THE FIRST SENTENCES OF POST-SOCIALISM

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growth and development were replaced by capitalist concepts of growth and development. Following the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, one of the first priorities of the reform governments was to transform the system of ownership. The transformation of socio-economic life which began in post-socialist countries at the end of the 1980s manifested itself first of all in the cities. Segregation reshapes residential landscapes in post-socialist countries. One of the most notable processes of metropolitan restructuring occurring in Eastern Europe since the end of communism in 1989 has been that of suburbanisation. In the cities of East Central Europe high-status gated residential enclaves emerged after the collapse of communism symbolising the new dimensions of social segregation brought about by the post-socialist transition. Is increased socioeconomic residential segregation a necessary consequence of the introduction of market reforms and of the increase of income inequalities in the formerly socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)?

Eastern Europe has been through a turbulent period of transition since 1989. In the last fifteen years, transition economies in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States have experienced highly dramatic change in political, economic and social terms. Arguably, post-socialist transformation, understood as the economic, political, institutional and ideological changes associated with the discarding of ‘communism’ or ‘state socialism’ and the embracing of ‘capitalism’ in Central and Eastern Europe, has been taking place for at least twenty years. For more than twenty years, CEE countries have faced similar problems in political, economic and societal systems. The centrality of ‘capitalism’ to discourses of post-socialist transition is now widely acknowledged. Fifteen years after the sudden collapse of the socialist system, half of the Central and Eastern European countries that bravely toppled their communist regimes announced the successful completion of their transition to market-oriented democratic societies. With the accession of 10 post-socialist states to the European Union and the steady approach of the twentieth anniversary of the events of 1989, we hear more and more calls for the end of post-socialism. The questions I am concerned with are both historical and futurist.

This paper is in its entirety composed of first sentences collected from academic literature that takes post-socialism as its subject. The collection of sentences is organised into a coherent narrative, which, in its form and in its argument, resembles the forms and the arguments of the literature it draws from. At the same time, the repetitive rhythm dramatises narrative archetypes that are produced and reproduced in this literature.