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Reproducing the nation: reproduction, citizenship and ethno-demographic survival in post-communist Romania

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ABSTRACT

The steady decline of fertility rates in Europe raises a number of important questions about the demographic and cultural reproduction of national societies. Apart from being confronted with population shrinkage and ageing, most European societies are also becoming more diverse. Demographic changes tend to exacerbate nationalist anxieties about the physical and cultural survival of the nation. This article develops the concept of national reproduction regime in order to analyse strategies and interventions at the biological, formal, and ethno-cultural levels of reproduction through which states seek to ensure the physical and cultural reproduction of the nation. It outlines the national reproduction regime of post-communist Romania by way of mapping and discussing key policies on biological and formal reproduction, as well as public discourses that frame these policies.

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Introduction

The steady decline of fertility rates in Europe raises important questions about the demographic and cultural reproduction of national societies. Although differences exist among countries, there is no single country in Europe with a total fertility rate (TFR) at the replacement level (about 2.1 births per woman).¹ In 2013 the average TFR of the European Union countries was 1.55.² This alone triggers serious concern about the economic and social sustainability of the European welfare states (Fargues 2011). In the context of real or perceived growth of minority populations, demographic anxieties tend to overlap with nationalist fears about the physical and cultural survival of the nation (Coleman 2012; Winter and Teitelbaum 2013).

The politicisation of demography in Europe takes place in two broad ethno-demographic contexts. In Western Europe ethno-demographic anxieties are largely driven by concerns about growing immigration and the alleged Muslims' 'plot to take over' European societies through excessive reproduction (Goldstone 2012, 21). This is well illustrated by the popular success of Sarrazin's book (2010) deploring the low birth rate of Germany's native population as opposed to that of Muslim immigrants. In France Marie Le Pen is equally outspoken about the 'apocalyptic menace' of immigration and about the 'disappearance of French civilization' caused by low fertility (Almeida 2014, 225).

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In Eastern Europe the problem of demographic decline is set against a background of high levels of emigration and of a history of complex ethnic relations within and across borders. After the fall of communist regimes most Eastern European countries experienced dramatic falls in fertility rates (Frejka and Sobotka 2008). The fertility decline combined with huge waves of economic emigration led to a demographic situation ‘unparalleled in world population history’ (Botev 2012, 72). The political demography of Central and Eastern Europe is complicated by the historical mismatch between statehood and ethnicity. According to estimates, about 21.15% of the total population of the region is regarded ‘as not belonging to the titular national majority of the state in which they live’ (Kovács, Körtvélyesi, and Pogonyi 2010, 6). In this context, anxieties about the ethno-demographic survival are triggered by real or perceived differences in the fertility rates of various ethnic groups, as well as by different ethnic migration patterns.

In this article I discuss different strategies of national reproduction through which states seek to ensure the collective reproduction of the nation. I distinguish between three dimensions of national reproduction: (1) biological reproduction – physical reproduction through birth; (2) formal reproduction – reproduction of formal membership through access to citizenship status and territory; and (3) ethno-cultural reproduction – symbolic reproduction through recognition of belonging to the nation. Whereas each of these dimensions has been researched extensively in relation to aspects of individual and collective reproduction, they have been rarely studied within an integrated analytical framework. There is an extensive literature focusing on the demographic changes in Europe and elsewhere. This includes works that look into the ethnic and cultural dimension of demographic changes (Coleman 2006; Goldstone, Kaufmann, and Toft 2012) and studies that analyse the ethno-demographic implications of various reproduction policies, such as abortion, pronatalism and family policies (King 2002; Brown and Ferree 2005; Jinga et al. 2010). There is also a separate body of research focusing on the ethnic dimension of citizenship and migration policies (Joppke 2005; Žilović 2012; Dumbrava 2014). Despite a recent boom in the empirical and normative research on immigration and citizenship, the relationship between reproduction, mobility, and citizenship has remained understudied (Roseneil et al. 2013).

The article is organised as follows. In the first part, I present the conceptual framework of national reproduction by discussing its analytical dimensions and flashing out several empirical examples. In the second part, I sketch the national reproduction regime of post-communist Romania by mapping key policies and discourses. The Romanian case offers a complex example of how concerns about ethno-demographic survival shape policies on biological and formal reproduction. The pre-1989 communist regime in Romania adopted a uniquely coercive approach towards reproduction by banning abortion and promoting childbearing as a means of national regeneration. However, the modest demographic gains of this policy vanished quickly after the collapse of communism. As in other former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, fertility rates fell sharply in the post-communist period which, together with significant waves of emigration, led to a substantial demographic decline. According to census data, the Romanian population decreased by more than 3 millions (14%) between 1992 and 2013 and its decline is projected to accelerate in the future (to almost 1/3 of the 1992 level by 2050).³ Given the complex ethnic structure of the population in Romania and throughout Central and Eastern Europe, it is not surprising that demographic anxieties in the region often turn

into ethno-nationalistic fears. In the case of Romania various nationalist-conservative forces have regrouped in the 1990s and began to reiterate discourses about the national duty to reproduce, and to bolster racial prejudices about the otherness and irresponsible reproduction of ethnic minorities, such as the Roma. As other countries in the region, Romania also engaged in ethnic diaspora politics seeking to use citizenship and immigration policies as instruments for ethno-demographic revival.

