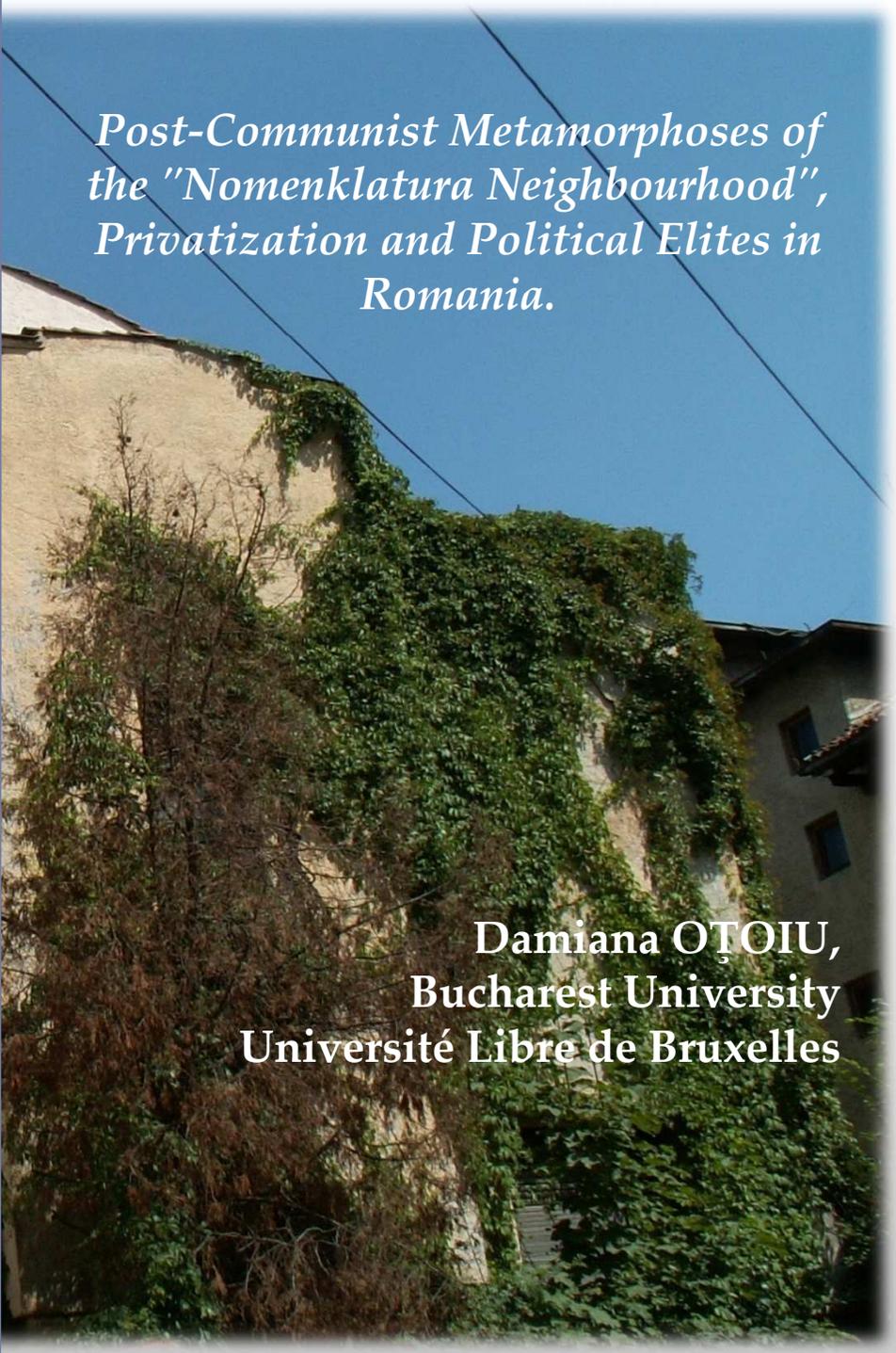




*Post-Communist Metamorphoses of  
the "Nomenklatura Neighbourhood",  
Privatization and Political Elites in  
Romania.*

**LSEE Visiting Speakers' Programme**

Date: Tuesday 12 March 2013 6.00pm  
LSE, Cañada Blanch Room,  
Cow 1.11, Cowdray House  
London, WC2A 2AE



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## **I. The « Primăverii » District**



- Area exclusively intended for the *nomenklatura/ apparatchiks*
- Institutions (see. photo)

## **II. & post-communist metamorphoses:**

- relationship between political hierarchies and real estate privileges
- continuity/discontinuity of elites and political practices,
- interactions between formal and informal institutions in transitional regimes.



