

Leadership, social capital and territorial identity of discontinued cultures: a comparative case study of Noarootsi and Vormsi communities, Estonia



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The aim

- The aim of this paper is to analyse leadership and governance in **social capital creating and identity building process** of peripheral localities of **discontinued „*Rannarootsi*“** (coastal Swedish) **cultures**
- To analyse comparatively two communities with almost entirely changed population during the WWII and several shocks after the opening of borders creating several interest groups

Motivation

- This area lost majority it's indigenous Swedish population during the World War II. New people from Estonian mainland moved in.
- Later, since 1970s, these areas became increasingly popular as holiday and particularly as second housing destinations.
- When Estonia regain it's independence and applied wide restitution of former ownership, descendents of former Swedish owners could return their properties.
- Many Swedish people set up their Summer cottages, others sold their land to mostly Estonian city people.
- **All these changes are very challenging for leadership**

Main concepts under the discussion



discontinued culture



leadership



social capital

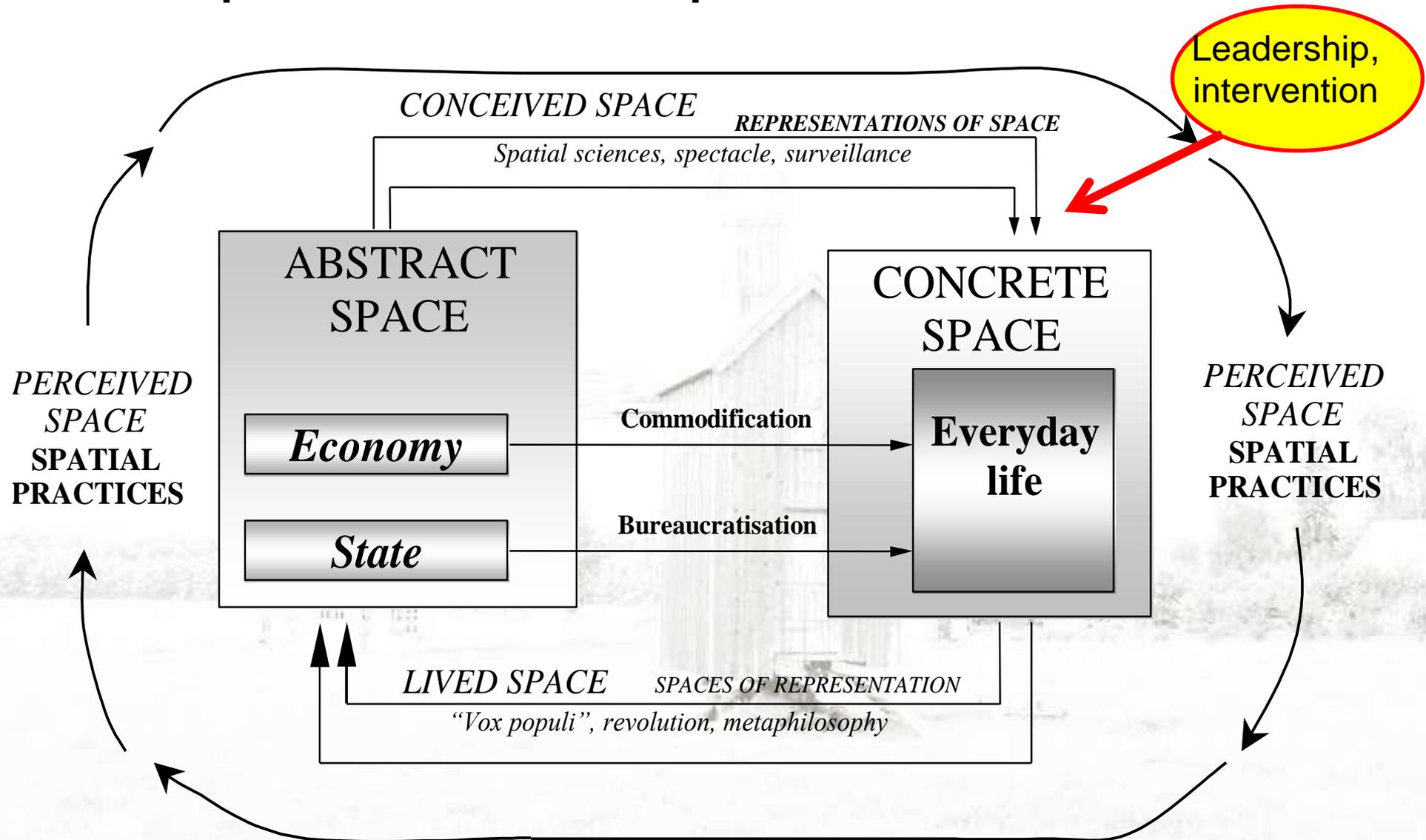


(new) territorial identity

Place – space of actions

- A place is characterised by physical setting, **activities of people** and meanings (Relph 1976, 47).
- The quality of a place depends on a human context shaped by memories and expectations, by stories of **real and imagined events** and by historical experiences located there (Walter 1980–81, 141)
- /.../ place is not only perceived ‘through the eyes and mind’ but also through ‘more passive and **direct modes of experience**’ (Tuan 1975, 152)