National reproduction

Controlling populations has become central to the political rationality of the modern state (Foucault 1976). Post-war demographic interventionism has been largely disconnected from its earlier eugenicist goal of 'improving the inborn qualities of a race' (Galton 1904, 45) and steered towards the provision of positive, non-coercive welfare incentives (Hampshire 2005). Certain 'crypto-eugenic' features persisted, however, particularly in the global crusade to promote family planning as a means to counteract global overpopulation (Connelly 2008, 10). While remaining diverse and driven by different goals, such as legitimising political power, attesting ideological superiority (communist/capitalist), and promoting social modernisation, post-war population policies were generally conceived of as 'a driver of economic development and nation-building' (Solinger and Nakachi 2016, 16).

Population scholars have been keener than migration scholars to point at the intertwining between reproduction, mobility, and membership. Connelly's (2008) studies the global 'politics of population' by analysing the regulation of public health, reproduction and migration. Teitelbaum and Winter (1998) show that fertility and migration often touch upon highly sensitive issues of national identity. King (2002, 371) argues that there is hardly any population policy that is immune to 'ideas about the future national character or national identity'. Although recent works on migration and citizenship tackle a number of relevant crosscutting issues, such as the integration of second-generation immigrants, family migration, and birthright citizenship, the more complex interactions between the territorial dimension of citizenship (border-crossing and social integration) and its intergenerational dimension (birth-crossing and cultural reproduction) have remained largely uncharted. In order to address this gap I propose to define and study national reproduction as a broad mix of policies and ideologies that aim to influence and shape the fertility, mobility, and identity of people in line with predefined 'ideas about the valid and favored characteristics of citizenship' (Solinger and Nakachi 2016, 3).

Human reproduction is at the centre of projects of individual and collective survival. In order to ensure continuity over time, societies establish complex norms to regulate the 'production' of new members (e.g. rules on sexuality, marriage, and childbirth) and the reproduction of membership (e.g. rules on tribal membership and citizenship). According to Anderson (1991, 6–7), the great appeal of the national idea in the nineteenth century was due to its promise to offer an alternative (secular) way of transforming fatality (individual death) into continuity (collective survival). In order to ensure the continuity over time states have to continuously 'make' new people. They can do so through encouraging people to make children and through bringing in more people, either physically (immigration) or formally (citizenship). These demographic strategies inevitably raise concerns about the cultural reproduction of the nation.

I define national reproduction as the set of strategies and interventions at the biological, formal, and ethno-cultural levels of membership through which states seek to ensure the physical and cultural reproduction of the nation. By conceptualising national reproduction as the (partial) overlap between three types of reproduction, we can better delineate and understand the continuities and contradictions between various national approaches to collective reproduction. In an ideal nationalist scenario, the three types of reproduction overlap perfectly, meaning that children born in a territorial community become automatically formal members of the political community and are recognised unconditionally as full members of the ethno-national community. In the real world, however, the transitions between these three memberships are by no means natural or complete. We can identify three reproductive transitions through which populations are continuously reconstituted physically, legally, and culturally: (a) from parents to children; (b) from children/residents to citizens; (c) from persons/citizens to ethno-nationals (see [Figure 1](#)). Not all parents are encouraged to have children, not all children or residents are allowed to become citizens and not all persons or citizens are recognised as ethno-nationals.

Nationalist ideologies about the nation often shape discourses and policies on reproduction, family, and citizenship. They typically portray women as biological and cultural reproducers of the nation and seek to instrumentalise their bodies and reproductive capacities for the sake of ensuring the intergenerational continuity of the nation (Ginsburg and Rapp 1991; Yuval-Davis 1997). Ginsburg and Rapp developed the concept of stratified reproduction to define ‘the power relations by which some categories of people are empowered to nurture and reproduce, while others are disempowered’ (1995, 3). Strategies of stratified reproduction are used in order to encourage the reproduction of certain