## Structure of the talk:

1. **the history of one house** from this neighbourhood: the direct connection between the political leadership & the inhabitants
2. **The post-communist laws** concerning the restitution of nationalized real estate: **the exceptions to these laws**
  - the status of a “deeply” politicised space, with houses distributed according to political algorithms, but also via informal networks and patronage relationships.
  - the impact of the various political shifts ?
3. **The beneficiaries of the non-restitution of patrimony of the Communist Party.**
  - Who are the new inhabitants of this district? former members of the communist elite? politically connected to members of different postcommunist governments? “les nouveaux riches”?



## Short methodological note

### Macro & Micro

- **Archival collections:** the National Archives of Romania, the archives of the former secret police, private archives, the archives of associations of former owners,
- **In-depth interviews,**
- **Official documents** (laws, agreements signed by different political parties, etc), minutes of parliamentary debates, **relevant jurisprudence**, decisions of the Constitutional Court, **autobiographical texts**, etc.
- Information made available by “the Autonomous Direction for the Administration of State Owned Official Residences (RA-APPS).

**Ex 1: Hodoş Family**



HU-OSA, 300-7-3: 1701, Private property, expropriation (1949-1955)

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RUMANIA

Evacuations in BUCHAREST.

SOURCE ROME: A foreign citizen expelled from Rumania in June 1952.  
DATE OF OBSERVATION: curent period.

It is reported that the few apartments and houses in the Parcul Bonaparte in BUCHAREST which are still occupied by Rumanian civilians will be evacuated so as to make room for Soviet families. Many families were evacuated from their houses in Aviator Iliescu Street near the Confederatia Balcanică Square in BUCHAREST.

It is planned that all the apartments in Roma Street, Londra Street and all the adjacent streets will be evacuated, since this district is supposed to be exclusively placed at the disposal of Soviet families.

HU-OSA, 300-7-3: 3701, Private property, expropriation (1952-1963)

The Russian Quarter in BUCHAREST

One sees many Russians in civilian dress in BUCHAREST. It is difficult to know, though, whether they are simply advisers who work at the ministries and in State offices, or whether there are also military among them. The military very rarely appear in uniform in public. These Russians occupy from 70 to 80 per cent of the rooms available in Soseaua Kiseleff, in the district which is today called after Stalin. Nearly all the buildings in the neighborhood of the War Ministry (the streets called Brezoianu, Intrarea Nordului, Dr. Marcovici, Piata Valter Maracineanu) are likewise occupied by Russian families. At Soseaua Kiseleff, from which Rumanian citizens have been almost entirely evacuated, the Russians have special co-operatives where they can buy foodstuffs, clothing and drinks at special prices. There is a Soviet school with elementary and higher courses in Architect Mincu Street. Only the sons of Russians and, in exceptional cases, of the leaders of the Rumanian Communist Party are admitted to the school. It is situated in front of what used to be the sanatorium of Dr. Antoniu (today it is the emergency hospital); previously too, it was a Rumanian elementary school.

**The post-communist laws**

concerning the restitution of nationalized real estate & the exceptions to these laws:

defining the beneficiaries:

- restitution as a form of "retroactive justice" (restitution of nationalized real estate to "former owners" affected by communist nationalizations or to their descendants)
- "redistribution" ("egalitarian" reprivatization of property: a very limited restitution to former owners and a sale at prices subsidized by the state that could benefit the current tenants).

**Aleea Alexandru**



**Law 112/1995**

- The former owner's right of reclaiming his/her property, but only one building
- “Protecting the tenants”
- The positions of the socialist parties, social democratic (considered Communist successor parties) and nationalist-populist largely converged

**1996:** Romanian Democratic Convention (CDR) : first democratic turn-over in power; no law

**Law 10/2001:** the notion of “public interest”

**2005 amendment:** the real estate considered of public interest could make the object of restitution law

**The patrimony of the Communist Party: a specific legal framework.**



## Who are the beneficiaries of the non-restitution of the Communist Party's patrimony?

- The idea that the main 'winners' of the post-socialist transition would be the **former members of the communist nomenklatura**: an *opinio communis*
- Ex: cases filed against the Romanian state by Ceausescu's children

- **But: political practice which transgresses divisions or tensions between different political families**
- Ex: the reports of investigations by institutions such as the Audit Department of the Government





**Conclusions:**

- 1. Incorporating the opposition**
- 2. Against (?) the thesis of political capitalism**



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