The production of space



Spirit of Tartu

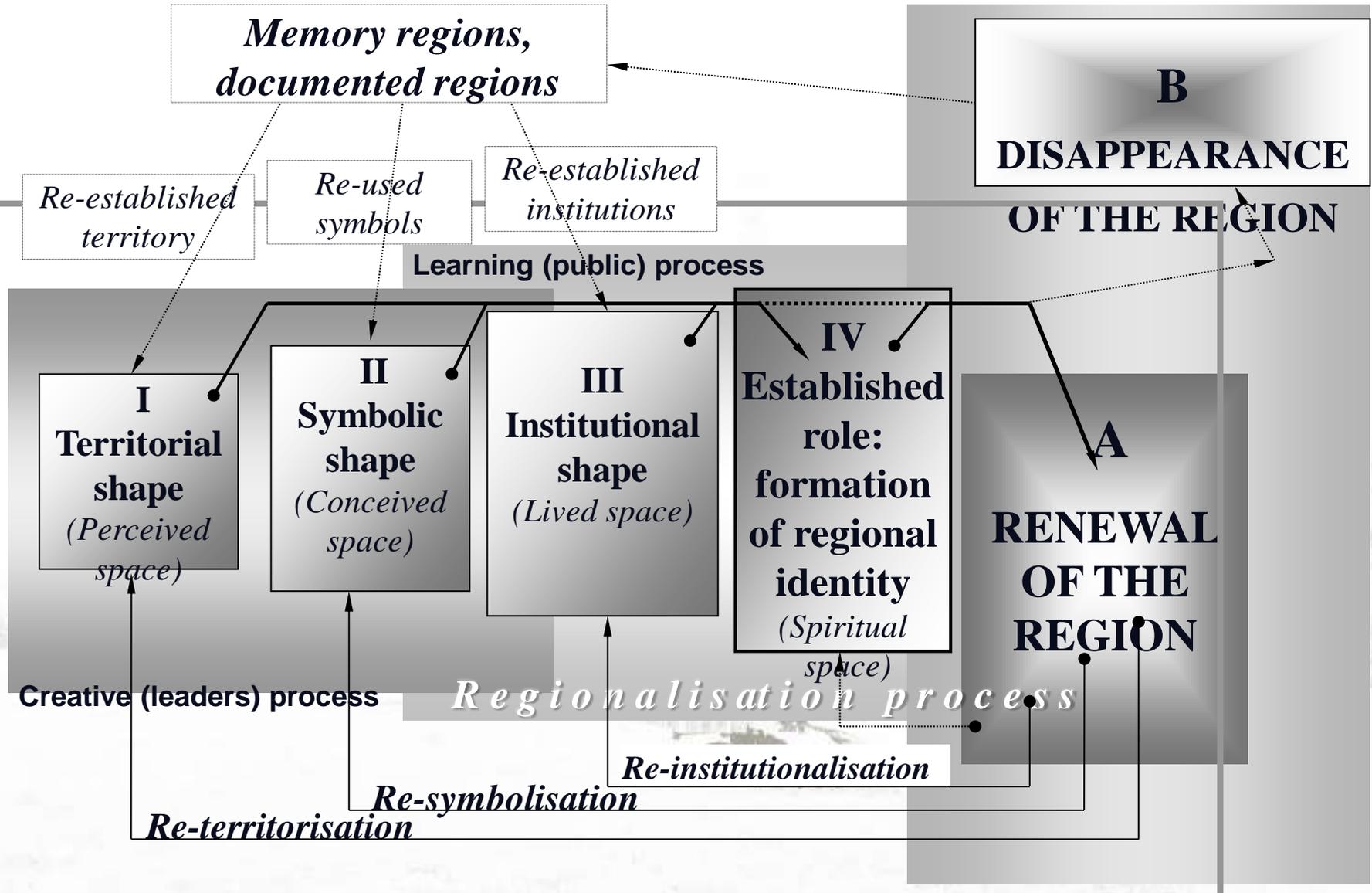


EGA SEE POLE
NALJAASI... LÄTI VOIM
LUBAS TÄNA TARTU
VAİMUGA KOHTUDA.