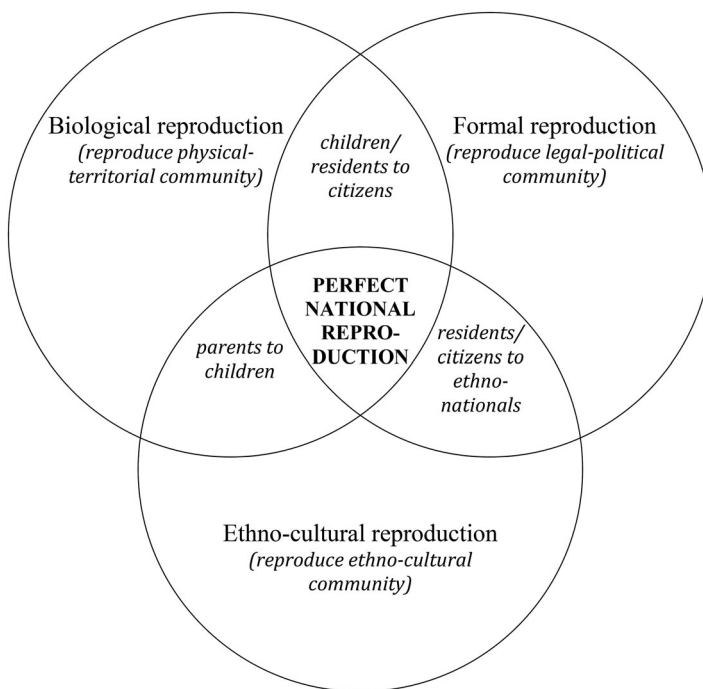


Figure 1. Dimensions of national reproduction.

groups of the population while discouraging the reproduction of others, such as immigrants, ethnic, racial, or sexual minorities (Yuval-Davis, Anthias, and Campling 1989; Ginsburg and Rapp 1995). There are plenty of examples of stratified reproduction at the intersection between biological, formal, and ethno-cultural reproduction. The recent backlash against pregnant immigrant women in the US – the ‘Latino threat’ phenomenon (Chavez 2013) – has been triggered by mounting fears about national (ethno-racial) survival. In Ireland the practice of exempting immigrant women from anti-abortion restrictions has been regarded as a nationalist attempt to deny ‘alien’ babies access to the Irish nation (Luibhéid 2004). In another Irish case (the ‘C case’), a woman belonging to the Irish traveller minority was granted exceptional access to abortion in the context in which the mainstream public discourse depicted the reproductive practices of this ethnic minority as a threat to the Irish nation (Fletcher 2005).

Like policies on biological reproduction, citizenship laws function as instruments of collective reproduction because they help to reproduce the formal body of the national community. The overwhelming majority of contemporary states subscribe to the principle of *ius sanguinis* citizenship – through which parents transmit citizenship to their children at birth. However, there are a number of countries that impose conditions to *ius sanguinis*, such as in the cases of children born out of wedlock or of children born through assisted reproduction technologies (ART). Such differentiated treatment of children of citizens can be seen as a legal-normative strategy aimed at ensuring the ‘correct’ reproduction of the national population. Concerns about national reproduction also affect policies and ideologies about *ius soli* citizenship – acquisition of citizenship in virtue of birth in the territory. For example, in 2004 Ireland abandoned the policy of unconditional *ius* in response to worries about the high numbers of births by immigrant women (Garner 2007). Recent attacks on *ius soli* citizenship in the US have also been driven by fears about, what Senator Lindsey Graham called, an ‘invasion by birth canal’ (Templeton 2010).

Many countries in the past used migration and citizenship policies in order to include or exclude groups of people on the basis of ethnicity or race (Joppke 2005; FitzGerald and Cook-Martin 2014). Whereas such policies have survived in attenuated forms in many European countries (Dumbrava 2014), they proved to be particularly resilient in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. After the fall of the communist regimes, many countries in the region acted as ‘nationalizing states’ (Brubaker 1996) by claiming to embody and serve a core ethnic nation. Citizenship laws played a key role in ensuring the ethno-demographic revival of the nation. For example, the exclusion of Russian-speaking (long-term) immigrants from the citizenship of the newly independent Estonia and Latvia was a direct response to fears about ethno-demographic extinction. Whereas in the 1930s Russian speakers constituted about 1/10 of the populations of Estonia and Latvia, by the end of 1980s their share increased to more than 1/3 of populations (Linz and Stepan 1996, 403).

Lastly, being born in a country or possessing the formal status of citizenship of a state does not always bring full recognition of membership into the national community, especially in countries where the national community is imagined as based on highly particularistic ethnic, cultural, or racial traits. This is apparent in the way in which forms of marginalisation and second-class citizenship among ethnic minorities persists despite access to formal citizenship. Moreover, the recognition of ethno-cultural membership is sometimes bestowed on people who do not possess the formal status of citizenship.

This is the case, for example, of the co-ethnic laws adopted by many countries of Central and Eastern Europe that grant symbolic recognition and a series of quasi-citizenship benefits to co-ethnics, regardless of their citizenship status (Fowler 2004).

Reproducing the Romanian nation

After the fall of the communist regime in December 1989, Romania became a constitutional democracy, which eventually acceded to the European Union in 2007. While struggling with formidable challenges related to democratisation and economic transformation, post-communist Romania experienced a series of significant demographic changes (Gheţău 2007). The TFR fell from 2.38 in 1987 to 1.33 in 1995⁴ and stabilised well under the replacement level afterwards. In 2012 the TFR hit the so-called 'lowest-low fertility level' (1.2), which signals that the demographic recovery is very unlikely (Kohler, Billari, and Ortega 2002). In addition to low fertility, Romania also experienced massive emigration, estimated to about 2.8 million since 1990 (Suditu et al. 2013). Taking into account current fertility levels and migration rates, the population of Romania is projected to decrease from about 20 million in 2014 to 16.5 million by 2050 (Population Reference Bureau 2014). The demographic data also revealed differences between the fertility rates of various ethnic groups living in Romania, especially between the (more fertile) ethnic Roma and (less fertile) ethnic Romanians. These demographic changes generated fears about national survival, which greatly shaped Romanian policies on biological and formal reproduction.

