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André Michael Hein, *Does Transnational Mobilization Work for Language Minorities? A Comparative Study on Romanians in Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Hungary*. Münster – Berlin – London: LIT Verlag, 2014, 257 p.

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In the study of Romanian "old" or historical communities in Romania's neighbouring countries, significant attention has been devoted in the past decades to issues regarding their origin, history, identity, folklore, traditions and language, both by researchers from the kin-state and from the host country. Recently, members of the international academic community have also started showing a vivid interest in these communities, adding new dimensions to their research by putting them within the frame of globalization, Europeanization and transnationalization. However, the Romanian communities around Romania have so far rarely been the subject of research in the political science, hence the overall shortage of material in this field. Therefore, writing a book about the transnational political mobilisation of Romanian minorities from the European countries that formerly belonged to the Soviet sphere of influence is a salutary initiative meant to fill an important gap. In order to do so, one needs a broad knowledge of the political science apparatus, familiarity with the theories in the field of social movements and nationality studies, consistency in interpreting and applying them, exceptional knowledge of the contemporary situation of the Romanian minorities and of their recent history, as well as the ability to draw pertinent conclusions from the analysis of such a broad set of variables.

André Michael Hein's book is thus a very ambitious pioneering study. It aims not only at illustrating and sustaining the leading theory(ies) in the field of political mobilization with empirical material from the Romanian communities outside Romania, but goes beyond that by putting together more theoretical concepts from different fields and skillfully building an understanding of the phenomena currently taking place in the studied communities. Also, it does not look at one country and one Romanian minority only, but encompasses the entire space around Romania where Romanians form a national minority: Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Hungary, and tries to compare the vastly different situations.

However, the reader might at first be puzzled since the title of the book *Does Transnational Mobilization Work for Language Minorities?* is more catchy than clear, containing two phrases that need to be further clarified: what exactly does *transnational mobilization* and *language minorities* refer to? The author is also aware of the non-transparency of the two phrases and devotes a great deal of text to explaining in detail what *transnational mobilization* is, which actors are involved in it and what the national and international factors which either promote or inhibit transnational mobilization are. Thus, Hein pleads for the understanding of this phrase in the widest possible sense, that a multitude of political processes can be defined as transnational mobilization: the sustained cooperation of social movements within transnational networks, the framing of political declarations of a social movement in the language of European integration, the physical movement of people etc. On the other hand, in the first footnote of the book it is said that *language minority* is to be understood as "a maximalist definition that can mean-

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ingfully include all potential members of the minority group that will be observed here", with the proviso that minority movements normally advocate ideas of common 'national' and 'ethnic' roots for minority groups that go far beyond the claims for a common 'language' only. As the author further on in the study excludes from his analysis those groups that do not aim at the promotion of a Romanian identity and culture or that do not declare themselves as parts of it, one might find the use of the phrase *language minority* superfluous: for the sake of brevity and clarity, *minority* could have been used instead, or *Romanian minority*. Nevertheless, the subtitle *A Comparative Study on Romanians in Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Hungary* is a fitting description of the topic explored in the book.

The aim of the study is to relate the existing theories in the field of social movements, cosmopolitanism, nationality studies and Europeanization to the empirical observations on the Romanian communities in Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Hungary in order to explain why transnational mobilization is likely or not to work for the Romanians in the four countries. As it aims at delivering an encompassing analysis of complex situations, in different regions with diverse political settings, it is argued that only a combination of these theories is capable of offering a qualified contribution to the topic rather than using the main theories within only one discipline. Accordingly, the book employs an inductive approach and aims at "theory building": starting with the critical analysis of the existing theories, it moves to the empirical level, using a variety of sources, in order to refer back to the theoretical explanations for the observed phenomena and to adjust them accordingly.

The author draws attention to the fact that, when talking about minority activism, the current literature has two main shortcomings: one is that there is still a shortage of literature on civil society development in those European countries that formerly belonged to the Soviet sphere of influence, the other, that most of the case study research on transnational minority mobilization has so far focused on groups with a significant amount of such an activity, priority being given to identifying certain patterns of already existing mobilization, rather than questioning whether transnational mobilization is at all a feasible option for the minorities in question. As Hein accurately notices that the existing studies prefer to look at successful examples of transnational actions rather than to examine why transnationalization attempts may not perpetuate in some situations, he chooses to take a look at the Romanian communities in Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Hungary, as he considers them an interesting case for transnational minority activism in post-communist Europe. Why? Because of several reasons: they are traditionally not mobile; they do not benefit from the support of any institutionalized representation at the European level; they are not visible enough in numerical terms; they do not have secessionist aims; their members do not seem keen to engage with the European ideas to a large extent.