„Univerity of Tallinn“ in Tartu



The process of regionalisation: disappearance and renewal of regions

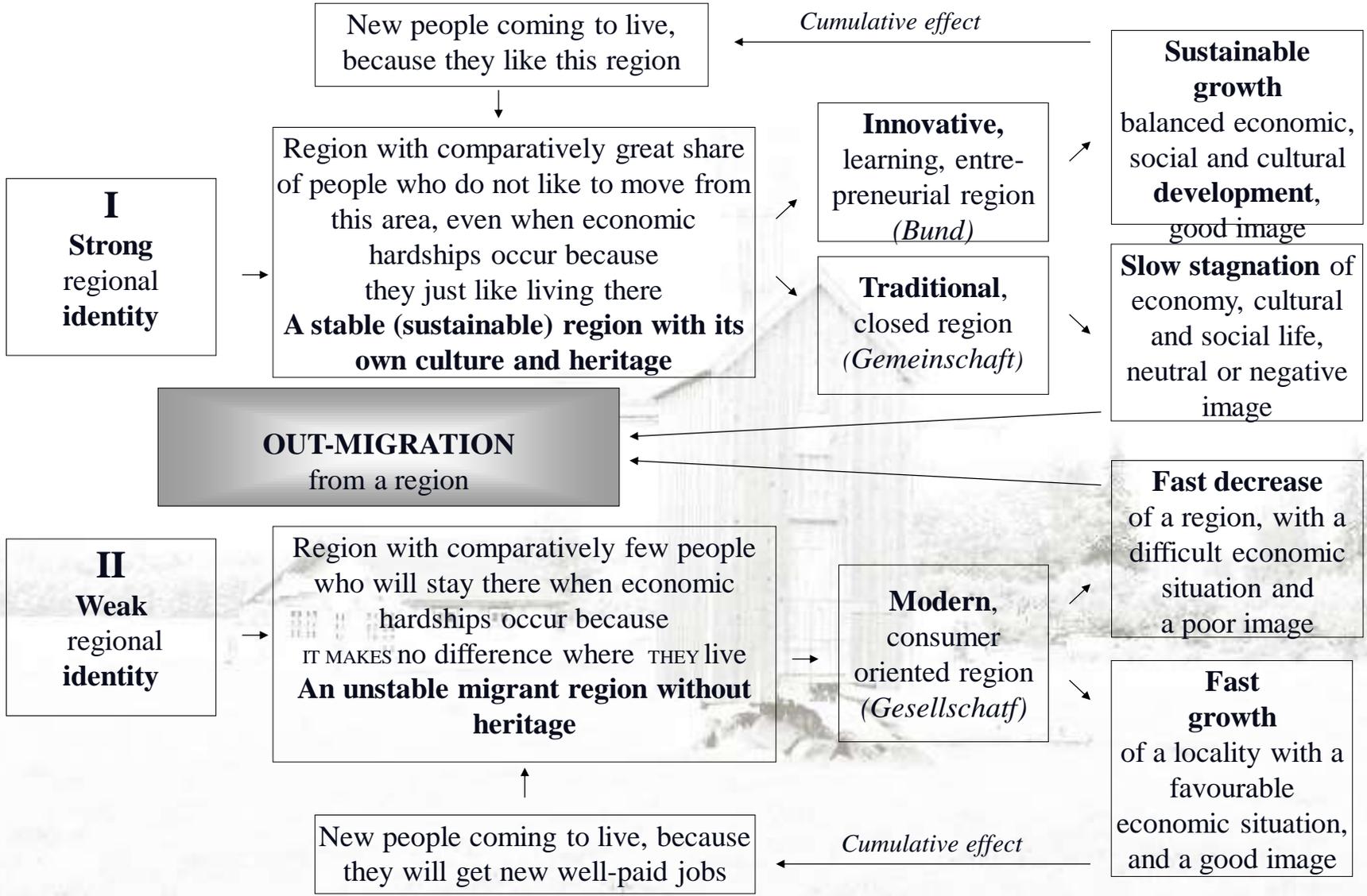


Unlearning, reformation process

Regional identity – a mobilising force

- Regional identity and nationalism (patriotism) as one of its forms has been one of the most powerful collective mobilising factors
- Gisevius (1993) states that identity may become an administrative strategy, which helps to mobilise local powers for regional development.
- Institutionalised territorial solidarity (common territory, values, symbols and institutions) maintains the image of the region and serves as the criteria for identity-building among the inhabitants.
- It is essential to safeguard the social consciousness. A region carries its established identity and image in the minds of both local inhabitants and outsiders (Paasi 1986b)

The effect of regional identity to population migratory behaviour



„Relational complexity“ (Healey 2006)

- Identities are associated with mobility, networks, and interactions occurring in ‘soft spaces’ and across ‘fuzzy boundaries’ (Paasi 2013)
- Identities are relational, marking out differences and contrasts between regions (Allen et al 1998)
- Regional identity **‘accumulates’ and reproduces** by institutions such as governmental and planning bodies, national and regional media, educational institutions and the creative industries that operate at and through various spatial scales (Tomaney, 2007).
- Regional identity is highly contextual, is moulded by events and political strategies, and can be mobilized for different purposes (Keating 1998)
- Regional identity should not be understood as automatically positive nor taken for granted because other authorities such as the European Union privilege it (Paasi 2013)