The 'national tragedy' of abortion

The Romanian post-communist policies on biological reproduction should be placed in the historical context provided by the radical pronatalist project pursued by the communist regime. In 1966 the communist government decided to tackle the problem of low fertility by strictly limiting access to legal abortion (Kligman 1998; Jinga et al. 2010). The Decree 770 of 1966 permitted access to abortion only in a few very specific cases, such as when a woman's life was at stake or when there was a great risk of transmission of serious hereditary diseases. The anti-abortion policy was accompanied by an aggressive ideological campaign promoting the reproductive duty of women towards the nation. As Nicolae Ceausescu, the communist leader, declared in 1984,

[o]ne of the most important duties of women, mothers and educators is to devote themselves to the raising of new generations in the spirit of ardent patriotism, of respect and esteem for the glorious past of the people, of the desire to sacrifice its entire life to the nourishing of the socialist Homeland and the ideals of the communism. (quoted in King 2002, 372)

It is estimated that about 9500 women died between 1965 and 1989 because of complications related to illegal abortions (Kligman 1998, 245). The harshness of this abortion policy explains why the infamous decree was one of the first laws to be repealed after the fall of the communist regime in 1989. The liberalisation of abortion in 1990 resulted in more than one million recorded abortions (Benezic 2011a). The abortion rates fell gradually afterwards⁵ but in 2013 the abortion rate in Romania was still double than the average abortion rate for the EU area. Although the memory of the traumatic

communist experiment inhibited anti-abortion initiatives in the aftermath of the regime change, high abortion rates and the prevalence of an 'abortion culture' (Stloukal 1999) emboldened anti-abortion champions, such as the Romanian Orthodox Church.

After 1989 the 'national' Orthodox Church managed to (re)gain significant public support and political influence by reiterating its historical association with nationalism and Romanism (Stan and Turcescu 2000). According to census data, the share of population declaring membership to the Orthodox faith remained constant at about 86% between 1992 and 2011 (Institutul National de Statistică 2013). Although the Orthodox dogma explicitly condemns abortion and contraception, the Orthodox Church avoided taking a strong stance on the issue in the early 1990s. Instead, it channelled its energies towards opposing the decriminalisation of homosexuality (Turcescu and Stan 2005). However, after the adoption of a liberal abortion law in 1996, which formally allowed for voluntary abortion (up to 14 weeks), several clerical voices began to advocate for anti-abortion measures.

In a virulent anti-abortion pamphlet, a radical Orthodox leader condemned abortion as 'crime, genocide and deicide' and warned that abortion threatened the very survival of the Romanian nation (Moldovan 1997). The head of the Church, Patriarch Teoctist, also called abortion a 'moral deviation weakening the Creation' and a 'real national tragedy' (quoted in Turcescu and Stan 2005, 301). An anti-abortion draft law backed by the Orthodox Church was put forward in 1997 but failed to gain sufficient political support. In 2012 another draft law supported by the Orthodox Church called for anti-abortion measures as a means to safeguard the 'physical and mental health of our nation'.⁶ It proposed to introduce mandatory psychological counselling before abortion, in which women seeking abortion would be shown graphic representations of the abortion procedure and the echography of the foetus. Before undertaking the procedure women would be obliged to sign a declaration saying: 'I was informed that abortion means the end of a life, because the foetus is a living human being from the moment of its conception'. Although the draft law failed, it heralded a revival of conservative ideologies and activism in the area of biological reproduction (Iordache 2014).

'How on earth can a Roma woman bring up five-six children ... ?'

Public anxieties about national reproduction have been exacerbated by reports about the differential demographic behaviour of ethnic minority groups living (and enjoying formal citizenship) in Romania. Traditionally, the nationalist rhetoric focused on the Hungarian minority, which is the most numerous ethnic minority group in Romania.⁷ However, demographic data showed that the number of self-declared ethnic Hungarians was decreasing faster than that of the general population (Horváth 2014). This demographic tendency contrasted with that of the second most numerous ethnic minority in Romania, the Roma. According to census data, between 2002 and 2011 the number of self-declared ethnic Roma grew from 535,000 to 621,600 in the conditions in which the general population declined by 1.5 million.

It must be noted that ethnic considerations also played a role in the communist pronatalist policy. Although the ultimate goal of the communist pronatalism was to ensure the adequate supply of people to power up the socialist economy, there is evidence indicating that the communist demographic project involved a certain degree of ethnic engineering

(Kligman 1998). For example, the regime was more lenient towards Hungarian women who sought abortion. The anti-abortion measures also had uneven impact on different ethnic groups. The Hungarian and the German ethnics managed to preserve lower levels of fertility because they had generally higher levels of education and lived predominantly in urban areas (and thus had greater access to under the counter contraceptives). On the contrary, the Roma maintained higher fertility levels as they found it more difficult to avoid the anti-abortion measures (Bradatan and Firebaugh 2007). The government's decision of 1980 to withdraw public support from couples with more than five children, who were not employed in a 'useful social activity' and whose children did not attend school regularly, could also be seen as a belated and indirect measure to tackle the issue of the undesirable fertility of the Roma (Barany 2000, 426).