An important part of the discussion on case selection is dedicated to reviewing how the ethnic boundaries of "Romanianneess" are defined by the three decisive actors: the Romanian government, the communities themselves and the governments of the host states. Hein's research builds upon transnationalization literature that has already identified two main sets of actors: the *transnational activists* who are actively involved at the international level, and the *sedentary glocals* who remain rooted in their native places and engage in external actions in a far more restricted manner. The book tries to see, on the concrete examples of the Roma-

nian communities in the four countries studies, which of these internal actors are performing at a local level and what frameworks and actors at the international level exist that Romanians may refer to. The author uses a variety of sources to back up his analysis, such as: international treaties, information provided by governmental institutions of Romania, interview data, secondary literature, press articles, census data provided by the host states and reports of international governmental and non-governmental organisations.

The four chapters, each devoted to a case study, offer extensive and valuable comparative information on the system of protection of minorities in each of the four countries with Romanian communities and on the level of political and civic engagement and mobilization of the members of these communities. The chapter devoted to Serbia is probably the most detailed and well documented. The fact that the author has done field research only in Serbia and Bulgaria clearly shows both in the length of the chapters and in the depth of the analysis, while those devoted to Ukraine and Hungary seem rather superficial in comparison. The author, aware of the very complex and disputed situation of the Romanian communities, chooses to focus only on the Romanian movement within the Vlach community in Central Serbia. After a thorough overview of the situation of minorities in Serbia, constitutional provisions and administrative capacity, public opinion and governmental behaviours, regional differences and centralisation tendencies, the local influence of international institutions and the Romanian communities in Serbia (Romanians in Vojvodina, Vlachs and Romanians in Central Serbia), the author goes on to show how the Romanian movement in Central Serbia cannot be considered a forerunner of transnational civic society. The Romanian movement has neither proved itself to be successful on factors such as internal cohesion or resources, nor has it managed to become a more important political player through coalition building. The conclusion is that, "while there has been some awareness of the European level as a helpful institutional framework, engagement with these institutions has not exceeded the level of mere declarations and memoranda".

Even though Hein states at the outset that his work "cannot and does not wish to resolve the several disputes that have been held on the communities" and that "it is not useful to imply the terminology of ethnologists in a political science study", we cannot help noticing that more detailed linguistic and ethnographic knowledge about the Romanian communities in the four countries would have helped him build a more accurate image of the complex interplay of issues, would have provided a more nuanced understanding of the social and political phenomena and would have avoided inconsistency. Precisely, mention is made in a footnote about the Rudari and Băieşi groups from Serbia, who also declare a Romanian identity, but nowhere are the numerous Rudari in Bulgaria mentioned, even though, unlike the ones in Serbia, they are politically active. They all speak Romanian, their overwhelming majority claims a Romanian identity and there exist several Rudari NGOs there. On the same note, the author does not seem to be aware that the Boyash from Hungary, present in two tables about minority language use and attitudes to language shift and maintenance that he took from a Hungarian language study, are part of the same ethnic group originating in Romania and spread all over the Balkans and partly in Central Europe, which speak an archaic dialect of Romanian. Also, given the significance and overarching nature of this research, the author should have incorporated better ethnic maps of the

regions inhabited by Romanians in the four countries, as some of the ones taken from different sites are of very low quality and have an effect opposite of the one intended, as they can even hamper understanding in the reader.

In his book, André Michael Hein offers a great deal of relevant information on a very dense subject which has not hitherto been tackled in a scientific manner. Due to the wide area the author tries to encompass, to the intense debates currently taking place in these Romanian communities and to the sharp divisions within them, to the complexity of their relations with the kin-state, with the host state and with Europe, to the multifarious interplay of the phenomena from the respective communities, the author had to be extremely selective in his work. This is obvious in the last two chapters, dedicated to the Ukraine and Bulgaria, which would have probably deserved a more detailed analysis, but which are nevertheless a useful starting point for future investigations. To sum up, Hein's book *Does Transnational Mobilization Work for Language Minorities? A Comparative Study on Romanians in Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Hungary* convincingly argues that Europeanization research should be further extended to the sphere of civil society activism and should also start looking into Eastern Europe, as it has so far shown a clear geographical bias towards Western Europe. The book will surely be a starting point for future research on European engagement of understudied minorities and a challenge to those who have investigated Romanian minorities to reconsider their current positions in the light of Hein's findings.