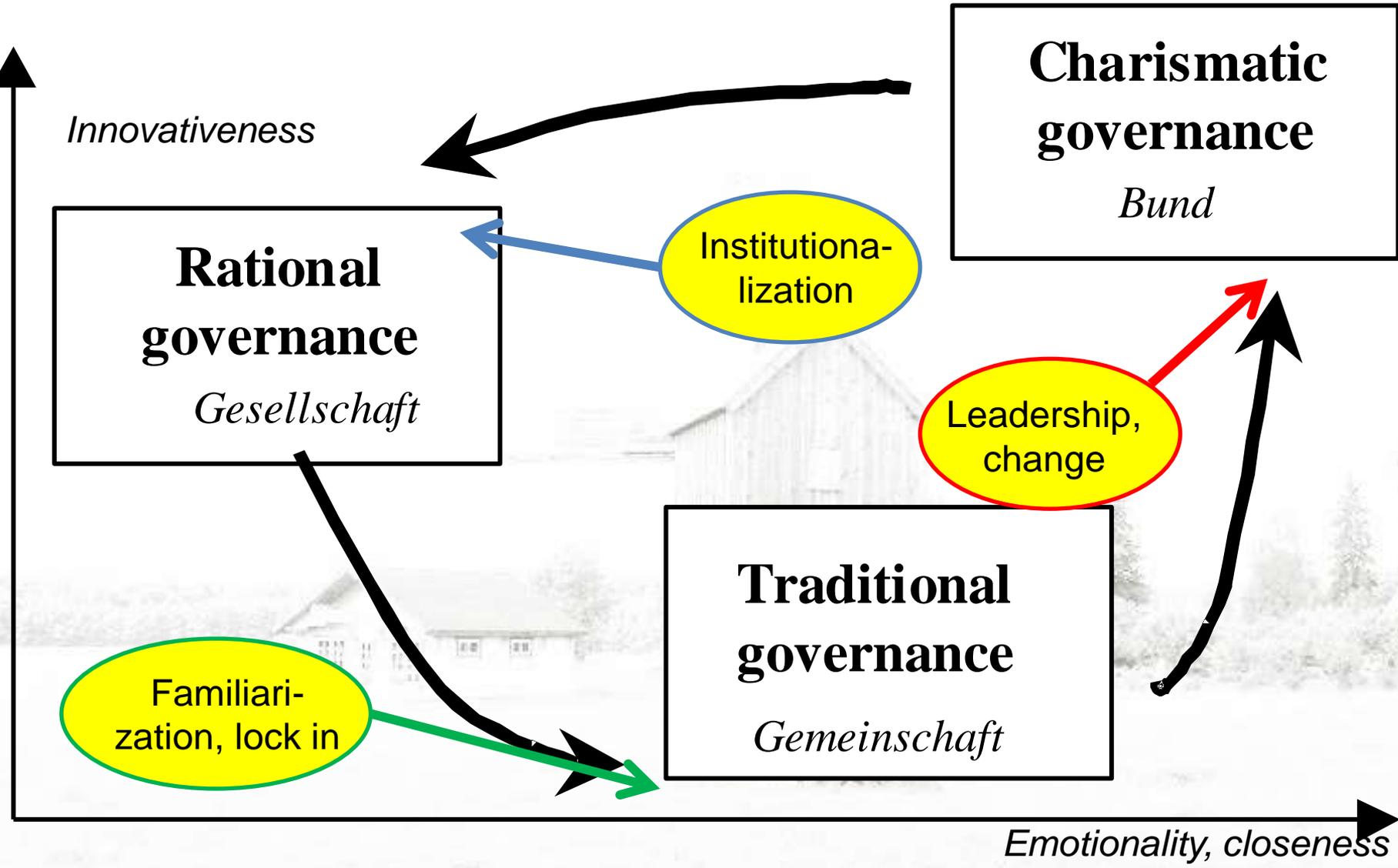
Institutional thickness, openness, innovation and entrepreneurialism

- Social groups are organised in networks of relatives, friends and acquaintances.
- Networking is a basic element of institutionalisation and regionalisation.
- The more institutions in a region the more stability.
- A well horizontally-institutionalised region seems like a thick cake with many overlapping layers – organisations and institutions and their identities which often are rooted or connected with the territory.
- **But what if the environment changes...**

Change we need! How?

- How to change institutions, values and other settings?
- To carry out big change in space, interrelated in social structures and locked in existing institutional behaviour, needs extra efforts and power
- Charismatic leadership that creates new vision, involves masses and matters to people makes change.
 - It drives people in some way crazy, so that they forgot about difficulties that every change accompanies

Evolutionary cycle in governance



After Weber (1968) and Schmalenbach (1922), cf. Hetherington (1997)

