russia's so-called Near Abroad ›Slavic‹ is almost synonymously used with ›Russophone‹ and ›Soviet‹. At the same time, Russian-speakers outside the Russian Federation prefer the term ›Slavic‹ to alternative terms like ›Russian‹ – in both its meanings of *russkii* and *rossiiskii* – ›Russophone‹, ›Orthodox‹, ›autochthonous‹, ›minoritarian‹, ›migratory‹, ›Cossack‹ or – in Central Asia – ›European‹.⁹ It is interesting to note that in an Asian context ›Slavic‹ can be replaced by ›European‹, whereas in a West European context ›Slavic‹ can have the connotation of ›Europe's Far East‹ or even ›extra-European‹.

8 Setting Slavs free. There is no reason why Slavs cannot be democrats. In: The Economist, 24.7.1999, 18.

9 Laitin, David D.: Identity in Formation. The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad. Ithaca, NY-London 1998, 263-299.

The absence of a Euroslavism does, of course, not mean that there is no political cooperation between Slavic-speaking states in Europe. It is, however, limited to very few topics or situations – and even then it is not called ›Slavic‹ but, e. g., ›new Europe‹, ›Visegrád‹, ›Central Europe‹, ›Southeast European‹ etc. Accordingly, there is no ›Slavic Group‹ in the European Parliament or in the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe and the OSCE nor an equivalent to what Scandinavians and Finns call ›Nordic‹ in cultural but also political terms. There is even the case of a political concept which initially carried the label ›Slavic‹ but then deleted it. I have in mind of course the initiative of presidents Yeltsin, Kravchuk and Shushkevych in 1991 to form a post-Soviet *Sodruzhestvo Slavianskikh Gosudarstv* – a Commonwealth of *Slavic* States. Yet, due to the interference of the Kazakh president Nazarbaev, also non-Slavic former Soviet republics were included and the organization was renamed pleonastically into *Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv* – a Commonwealth of *Independent* States.

So the question remains: What does ›Slavic‹ mean to us personally, that is, to those involved in Slavic studies? In 1998, the Austrian expert on Slavic linguistics Otto Kronsteiner made a pessimistic prediction: Traditional Slavic studies will inevitably go down the drain since they are ›incestuous – by Slavs for Slavs.«¹⁰ In his opinion, the focus of Slavic studies in the 19th century on pan-Slavism and Slavic reciprocity has led to a methodical and theoretical petrification of the discipline – something which was prolonged for another century by Soviet Communism. »Auf diese Weise«, thus Kronsteiner's resume, »ist die Slawistik zu einer schwer durchschaubaren monolithischen Geheimwissenschaft geworden«¹¹ – that is, Slavic studies mutated into an opaque, monolithic and esoteric science. Recently, Kronsteiner's German colleague Norbert Franz came up with a similar, yet less harsh verdict. He, too, doubted whether the medieval unity of the Slavs was sufficient to argue the unity of the academic discipline of Slavic studies. At the same time Franz saw a way out of this dilemma: »For Slavic Cultural Studies, the thematization of Slavic discourse could be a field which – similar to the language – forms a link uniting the discipline, or rather a vanishing point for research

10 Kronsteiner, Otto: Zum unvermeidlichen Untergang der Slawistik alten Typs [On the inevitable decay of old-type Slavic studies]. In: Międzynarodowy kongres slawistów (Kraków, 27.8.-2.9.1998). Streszczenia referatów i komunikatów. Literaturaoznawstwo, folklorystyka, nauka o kulturze. Warszawa 1998, 13-21, 14.

11 Idem: Kurzschluss oder Vernetzung. Warum wir eine europäische Philologie brauchen statt weiterhin etatistische Nationalphilologien [Short circuit or network-building. Why we need a European philology instead of going on with etatist national philologies]. In: Die slawischen Sprachen 58 (1998), 225-245, here 228.

efforts.«¹² So analyzing the ›Slavic‹ discourse on ›Slaviness‹ could in his view constitute the scholarly foundation of the discipline of Slavic cultural studies. This seems to me to be a reasonable proposal. We will see in the future how convincing it is perceived to be by university managements and parliamentary budget committees.