The issue of the 'excessive' fertility of the Roma became commonplace in the post-communist public discourse. However, occasional denunciations of the alleged strategic reproductive behaviour of the Roma (e.g. give birth to more children in order to cash more child allowances) turned into overblown warnings when 'evidence' about the reproductive superiority of the Roma became public. In 2013 the Romanian president, Traian Băsescu, scolded publically (ethnic) Romanian women for failing to fulfil their duties towards the nation pointing out that the Roma women outperformed them in the reproductive race. 'How on earth can a Roma woman bring up five-six children and a Romanian woman cannot?' lamented the president (quoted in Fati 2013). Noting that the Roma women were 'extremely productive', Băsescu warned that ethnic Romanians would soon become a minority in their 'own' country. The president voiced a popular view about the 'irresponsible' reproduction of the Roma population. In 2013 a Romanian MP declared on his Facebook page that he supported 'the sterilisation of Roma women after the birth of their first child, if social investigations prove that they cannot provide adequately for the child and that they do not intend to raise children in human conditions' (Alexe 2013). In the same year an extremist group from the city of Timisoara advertised that it offered 300 *lei* (about 75 Euro) to Roma women from the surrounding region who would agree to undergo voluntary sterilisation (deBanat 2013).

Despite public perceptions of a general demographic decline, the pro-natalist behaviour of the ethnic Roma is seen as aggravating rather than alleviating the demographic crisis. This is because concerns about national reproduction are rarely limited to issues of biological reproduction and the availability of the 'human stock'.

Children 'as white as possible'

In 2003 the Romanian government introduced a fairly generous welfare package aiming at encouraging natality.⁸ One of the most important measures was to grant new mothers 24 months of parental leave, paid at the rate of 85% of the average national wage. This benefit, however, was granted only to new mothers who had stable employment, that is, who were employed for at least two years before the child's birth. Because it excluded unemployed women and women with temporary or irregular employment, the policy rewarded the reproductive efforts of middle class women to the detriment of that of the poor and marginalised women. According to an early assessment, by 2005 about one third of the new-born children were born to women with graduate education, compared to only one tenth in 2000 (Ghețău 2007). Taking into account the high rate of unemployment among the

Roma population in Romania (FRA 2012), it is reasonable to say that a large proportion of the Roma women were excluded from this policy.

The field of ART is particularly relevant for the study of national reproduction. Whereas ART open new avenues for forging and imagining social relations, they also contribute to the reassertion of traditionalist and essentialist ideas about gender relations, genetic relatedness, race and ethnic descent (McKinnon 2014). This ambivalence is visible in the complex relationship between ART and nationalism. On the one hand, ART are depicted as a threat to the nation. In Poland, for example, the Catholic Church views ART as a form of 'sophisticated abortion' and claims that the children born through ART are 'monsters' that endanger 'the healthy body of the nation' (Korolczuk 2013, 10). On the other hand, ART are regarded as strategic means for ensuring the national survival. In Bulgaria, for example, policy makers advertise ART as a genuine solution for the 'regeneration of the Bulgarian people', which may also 'counteract the outnumbering of Bulgarians by the [ethnic] minorities' (Dimitrova 2013).

ART have been available in Romania since the 1990s. Despite several successive attempts to regulate ART, Romania failed to adopt a comprehensive legal framework in this area. This led to the proliferation of illegal and exploitative practices such as trafficking of human eggs and surrogacy. In 2013 the Romanian Department for the Investigation of Organised Crime and Terrorism unveiled a network of traffickers and intermediaries that persuaded poor and marginalised women, including Roma, to sell eggs or to enter into surrogacy arrangements (Florescu 2013).

The first draft law on ART⁹ was adopted by the Parliament in 2004 but was overturned by the Constitutional Court. One of the provisions included in this proposal required doctors to ascertain the health condition of the persons seeking access to ART as well as 'the capacity of couples to be parents' (Cutas 2008). The second draft law, introduced in 2009,¹⁰ offered two background justifications for the regulation of ART: (1) the raising number of infertile people, and (2) the demographic decline of the country. The draft explicitly referred to demographic evidence about the estimated population decline (from 21 million to 15 million by 2050). In 2016 there were two draft laws on ART pending in the Parliament.¹¹ Both drafts are officially motivated with demographic arguments. The explanatory note for the latest draft (2013) states that 'the negative effects of ageing can be diminished through medically assisted reproduction, which can influence positively fertility rates, the proportion of active population and contributions to state budget'. By justifying ART primarily in terms of a demographic strategy, these proposals reiterate views about individual reproduction as a means for achieving nationalistic goals (Bretonnière 2014).