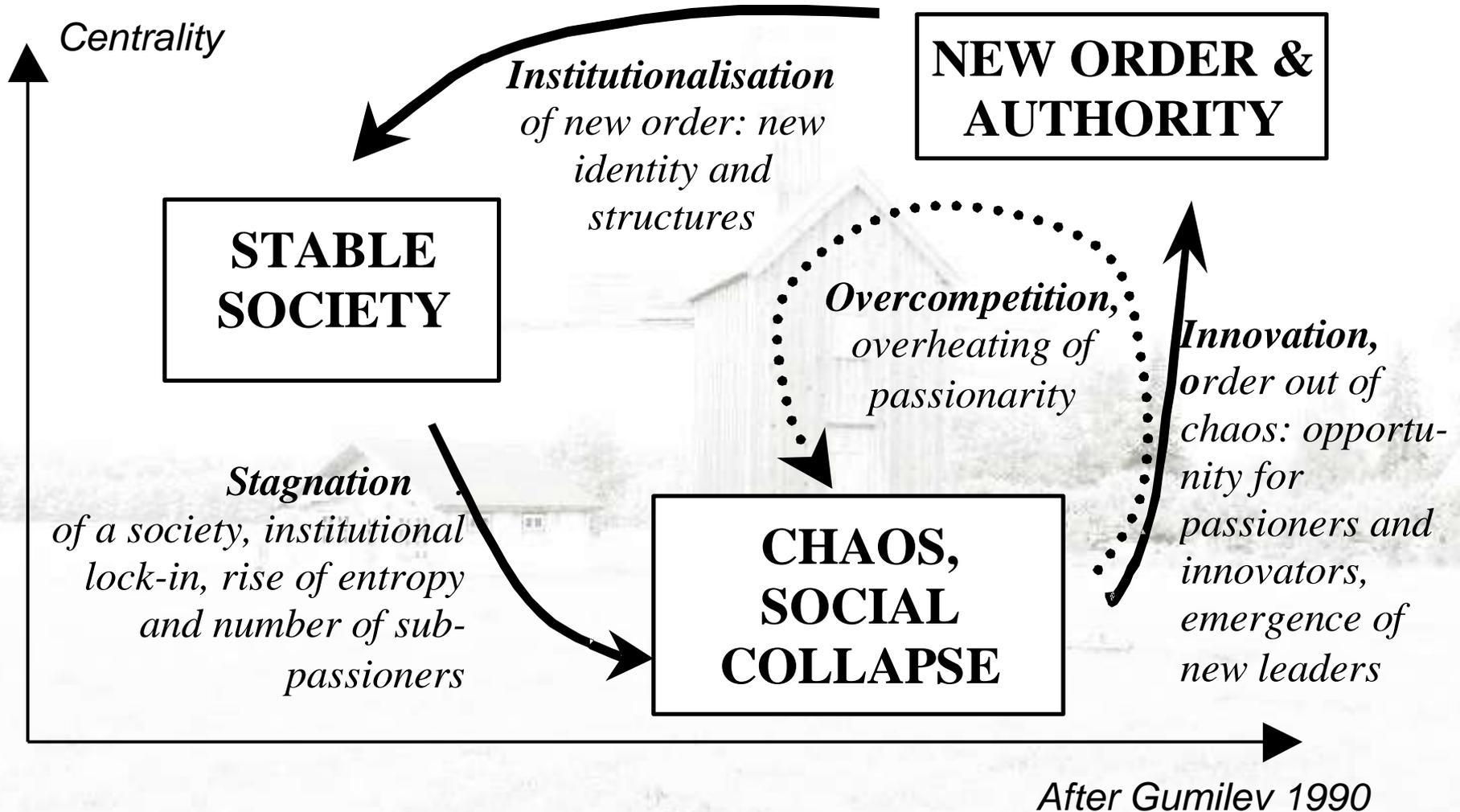
Leaders - people with high energy

- **Passioners** are very charismatic and powerful people with their own clear vision about the future and will to achieve goals. They have great capability to mobilise people into action. They are highly motivated at working to achieve certain goals (Gumilev 1990)
- Passioners – as energy bombs – attract and fire activity in other people with greater energy and, eventually, in "normal" people with lower energy as well

Subpassioners

- **Subpassioners** lack social networks, need additional energy and lack (local) morale, but can be easily mobilised into the revolutionary actions carried out by passioners.
- The number of subpassioners increases when general ethnic activity (common identity basis) decreases.
- This group's share is comparable with entropy-eroding cornerstones of an existing system, which gives passioners opportunities to change the system more easily.

Change through charismatic leadership



Leadership is a multi-agent and -level activity

- Charismatic, visionary leaders are rather important catalysts
- Success depends on their **ability to build up new teams and systems** as well as on the managerial process to leverage and add substance to their visions and energy. It is this interaction of charisma, attention to systems and process, and involvement at multiple levels that seems to drive large system changes (Nadler and Tushman 1990)
- *„Passioners need followers and to be followed,,*
Gumilev (1990)

Leaders in regional development

- The role of a key individual or a public leader might be extremely high in regional/local development
- They could be conventional – public administrators, managers of large-scale enterprise – but very often also unconventional – a local intellectual, a clergyman or other community activists
- Quite often these activists can be external people, especially returned migrants (Stöhr 1990) who are **well aware of regional culture and social networks**, but who are simultaneously **not dependent on the regional power structures** and can with the help of external networks carry out necessary policies.