In sum: To revitalize the ›Slavic Idea‹ in the romantic sense of the 19th century or in the sense of political pan-Slavism was not possible in the 20th century, nor will it be in the 21st. In certain instances, however, elements of ›Slavic solidarity‹ can be used for political mobilization. There is, however, no guarantee that this mechanism works in every case. For instance, during the 1999 NATO air strike campaign against rump-Yugoslavia's attempt to ethnically cleanse Kosovo of Albanians, the Russian State Duma and the Russian Orthodox Church tried to drum up a ›Slavic levy‹ to support militarily the ›orthodox brethren‹ in the Balkans. And Vladimir Zhirinovskiy even boasted that he would charter at his own expense planes to bring several thousand Russian volunteers and Cossacks to Serbia. Nothing came out of this attempt, and Russian critics of the rightwing political weirdo cited the acid remark by the Russian Minister of the Interior of the 1860s, Petr Valuev, who had qualified pan-Slavic sentiment as ›Slavophile masturbation‹.¹³

These micro elements of ›Slavic reciprocity‹ can be detected not only in fields like politics and religion, but also in popular culture – see prominently the Eurovision Song Contest – and, last but not least, sports. When asked in 2008 about corruption and mismanagement in the Polish Soccer Association PZPN, its chairman stated that these deplorable phenomena would luckily enough not endanger the European championship that was to take place jointly in Poland and Ukraine. Instead he predicted a sports highlight: ›Two countries, one application, one decision – and a fabulous Slavic tournament in 2012.«¹⁴

12 Franz, Norbert: Slawen(dis)kurs. Die deutsche Slawistik und ihr Gegenstand [Slavic (dis)course. German Slavic studies and their object]. In: *Gemeinsam einsam* (cf. n. 1), 251-262, here 259 (›Für die slawistische Kulturwissenschaft könnte die Thematisierung des Slawen-Diskurses ein Feld sein, das – der Sprache ähnlich – eine das Fach einende Klammer bzw. einen Fluchtpunkt für Forschungsanstrengungen bildet.«).

13 Dnevnik P.A. Valueva, ministra vnutrennich del [Diary of P.A. Valuev, minister of the interior]. T. 2. Moskva 1961, 381 (entry of 4 August 1876).

14 Horeni, Michael: Hoffen auf den Zivilisationssprung. Korruption, Gewalt, Rassismus: Der polnische Fußball hat einen miserablen Ruf [Hoping on a civilizational paradigm. Corruption, violence, racism: The low prestige of Polish football]. In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 23.12.2008, 30.

Notes in/from the Margin

Slavic and East European Studies in the Anglo-American Academy

*West European Slavists were wont to enter the field for emotional reasons: they had fallen in love with one of those exotic East bloc types. Or they would cement their choice of field after the fact with a politically, culturally, professionally, sentimentally correct marriage. There was another factor involved: the field made them absolute lords over minor, out-of-the-way, language-and-literature fiefdoms into which no one had ventured theretofore, which made the probability of their competence being adequately evaluated statistically insignificant.*²

Dubravka Ugrešić 2005

Providing an overview of a broad subject such as this probably requires one to be – *a priori* – a lover of lost causes. Yet as it will become clear, »lover of lost causes« is one of the better definitions of what it means to be a western Slavic scholar. As Croatian writer Dubravka Ugrešić put it in a recent essay: »We eventually come to love our own bad choices, particularly if correcting them requires too great an effort.«³ As a New Zealander born in the Pacific seas of Fiji, with degrees in German, English, and Comparative Literature, there is a considerable irony in me, of all people, making the quixotic attempt. In my southern homeland the only Slavic language taught is Russian, which is offered at two of the country's eight universities, and available as a major at only one of them, where it is taught by two staff members. Yet as a lover of irony, a love no doubt born from the years of my life lost to repeated reading of Hrabal, Kundera, and not least, Ugrešić, perhaps I am better equipped for the task than my personal or academic biography would suggest.