The issue of the demographic contribution of ART policies is a disputed one. According to a study based on data from the UK, the contribution of ART to increasing fertility could be 'comparable to that of other policies used to influence fertility, such as increasing state-supported child benefits' (Grant et al. 2006). However, the results from a pilot in vitro fertilisation (IVF) programme launched by the Romanian Ministry of Health in 2011 are rather disappointing. The government spent four million *lei* (about one million Euro) to subsidise 1129 IVF procedures that resulted in a total of 197 births (Rotaru 2014). This parallels a similar initiative sponsored by the Bulgarian government. According to the Bulgarian Strategy for Demographic Development 2006–2020, ART were expected to contribute to 'multiplying the Bulgarian nation with 189,000 desired children'.

However, by 2012 the actual number of children born through state-sponsored ART in Bulgaria was about 1400 (Dimitrova 2013).

Together with other attempts to frustrate and devalue the reproductive capacities of ethnic minorities, ART practices reveal the establishment of ethno-hierarchies of reproductive worth. According to Anca Moise, the coordinator of the Bucharest Sperm Bank, there have been no clients demanding genetic material from a donor of Roma ethnicity. More interestingly, Roma clients who seek sperm donation typically express the desire to procreate children 'as white as possible' and 'as blond as possible' (Ziare.com 2009). During a criminal investigation into illegal surrogacy practices it was revealed that one of the arguments used for advertising these services was that 'a foetus develops better and benefits from higher medical immunity in the uterus of a Roma (or peasant) woman' (Florescu 2013). Whereas Roma women are portrayed as fit for surrogate motherhood (as they do not contribute with genetic material to the future offspring), Roma men are not seen as acceptable donors for ART procedures.

'Romania's engine roars outside'

The opening of Romanian borders after 1990 triggered massive waves of emigration. This phenomenon raised serious concerns about the depletion of the countries' labour force. 'Romania's engine roars outside', complained an analyst (Benezic 2011b). Romania needs people 'to build highways, to work for the environment and in the private sphere', claimed president Băsescu (quoted in Spînu 2010). Since emigrants tend to be young and because women are increasingly engaged in migration (Suditu et al. 2013, 32), emigration also triggers nationalist anxieties about the reproductive future of the nation. In 1998 the Government adopted a plan of measures for the return of Romanian citizens who work abroad, which aimed to gather data, provide information and establish channels for circular migration.¹² However, this initiative remained largely declarative and failed to lure emigrants back (Suditu et al. 2013).

The ethnic dimension of the Romanian emigration is also relevant. In the early 1990s it was mainly the ethnic Germans, Jews, and Hungarians who left, primarily to their kin states. This phenomenon was a continuation of a trend started during the communist period. The Romanian communist regime used selective emigration policies in order to silence political dissent, as well as to re-balance the ethnic composition of the population. Although emigration was generally restricted during that period, people of certain ethnicities such as Jews and Germans were allowed to and even encouraged to leave. Ceaușescu allegedly made a profit out of this practice by cashing hard currency from Germany and Israel in exchange for letting these people go (King 2002, 375).

A new type of ethnic emigration was the emigration of Roma people, especially after the lifting of the EU visa restrictions in the eve of Romania's accession to the European Union. The Roma emigration was seen with a combination of relief and embarrassment by Romanian political elites. It was a relief because, by letting the Roma go, Romania exported and Europeanised a social problem, which it was unable to solve. When confronted with pressures from other European countries to take the Roma back, Romanian officials resisted by championing the EU freedom of movement. The embarrassment was generated by the association between 'the Roma' and 'Romanians' in Western societies. This was addressed by launching a series of official branding campaigns that sought to 'purge the Roma from

their construction of Romanianess' (Kaneva and Popescu 2014, 11). For example, in 2008 the government launched the campaign 'Romanians in Europe' (worth 8 million Euro). One element of this campaign was the setting up of a travelling pavilion that represented a replica of a contemporary Romanian home. What was striking about this 'Casa Romania' was its perfect and implausible whiteness: '[w]hite walls, a white couch, white tables, chairs, and bookcases, a white television set, a white stereo, and a white, blonde hostess, wearing a white shirt' (Kaneva and Popescu 2014, 12).

Romanian emigrants are generally seen as a potential economic and demographic resource for the country. However, as in the case of biological reproduction, not all emigrants are valued equally. In the case of the Romanian emigrants of Roma ethnicity, the official approach was to apply a twin strategy of Europeanisation and de-Romanian-isation.

'Our historical duty' towards co-ethnics

The major Romanian strategy of national reproduction at the level of formal reproduction has been the policy of preferential citizenship for co-ethnics. After the collapse of the Soviet bloc many countries in Central and Eastern Europe sought to redraw the national boundaries through excluding ethnic minorities and including co-ethnics. This dialectic of exclusion and inclusion was implemented through various interventions at the physical, legal, and symbolic levels of membership. The physical exclusion of ethnic minorities through ethnic cleansing and forced migration, as in the countries of the former Yugoslavia (Hayden 1992), was paralleled by the physical inclusion of co-ethnics through preferential immigration and repatriation, as in Poland (Górny and Pudzianowska 2013). Citizenship policies were also used as a means to formally exclude ethnic minorities, as in the case of the 'erased people' (mainly Roma) in Slovenia (Dedić 2003), as well as to include co-ethnics living outside borders, as in Hungary (Waterbury 2010). Lastly, most countries in the region also committed to represent and care for all people belonging to the nation, regardless of their place of residence or citizenship status (Horvath 2008).