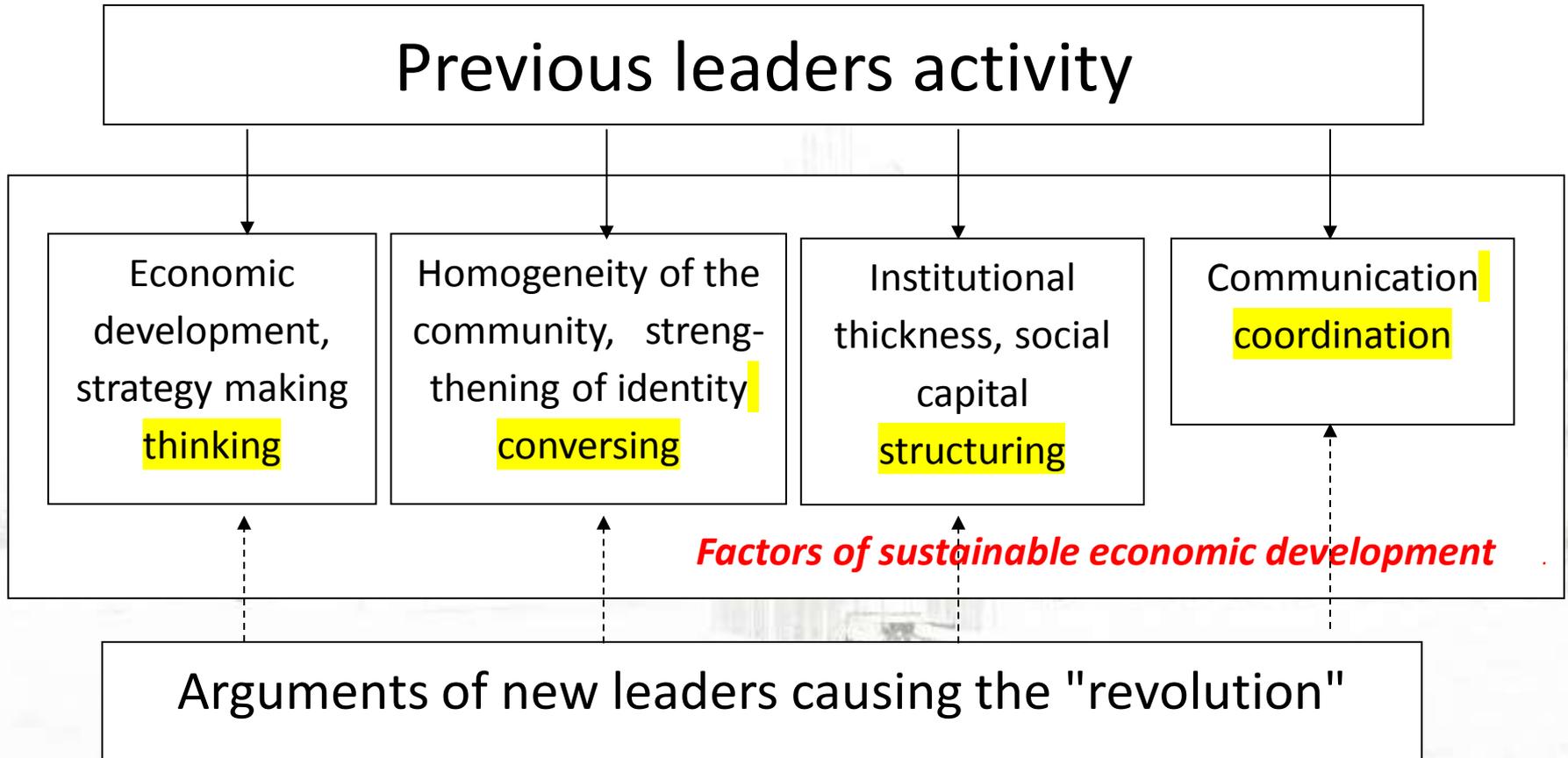
Leadership in sustainable development

- Acknowledgement the need for changes
 - **NEW LEADERS, ELITES on the power;**
- Open discussion about the community building
 - two (three) way communication (between administration, industrialists and the population);
- Creation of **new institutions** through common action and social learning
 - NGOs, growing social capital
 - new enterprises and jobs, changing or restructuring the dominant production line;
- Maintaining **positive image** and expectations, a good investment milieu and sustainable growth

Pitfalls in community leadership

- Lack competence and strategic thinking
 - overheating, non-controlled regional economic growth --> lack of services, congestion
- Lack of communication
 - loosing trust
- Lack of new ideas, vision
 - weakening community spirit
- Lack of technical skills, knowledge
 - Weak institutionalization of changes

Framework of changes



What happens when all basic elements
of a society
– including most people & institutions –,
culture of a whole region, will be removed
or entirely changed?



Discontinued cultures (as WW II result)

- If most native people leave the region or many new people move in → *characteristic to many CEE areas*
 - Ceded or new industrial development areas with massive inflow of new people/labour
- New combined culture(s) emerges, characterised by
 - Segregation and low trust between people
 - No functional institutions and governance
- Neo-colonial policies of a central government:
 - To utilize resources
 - To apply standardised procedures in the colony

LEADERSHIP matters...

- always in geographic peripheries,
 - where thin institutional set up exists
 - **THE ROLE OF SINGLE PERSONS IS GREATER**
- during great changes and chaos,
 - when confident initiative (of a leader) finds followers
 - **LEADERS AS CATALYST'S OF CHANGES**
- when additional challenges appear: *à la* high cultural/social diversity OR **discontinued culture**
 - **LEADERS HAVE TO SOLVE CONFLICTS, STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONS, AND BUILD A NEW COMMON (TERRITORIAL) IDENTITY**

Leadership is nested in SOCIAL CAPITAL

- Some regions achieve better results in development than others because of different levels of social capital (Putnam et al 1993)
- Most beneficial are softly tied informal horizontal networks of different social groups that support diversity (Woolcock 2000)
- Communities with high social capital have a high level of **mutual trust** (Lagerspetz 2006)
- To avoid conflicts and alienation, leaders should act as middlemen and gradually change people's values (Raagmaa et al 2012) on daily basis

Territorial identity – a mobilising force

- Territorial identity and nationalism (patriotism) as one of its forms has been one of the most powerful collective mobilising factors in the 20th century
- Gisevius (1993) states that ***identity may become an administrative strategy, which helps to mobilise local actors*** for regional development
- Institutionalised territorial solidarity (common territory, values, symbols and institutions) maintains the image of the region and serves as the criteria for identity-building among the inhabitants
- A region carries its established identity and image in the minds of both local inhabitants and outsiders (Paasi 1986)

The identity and quality of a place are constituted by:

- the natural and anthropogenic environment;
- local people, who form the social environment;
- symbolic meanings;
- stories (narratives) told about the place,
 - including history, legends, current images in the media, and
- stories spread on the basis of personal experience
- The quality of a place depends on ***a human context shaped by memories and expectations, by stories of real and imagined events and by historical experiences located there*** (Walter 1981, 141)

Hypotheses

- Discontinued cultures need extra effort from leaders to build...
 - social capital (relations) & trust (solving conflicts)
 - institutions (to make changes permanent)
 - common identity (via joint actions)
- On the case of weak leaderships, region may
 - loose its economic ground and public investments,
 - because of endless fights between villages and different interest groups