As Galin Tikhanov notes in his 2004 article »Why Did Modern Literary Theory Originate in Central and Eastern Europe? (And Why Is It Now Dead?),« the esteem in which literature in Eastern Europe has traditionally been held – as a matter of the nation and of the people – was »reflected in

- 1 David Williams was a visiting scholar at the Leipzig Centre for the History and Culture of East-Central Europe (GWZO) in 2013.
- 2 Ugrešić, Dubravka: *The Ministry of Pain*. Trans. Michael Henry Heim. London 2005, 46.
- 3 Eadem: *A Middle Finger*. In: *Europe in Sepia*. Trans. David Williams. Rochester, NY, 2014, 148-152, 148.

the early institutionalization of its study.«⁴ In Russia, a chair in the national literature was first established in 1835, while in England the equivalent didn't occur until 1852, at University College London. Harvard first had a chair in English in 1876, while at Oxford a department of English was not founded until 1894; Cambridge didn't award an undergraduate degree in the subject until 1916. As Tikhonov observes, »English literature was viewed from early on less as a tool of nation building or a channel of political influence and more as a practice that contributes to the well-being of society by enhancing the life of the individual.«⁵ Indirectly confirming the East-West dialectic of literature as either a public or private matter, Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer suggest that »literature was institutionalized earlier in societies with problematic national identities – such as in Eastern and Central Europe (including Germany) – rather than in nations that had »a robust self-image«, such as England and France.«⁶ This fundamental East-West difference in the understanding of the social function of literature is a question central to debates over the study of Slavic and East European literature in the post-1989 context, and one to which I shall later return.

In terms of Slavic Studies, while in the Germanophone lands a professorship was established in Breslau in 1842, in the USA, the first appointment of any kind was to Harvard in 1896, when a tutor was engaged to teach language classes in Russian and Polish. Russian wasn't offered at Berkeley until 1901, while the first full Slavic programme was introduced at Columbia in 1915, followed by one at Harvard in 1927. While Slavic Studies became a fully recognized subject at American universities in the 1930s, as Horace Lunt notes, four decades after the introduction of Russian at Harvard and Berkeley, the language remained an exotic oddity, »while other Slavic languages were seen as essentially a matter for the children of immigrants.«⁷ Illustrating the point, Lunt recalls that in 1938 there were only six students in Harvard's second-year Russian course. A Polish language course had four Polish-Americans, while a course in Serbo-Croatian had only one student.

Slavic Studies came into its own after 1945 with the beginnings of the Cold War, many American Slavists having begun their careers taking crash courses in Russian during the Second World War. By 1949 the Harvard

4 Tikhonov, Galin: Why Did Modern Literary Theory Originate in Central and Eastern Europe? (And Why Is It Now Dead?). In: *Common Knowledge* 10 (Winter 2004) 1, 61-81, 77.

5 Ibid., 77f.

6 Cited in *ibid.*, 78.

7 Lunt, Horace G.: On the History of Slavic Studies in the United States. Review of »Beiträge zur Geschichte der Slawistik in nichtslawischen Ländern«, by Josef Hamm and Günther Wytzens. In: *Slavic Review* 46 (Summer 1987) 2, 294-301, 297.

Slavic programme boasted a full complement of courses in Russian language and literature, along with strong Czech, Polish, and Serbo-Croatian offerings, the programme crowned by the presence of Roman Jakobson. Both undergraduate and graduate classes were apparently full, a situation mirrored at Columbia and Berkeley. By 1961 the University of Chicago also had a complete department, today one of the strongest in the United States.

Yet before dates, facts, and numbers overwhelm us, it is important to underline a distinction Lunt makes on the different historical development and purpose of Slavic Studies in the U.S. and in Europe. As Lunt maintains, in Europe linguists established the field, while in the U.S. it was established by historians. American Slavists, as Lunt contends, have had two separate goals: the first »to make Americans aware of the Slavic world and its culture, as a matter of general significance«; the second, the training of »a few Americans in the languages and the history so that dealings with Slavic countries can be conducted intelligently.«⁸ Yet, as a recent article by Stefan Troebst outlines, from the turn of the twentieth century to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the second goal also applied in Germany, where what Troebst calls »the sub-discipline« of East European History was used by politics and diplomacy as a kind of »Feindwissenschaft« – a way to *know thy enemy*.⁹