Unlike other countries in the region, Romania did not experience changes of borders or statehood after 1990. However, the dissolution of the Soviet bloc brought to the fore old grievances about the territorial losses during the WW2, namely the loss of the provinces of Bessarabia (in the Republic of Moldova) and Northern Bukovina (in Ukraine). While refraining from making territorial claims, Romania amended its citizenship law in order to allow former Romanian citizens (and their descendants) who lived in these lost territories to re-acquire Romanian citizenship without having to move to Romania (Iordachi 2013). The official justification of this policy was that of undoing a historical wrong. As the president Băsescu declared in 2010, 'it is not citizen Dumitrescu from [the Moldovan city of] Cahul who has decided to lose his [Romanian] nationality, it's Stalin who has decided for him' (quoted in Dumbrava 2013). The unspoken intention of the policymakers was to recreate the national community of the pre-communist state. Apart from the fact that former citizenship and their descendants (up to the third degree) can require Romanian citizenship without taking up residence in the country, the citizenship law also allows citizens living outside the country to pass citizenship to their children (via *ius sanguinis*) without any restrictions. Moreover, Romania also grants non-resident citizens full voting rights in national elections.

The political impact of this citizenship policy was demonstrated recently in several elections. In 2009 Băsescu won a second presidential mandate by a small margin after gaining a strong electoral support from Romanian voters living in the Republic of Moldova (Dumbrava 2012). The diaspora vote and mobilisation also played a key role in the presidential elections of 2014. Although the overwhelming majority of external voters sustained Klaus Iohannis, an ethnic German, in a bid to overthrow what seemed a deeply corrupt political establishment (Stavilă 2014), the majority of votes cast in the Republic of Moldova (in the first tour of elections) supported his opponent, Victor Ponta. Ponta claimed, on many occasions, that ‘the provision of the Romanian citizenship to Moldova residents is our historic duty’ (quoted in Dumbrava 2015).

The policy of co-ethnic citizenship can have a significant ethno-demographic potential. Ethno-nationally sensitive migration and citizenship policies can reduce the need to rely on (non-ethnic) immigrants to fill in labour shortages and they can also contribute to the re-adjustment of the ethnic structure of the population. In the Romanian case, granting preferential citizenship (and hence full immigration rights) to people from Moldova could provide an important source of immigrant workers who are deemed to be culturally compatible (Benezic 2011b). Co-ethnic citizens can also be instrumental for reducing the demographic share and the political impact of ethnic minorities, such as the Roma and the Hungarians (Waterbury 2014, 40). Despite sensationalist reports about one million of Moldovans (Escritt 2009) taking up Romanian passports, evidence shows that only about 225,000 Moldovans received Romanian citizenship between 1991 and 2011 (Barbulescu 2012). So far, the great majority of co-ethnic citizens opted to flee to Western Europe in search for better economic opportunities. Although there may be a group of (older) people who (re-) acquire Romanian citizenship for sentimental reasons, these are not very likely to contribute to the country’s demographic revival.

Conclusions

In this article I study national reproduction as the overlap between three types of reproduction: biological, formal, and ethno-cultural. The case of post-communist Romania exemplifies how concerns about ethno-cultural survival can shape policies and discourses on biological and formal reproduction. Interventions at these two levels of reproduction can be used either separately or in concert in order to promote particular visions about national reproduction. By looking at national reproduction as a multilayered concept that integrates reproduction, mobility, and identity, we can understand better a number of complex and sometimes paradoxical policies and discourses about membership. For example, anxieties about demographic decline may coexist with certain anti-natalist measures because the latter are aimed at defending the nation against the reproductive threat of minorities (autochthonous or immigrants). Equally, regardless of its mitigating demographic effects, immigration tends to inflame rather than assuage demographic concerns. This is because fears about ethno-cultural weakening often overcome fears about population shrinking. Another example is offered by the millions of people of European ancestry around the world who can claim European passports and consequently full immigration rights through special citizenship arrangements (Harpaz 2015). In this case, the absence of ethno-demographic concerns is explained by the general perception that these people are ethno-culturally related and thus suitable for admission.

The national reproduction regime of post-communist Romania was built on a combination of selective pronatalism, symbolic exclusion of marginalised ethnic minorities (the Roma), and formal inclusion of ethnic diaspora. The painful memory of the communist coercive pronatalist policy prevented attempts to fully reassert public control over reproduction. However, public anxieties about demographic decline and about the 'excessive' reproduction of the Roma ethnic minority marked the revival of nationalist and conservative ideologies about reproduction and supported a series of pronatalist measures that indirectly excluded marginalised groups and ethnic minorities. As the literature on the politics of reproduction shows, birthing and childbearing has long been a contested site where states sought to control and exploit individual reproductive capacities in the pursuit of gendered, nationalist, and collectivist goals. The development of ART provides new tools for the politics of stratified reproduction. Unlike, the exclusion of unwanted physical bodies through expulsion, incarceration, or death, reproduction technologies can operate in a more subtle way by eliminating unwanted traits at thus purifying the biological body of the nation. When looking at ART practices in Romania, we can discern a hierarchy of biological reproduction, in which the Roma are placed at the bottom of the reproductive worth.