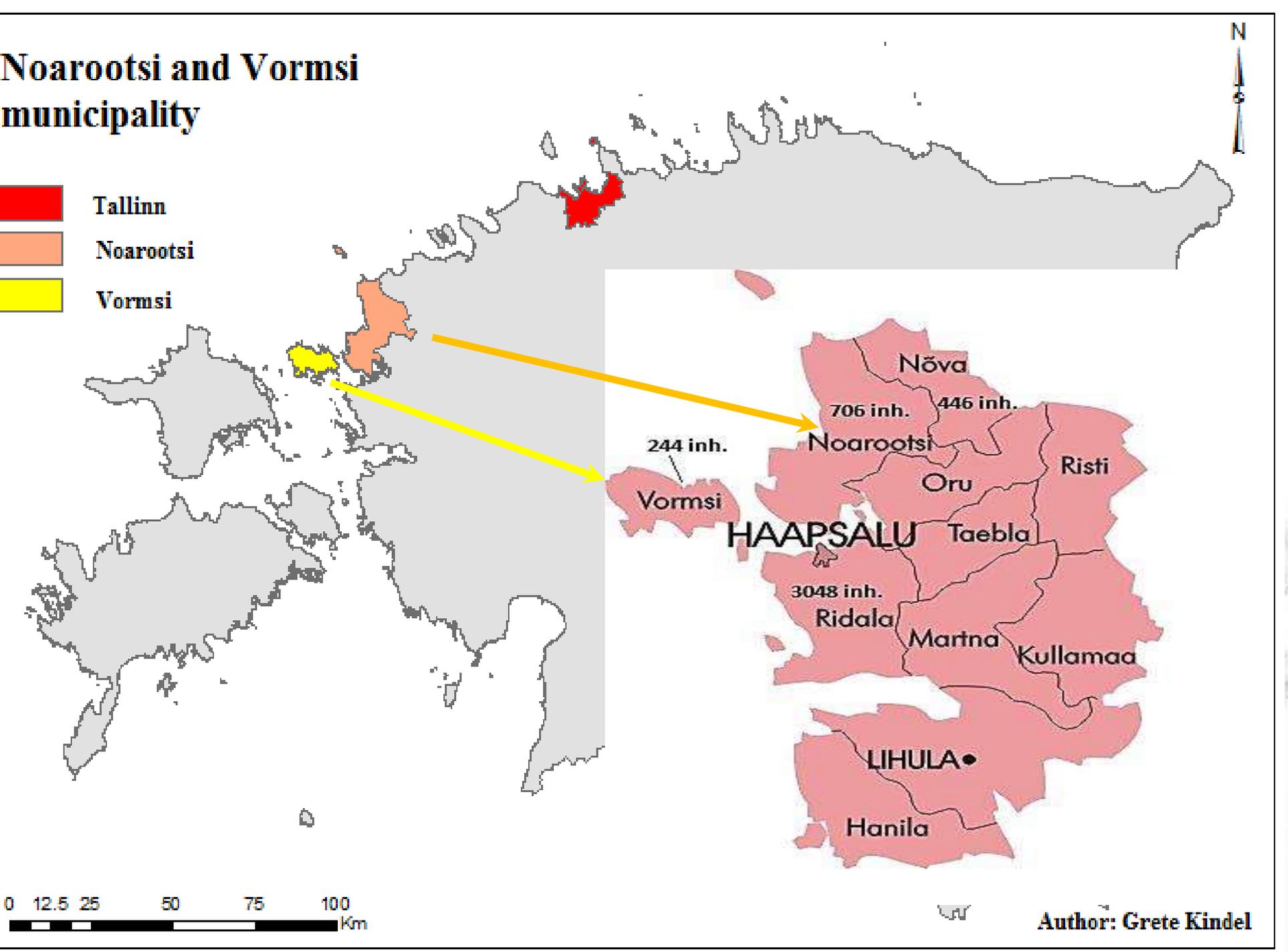
Case study methods

- Historical overview
 - the description of cultural change
- Statistical analyse of population and economic data
 - comparison with neighbouring municipalities
- Media search
 - defining leaders, finding important narratives and events
- Desk research
 - analyse of documents
- Semi-structured interviews
 - analyse of processes