In a 2005 interview, Katherine Verdery, president of what was then called the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (better known by its »triple A double S« acronym), indirectly sketched the transformation of American Slavic Studies from the second half of the twentieth century to the present. As Verdery explained, the organization was founded in 1938 with the aim of »trying to promote a deeper understanding of the Soviet world and the satellite countries that had come under Soviet domination.«¹⁰ Reflecting both new geopolitical realities and changes in emphasis in the field, in 2008 members voted to rename the organization the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), a change that became effective in 2010. In many respects, the name change righted a historical wrong, »Slavic« having long been an inaccurate umbrella term for the study of Eastern Europe, which naturally includes Romania, Hungary, the Baltic republics, and, depending on where one draws the eastern borders of Eastern Europe, Central Asia. It also highlighted the decreasing impor-

8 Ibid., 296.

9 Troebst, Stefan: Sonderweg zur Geschichtsregion: Die Teildisziplin Osteuropäische Geschichte. In: Osteuropa 63 (2013) 2-3, 55-80, 55.

10 Verdery, Katherine: Slavic Studies Face an Uncertain Future. Interview by Andrei Zolotov Jr. In: Russia Profile November 8, 2005; http://russiaprofile.org/culture_living/a915.html (June 19, 2013).

tance of philology, which today remains perhaps the only relevant unifier of the Slavic peoples. Indeed, as the editorial board of »Slavic Review« agreed in 2008, outside of linguistics »Slavic« has become a largely flexible, even empty, signifier«, which the journal's sub-title, »Interdisciplinary Quarterly of Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies«, itself reflects.¹¹

At its peak the AAASS had around 5 000 members; today its successor, the ASEES, has around 3 000. As Verdery frankly noted in her interview: »It is no longer an area that attracts a lot of new scholars. Today students are going into a study of China or the Middle East – you know, whatever is hot.«¹² While it is perhaps not surprising that the end of communism brought on a decline in Slavic and East European Studies in the Anglophone lands, as Ulrich Schmid recently pointed out, things are not altogether different in the German context, where »in spite of Europe's opening toward the East, in the past twenty-five years academic engagement with the small Slavic lands remains marginal.«¹³

In terms of the AAASS's historical character, Verdery explains that the disciplines of history and literature have traditionally predominated, while of the social sciences, political science has had the greatest presence. She also makes an illuminating observation on the post-1989 withdrawal of political scientists and the growing ranks of anthropologists. Political scientists, she maintains, have been »captured by certain kinds of theories,« and »think they can develop theoretical models and apply them anywhere,«¹⁴ which undermines the perceived value of area-specific knowledge. On the other hand, anthropologists are making a greater contribution than ever to the field due to the fact that is now much easier to conduct field research.

The premise of a workshop held in February 2013 at Princeton University – »The End of the Story? Problems and Perspectives of East European Literary Studies« – reiterated and underscored many of the pressing anxieties first highlighted by Verdery some eight years previously. The aim of the workshop was »to analyze the current status and prospects of the field of East European literary studies in the context of historical, geopolitical and disciplinary changes, [to] examine critically the *raison d'être* of the field, review new scholarship, [and] chart the key directions.«¹⁵ Being somewhat braver

11 Draft Minutes, »Slavic Review« Annual Editorial Board Meeting (Philadelphia Marriot Hotel), 21 November 2008, 2. Cited in Troebst, Stefan: Slavizität: Identitätsmuster, Analyserahmen, Mythos. In: Osteuropa 59 (2009) 12, 7-19, 14.

12 Verdery (cf. n. 10).

13 Schmid, Ulrich: Ende und Neubeginn der Philologie: Perspektiven für die literaturwissenschaftliche Slavistik. In: Osteuropa 63 (2013) 2-3, 31-54, 31.