Migration and citizenship policies play a key role in the reproduction of national populations, not least because they provide effective tools for selecting people according to ethno-demographic criteria. Although free emigration (and return migration) constitutes an important liberal democratic right, states can generally use positive measures to encourage or discourage the emigration (and return) of particular groups of citizens. Romanian officials have been eager to defend the right of the Romanian citizens of Roma ethnicity to emigrate (and to move freely with the EU) while sponsoring expensive PR campaigns in Europe in order to dissociate the (white) Romanians from the (non-white) Roma. The policy of preferential citizenship for co-ethnics has been Romania's most obvious strategy of ethno-demographic survival. By granting access to non-residential citizenship to people who held Romanian citizenship in the pre-WW2 state, Romania reaffirmed a commitment towards national unity and created an important demographic reserve. Because co-ethnic citizens from Moldova and Ukraine are deemed culturally compatible, they could fill up labour shortages and thus prevent the country from resorting to bringing in culturally alien immigrants (and being overwhelmed by over-reproductive Roma). Unlike other European countries, Romania has only a limited number of immigrants, so the public is less concerned about the reproductive threat of immigrants. For the same reason, Romania is not under pressure to amend its birthright citizenship rules in order to allow for *ius soli*. However, Romania's reliance on unconditional *ius sanguinis* citizenship in the context of sustained emigration and of a generous policy of co-ethnic citizenship should be seen as an ethno-demographic strategy to ensure the reproduction of the nation irrespective of territorial boundaries.

It often goes unnoticed that contentions about the inclusion of immigrants are not only about immigrants *qua* labourers or immigrants *qua* welfare recipients, but also about immigrants *qua* reproductive agents. Because states are intergenerational communities as much as they are territorial ones, any measure on citizenship and immigration is bound to have consequences on the intergenerational reproduction of the national community. This often-overlooked intergenerational dimension of migration and citizenship is key to understanding contemporary politics of membership. Citizens and migrants do

not only challenge the state's capacity to regulate and preserve membership through cross-ing territorial borders; they also do so by redrawing state boundaries through reproduction. As reproductive agents, people have the capacity to remake state membership. This future-making capacity of individuals is both cherished and feared by the state depending on who claims to exercise it and on whatever visions of membership the state seeks to establish.

Notes

1. The TFR refers to 'the number of children that would be born to a woman if she were to live to the end of her childbearing years and bear children in accordance with current age-specific fertility rates' (World Bank, Open Data. Fertility rate, total (births per woman). <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN>).
2. European Commission, Eurostat Population (Demography, Migration and Projections), Births and fertility data. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/population-demography-migration-projections/births-fertility-data/main-tables>.
3. World Bank, Open Data. Population, total. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>.
4. World Bank, Open Data. Fertility rate, total (births per woman). <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN>.
5. The abortion rate of Romania fell from 3152 abortions/1000 live births in 1990 to 1099/1000 live births in 2000. European Health for All Database, World Health Organization.
6. Romanian Parliament, Draft Law PL-x 348/2012 on the establishment, functioning and organisation of conciliation offices for pregnancy crisis [Propunerea legislativă privind înființarea, funcționarea și organizarea cabinetelor de consiliere pentru criza de sarcină].
7. According to the census of 2002, the major ethnic groups living in Romania were: Romanians: 89.47%, Hungarians: 6.60%; and Roma: 2.46%.
8. The Government of Romanian, Emergency Ordinance 9/2003 and Emergency Ordinance 23/2003 [Ordonanța de urgență 9/2003 and Ordonanța de urgență 23/2003].
9. Romanian Parliament, Draft Law PL-x 334/2004 on reproductive health and medically assisted human reproduction [Proiect de Lege privind sănătatea reproducerii și reproducerea umană asistată medical].
10. Romanian Parliament, Draft Law PL-x 690/2009 on medically assisted human reproduction [Proiect de Lege privind reproducerea umană asistată medical].
11. Romanian Parliament, Draft Law PL-x nr. 63/2012 medically assisted human reproduction involving third party donors [Proiect de Lege privind reproducerea umană asistată medical cu terț donator]; Romanian Parliament, Draft Law PL-x nr. 462/2013 on medically assisted human reproduction [Proiect de Lege privind reproducerea umană asistată medical].
12. The Government of Romanian, Decision no. 187/2008 approving the Plan containing measures for the return of Romanian citizens who work abroad [Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 187/2008 pentru aprobarea Planului de măsuri pentru revenirea în țară a cetățenilor români care lucrează în străinătate].

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