Noarootsi and Vormsi municipality

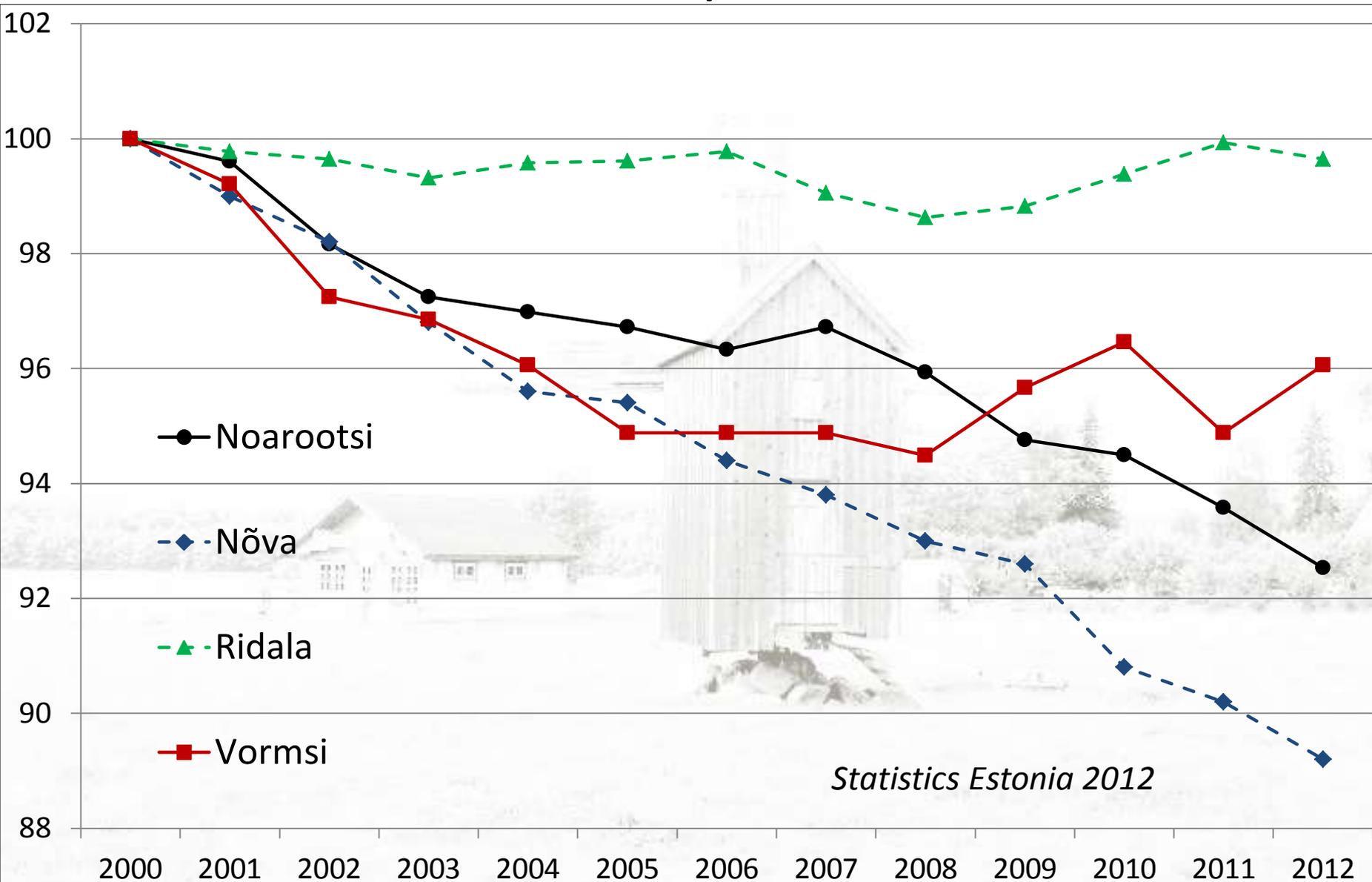
- Tallinn
- Noarootsi
- Vormsi



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Author: Grete Kindel

Population dynamics in Noarootsi, Nõva, Ridala and Vormsi municipalities, 2000=100%



The history

- Estonian-Swedish settlements established in 13th century
- 2697 Noarootsi & 2500 Vormsi Estonian-Swedes in 1934
- Swedish Government recall Estonian-Swedes to Sweden in 1939 and ca 7000 people emigrated 1939-1944
- Estonia-Swedish was repopulated by people from the mainland
 - From the Eastern Estonia and Inkerimaa / NEW NARRATIVE??
- Border regime: coastal areas closed to the public
 - Border regime removed 1993
- 1991 land-reform applied with very wide restitution
 - 3 generations of Estonian-Swedish decedents could claim for their properties

Social groups and conflicts due to the land reform

- Different sub-groups:
 - („New“) locals of the 1940-1960s
 - Second-home owners since 1970s (elite/nomenklature)
 - Second-home owners since 1990s
 - Estonian-Swedish:
 - returned & second-home owners
- Noarootsi land-reform was carried out smoothly
- Vormsi people were resisting against restitution
 - Opposition leaded by second house owners and supported by locals

Leaders and institutional set up

	Noarootsi	Vormsi
Number of mayors (1991-2013)	3	13
Number of NGO's	34 (+non-registered societies?)	32 (+non-registered societies?)
Village elders	Two elders, Estonian and Swedish	One village elder
Formal linkages with Swedes	Twin communes (Atvidaberg, Kronoby), Riguldi-Noarootsi Estonian-Swedish Association	No twin communes Vormsi Estonian-Swedish Association
Joint projects with Swedes	Swedish secondary school, humanitarian aid, 2 chapels, boiler house etc.	Ambulance and fire engine
Celebrations in association with Swedes	Summer festival	St. Olaf's day
Involvement of summer inhabitants	Good	Good

Leadership in Noarootsi

- 9 council members
 - Two parties (5/4) 2009
- 3 mayors (1991-2013):
- Ülo Kalm (1991-2009)
 - The true leader
- Aivar Kroon (2009-2011)
 - entrepreneur
- Annika Kapp (2011-...)
 - professional manager



Vormsi leadership?

- 9 council members
 - Three local parties (6/2/1) 2009
- 13 mayors (1991-2013)
 - Frequently changing coalitions
 - Based on concrete projects/interests
 - No charismatic leaders
 - Several outsiders didn't find common language with local people and quit

Estonian-Swedish identity

- Several joint projects with Estonian-Swedish during the 1990s in Noarootsi
- Vanishing Estonian-Swedish identity
 - Estonian-Swedish are elderly people and their children are not interested about Estonia and Estonian-Swedish culture
 - Most of Estonian-Swedish summerhouses out of use and dilapidated
- „Rannarootsi“ as a trade mark extensively used by food and retail industry

Discussion

- Vormsi and Noarootsi are still influenced by Estonian-Swedish culture, but in quite different forms
 - Rannarootsi as a new (capitalist) narrative
 - Estonian-Swedish vanishing in both localities
- 1990's decisive period of changes
 - great role of new leadership (mayor) in Noarootsi in starting collaborative relations with Estonian-Swedish
 - accelerating of conflicts in Vormsi concerning the return of Swedish and land ownership – low trust
- No particular differences in NGO development
- No common identity neither in Vormsi nor in Noarootsi
 - Rather on the village level

Conclusions (preliminary)

- Vormsi as **CLOSED** individualistic micro-corporate society:
 - Weak leadership and governance
 - Low social capital & trust
 - No community (identity)
- Noarootsi as **OPEN** and more solidary society
 - Strong leadership and good governance
 - Good and stabilised social capital & trust
 - No community (identity)