14 Verdery (cf. n. 10).

15 See: <http://easteuropeanliterarystudies.wordpress.com/> (June 19, 2013).

than Verdery, the conference organizers argued that »the rationale for support of East European studies based on the geopolitical place of the region in a bi-polar world, no longer holds,« and suggested that »because of their economic growth, trade dynamism, and military affiliation with the United States through NATO, many East European countries [have] superseded their regional identification and are now part of the economic and cultural ›North‹.«¹⁶

There are several matters worth unpacking here, all of which illuminate ongoing – perhaps entrenched – crises in Anglophone Slavic and East European scholarship. The first is the internecine and never-ending debate about where Eastern Europe actually is. Surprisingly, the conference organizers implicitly define it as a region that excludes the former Soviet Union, when the overwhelming weight of scholarship over the past two decades tends to use the nomenclatures »Central Europe« or »East-Central Europe« when aiming to exclude the (past and present) CIS states.¹⁷ The second issue, intrinsically linked to the first, is whether the term »Eastern Europe« is an exhausted one, of no descriptive use when it includes the relatively prosperous and progressive Slovenia with »still-stuck-in-the-mud« Moldova, the tiny Nokia colony of Estonia with the 45-million-strong Ukraine, the docile Czechs with the belligerent Serbs, and so on and so forth. Yet the conference organizers' contention that many East European countries »are now part of the economic and cultural ›North‹« appears dramatically overstated. A cursory glance at any British tabloid would disabuse even the most optimistic scholar of the notion that »Easterners« and »Eastern Europe« are now culturally or economically part of the »North«. For as long as a Polish woman can only appear in a British or American TV show as either a cleaner or a prostitute, an Albanian as a drug dealer or human trafficker, a Serb as a war criminal, and a Russian as a gangster, it is clear that at least in the popular Anglo-American imagination, Eastern Europe still lives.

Darkness Falling

Using the principle of »one village can speak for many villages,« at this juncture it is most instructive to focus on individual case studies. In recent years

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ For a comprehensive overview of the nomenclature debate, s. Neubauer, John: What's in a Name? Mitteleuropa, Central Europe, Eastern Europe, East-Central Europe. In: Kakanien Revisited, 7 May 2003; <http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/theorie/JNeubauer1.pdf> (June 19, 2013).

the other major U.S. Slavic organization, the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL), has asked established scholars to provide state-of-the-field reports. For present purposes, of particular interest is the one on Czech literary studies authored by Harvard Professor of Czech, Jonathan Bolton.

Bolton begins his report by citing a 2010 poll in the journal »Česka literatura«, which asked scholars »to identify the ›blank spots‹ (*bílá místa*) in Czech literary history and theory. What remained ›uncovered‹, even after twenty years of intensive scholarship devoted to rediscovering authors, texts, and methodologies that had been neglected or suppressed (whether for political or other reasons) under Communism?«¹⁸ Bolton observes that poll responses were almost equally divided. The first camp identified under-studied areas, while the second suggested »Czech literary studies faced other challenges – not an absence of coverage, but the failure to structure a lively, ongoing debate that would reach a wider audience and generate excitement among its own students.«¹⁹

One of the main problems Bolton identifies is what he describes as »the stagnant and distorted view of the twentieth-century Czech literary canon« as reflected in Anglophone Slavic scholarship and university teaching. He maintains that the Anglo-American canon of Czech literature has barely changed in the last twenty years, a time in which he suggests »Czech literary history has been entirely reconstructed.«²⁰ As Bolton charges, the teaching of Czech literature in the U.S. is still dominated by »the *pětka* of Jaroslav Hašek, Karel Čapek, Milan Kundera, Bohumil Hrabal, and Václav Havel.«²¹ Bolton outlines several possible causes for this fossilization, all perfectly plausible. Chief among them are the foreigner's love for Czech literature featuring »the Czechs' anti-heroic irony« (remembering my introduction, I am guilty as charged), »the virtues of the ›little man‹«, pub stories, and »the occasional mixture of dissident heroics,« all of which Bolton suggests represent »a version of Czech identity that freezes out the myriad of writers who simply don't fit the model.«²² Exemplifying this apparent freezing out, Bolton offers a long list of Czech authors who have never had »a single article devoted [to them] in whole or in part« in the »Slavic and East European

18 Bolton, Jonathan: Czech Literary Studies: The State of the Field. In: AATSEEL Newsletter 54 (October 2011) 3, 2-4, 2.

19 Ibid., 2.

20 Ibid., 3.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

Journal« (the official AATSEEL journal), with many having never »received a single mention.«²³

Seeking answers, Bolton provocatively asks whether »America's Russo-centric Slavic Departments have neglected Czech literature, or whether American Bohemists have failed to engage the interest of their colleagues.«²⁴ Rather than engaging in academic tribal warfare, Bolton suggests that the real issue is that the study of Czech literature and culture (and here one could substitute Polish, South Slavic, Baltic literatures and cultures, and so forth) now takes place in many non-Slavic departments, e. g. in Global and World Literature programmes within English departments, in Comparative Literature programmes, in History, Art History, Music, Architecture, Sociology, and Anthropology departments. As Bolton maintains, the end result is that »many Czech scholars are not really sure whether Russian-oriented Slavic departments in the U.S. constitute their primary audience.«²⁵ In my experience, the same could be said for scholars of almost any »baby Slavic« literature.

Despite asking useful questions, Bolton's solutions to the apparent crisis are both contradictory and unrealistic. On the one hand, he suggests that U.S. scholars of Czech literature need to »re-connect with [...] the larger world of Slavic literature scholars,« yet on the other, placing the burden of change on PhD students, he suggests that is necessary for them »to turn outward and recognize the widest possible definition of the discipline,«²⁶ urging them to seek connections with non-Slavic disciplines. Yet the very thrust of his argument is that it is these very same centrifugal forces that have led to what he sees as an unfortunate decentering of the field – or lack of coherency – which in turn means that »hoary stereotypes« of Czech literature go unchallenged. Complaining about the »dearth of widely-read books that could highlight new authors and propose provocative new paradigms,«²⁷ Bolton offers a rather unfortunate impersonation of the statue of the three monkeys – seeing no evil, hearing no evil, and speaking no evil.

There are at least three interrelated evils. The first is the reality of Anglo-American academic publishing; the second, the reality of Anglo-American publishing of literature in translation; the third, the reality of foreign language study in Anglophone countries. With regard to the first, it is well and good for Bolton, a tenured scholar at one of America's most elite uni-

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

versities, whose sole monograph is a study of Czech dissidents under communism,²⁸ to suggest to younger scholars that they should work on bringing lesser-known Czech writers to wider attention. The unfortunate reality (one Bolton no doubt knows well) is that it is *very* difficult to get scholarship on such writers published as a monograph, with all the attendant consequences for one's career aspirations. While one will certainly be able to place articles about Patrik Ouředník, Petra Hůlová, or Jáchym Topol in »Slavic Review« or the »Slavic and East European Journal«, trying to publish a book based on one or even a handful of these writers will prove far more problematic – if not impossible.²⁹

Here it is critical to highlight a crucial difference between scholarly publishing in English and in German, and the significant impact it has on smaller fields such as Slavic and East European Studies. While in Germany and a number of other European countries authorial subventions are the rule, i. e. the author pays the publisher to publish his or her book (often with a grant from a foundation), in the Anglo-American academy this is generally referred to as »vanity publishing« and considered but a small step above self-publishing. A consequence of this funding difference is that scholarly publishers in the English-speaking world are far more conservative than their Germanophone counterparts. Put baldly, a scholarly publisher or university press in the English-speaking world is very concerned about whether the book will actually sell – and make a profit. In the German model, the author's contribution guarantees in advance that the publisher will at least break even. And given the ubiquity of subventions in the region of EUR 8 000, it would appear that many German scholarly publishers make healthy profits irrespective of whether or not their books sell more than a handful of copies.

Coupled with the profit-driven conservatism of Anglophone scholarly publishing is the profit-driven conservatism of Anglophone literary publishing, which in recent years has become known as »the three percent problem.« In short, the three percent problem refers to the reality that translated books make up less than three percent of all books published in the United States in any given year. Given that this figure includes car repair manuals, self-help books, cookbooks, and the Stieg Larson trilogy, for works of what was once called »high literature,« the reality is actually much worse.

28 Bolton, Jonathan: *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, The Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech Culture under Communism*. Cambridge, MA 2012.

29 The fact that British scholar Rajendra Chitnis could only publish his (English-language) monograph »Vladislav Vančura: The Heart of the Czech Avant-garde« with the Prague-based Karolinum Press (Charles University) supports this contention.