

# Social and political trust in Istanbul and Moscow: a comparative analysis of individual and neighbourhood effects

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Aiming to bring local context into studies of social capital, our study uses samples of 4006 individuals in Istanbul and 3476 in Moscow using a comparable questionnaire. The stratification of each city's neighbourhoods on the basis of socio-economic characteristics provided the basis for the sampling. Using a multilevel modelling procedure, we show both that locality matters (neighbourhood effect proved significant) and that social capital may indeed be constituted in very particular ways in illiberal democracies such as Russia and Turkey. Social and political trust are frequently thought to contribute to social capital – that is, to provide social resources upon which individuals or groups may draw for their political efficacy. Trust in fellow citizens in Istanbul exhibits a positive relationship to associational activities (joining clubs etc.), while in Moscow social trust can be explained predominantly in terms of (lower) socio-economic status. At the same time, important similarities emerged between the two cases. For social trust, in both cities the 'cosmopolitanization thesis', which holds that those who associate more widely are also more trusting of fellow citizens, generally applied. Further, in both cities, residents with *lower* socio-economic status (though in Moscow this is complicated by education) and *lower* likelihoods of engagement in direct political action were *more trustful of parliament*. While this is the opposite of what we have been led to expect based on Western democratic polities, it is a reasonable outcome of illiberal democratic governance operating in these two cities.

**key words** Moscow Istanbul neighbourhood contextual effects political trust generalized social trust

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revised manuscript received 16 July 2004

## Introduction

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist alternative to the democratic and capitalist regimes of the West, significant attention has been given to the transition from non-democratic to democratic styles of government in a variety of global settings. The quality of the democratic regimes that have replaced previously authoritarian ones has varied, from pseudo-

democracy in Central Asia to the more Western-style democracy of Central Europe. Though disproportionate attention has been devoted to the changes in the former Communist countries, a simultaneous shift in the nature of the political regimes occurred in other authoritarian states. Large-scale cross-sectional studies such as that of Gleditsch and Ward (1997) and O'Loughlin *et al.* (1998) have identified the correlates (country characteristics) of democratization and also the

importance of geographic contiguity of states in determining the odds of a transition to democracy. Small-scale studies of individual communities such as localities in Russia (Stoner-Weiss 2002) have shown the contingent circumstances that have led to the development of democracy in some locales. Though both of these sets of studies have been useful in increasing our understanding of the processes of democratization, they suffer respectively from the problems of aggregation (cross-sectional approach) and uniqueness (local study). Our purpose in this paper is to put forward a comparative analysis of a key question in the democratization literature: the role of social capital, and especially political and social trust. Selecting the largest cities of two key countries (Turkey and Russia), we report the results of a study that used a similar survey instrument and a similar research design based on neighbourhood sampling in Istanbul and Moscow. Our comparative approach thus offers the advantages of country comparison while retaining the virtues of a focus on local circumstances.

The type of politics that is emerging in the aftermath of the demise of authoritarian regimes is a key element of comparative political studies. An important debate concerns the transferability of concepts between regional contexts. While authors such as Bunce (2000) argue that a strongly contextual (nuanced and locally focused) approach is needed to understand the emerging democracies, Schmitter and Karl (1994) believe that key concepts are functionally equivalent. The functional equivalence argument rests on the development of indicators that are not culturally specific. 'Equivalence is a matter of inference, not of direct observations' (Przeworski and Teune 1970, 117–18). We adopt a position between these extremes of contingency and generalization with our use of comparative concepts that are functionally equivalent but which are measured according to a neighbourhood-based survey.

As well as contributing to the debate about the transferability of democratic concepts, we also return to the discussion between geographers and political scientists about the importance of neighbourhood context in shaping voter beliefs and preferences. Our study uses samples of 4006 individuals in Istanbul and 3476 in Moscow. Rather than drawing a random sample of adults in a citywide selection, we first stratified the neighbourhoods on the basis of their socio-demographic characteristics and then, within the sample neighbourhoods (72 in Istanbul and 17 in Moscow), we

sampled randomly. By mixing compositional (individual characteristics) and contextual (neighbourhood) variables, we can estimate the relative contribution of each set to the trust levels. For over half a century, geographers have argued that contextual elements are important in shaping political beliefs and have tried using a variety of statistical devices to demonstrate these effects (Cox 1969; O'Loughlin *et al.* 1994; Agnew 1996). Although political scientists remain sceptical of the size of these effects (King 1996), recent work using survey and electoral data and contextualizing these data by neighbourhood placement has allowed geographers to show important contextual effects (Jones *et al.* 1998; Pattie and Johnston 2000; Johnston *et al.* 2004). These studies have managed to harness data collected for other purposes into a geographic framework. The advantage of our data is that they were collected specifically for the measurement of the relative significance of compositional and contextual effects. By shifting the study sites outside the realm of Western democracies to two cities undergoing political and economic transitions and by the choice of a statistical methodology (multilevel modelling) designed for identifying individual and contextual effects, we extend the range of political geographic study.

Critics of social capital theory have called for the recovery of context in studies of trust and association (Tarrow 1996; Foley *et al.* 2001; Rose 2001). Mindful of the trenchant critiques that have been levelled against the unwarranted assumptions of much recent work on social capital and civil society (such as that certain attitudes on the part of individuals are 'good for' democracy), we begin by outlining a critical approach to the study of social capital and trust. Through our comparative methodology, we interrogate the bases of social and political trust in Istanbul and Moscow. We argue that the wider structural contexts of Istanbul and Moscow shape the ways in which individuals, groups and localities are inserted into relations of trust. Furthermore, our study shows that neighbourhood contexts do matter in the shaping of social relations and attitudes – though these relationships vary across our two cases. Finally, our study leads to some rather surprising conclusions regarding how social capital is constituted outside of Western Europe and the United States. Where there is widespread alienation from corrupt and ineffective political systems, it seems that trust in political institutions is neither a condition for nor a result of political engagement.

## Trust and comparative democracy

In his study of associational life and governance in Italy, Putnam defined social capital as referring to 'features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions' (Putnam 1993, 167). Following Putnam (1995 2000), researchers have sought to evaluate the relationships between dense networks of association, social trust and democratic governance. The result has been a resurgence of the idea of 'social capital', though the term did not originate with Putnam and in fact has been deployed differently in different contexts (Jacobs 1961; Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988). While for Putnam 'social capital' is understood as a collective resource at the societal level, Bourdieu and Coleman used the term instead to emphasize how social ties benefit actors within networks.

As a result of its multi-sited theoretical genesis, research on social capital has frequently been described as falling into different 'camps' distinguished by different assumptions about the scale of analysis, the role and meaning of trust, and the outcomes associated with social capital accumulation. Richard Rose (2001) and others (see Tarrow 1996; Foley *et al.* 2001) have convincingly argued that Putnam's approach to social capital and democracy underestimates the influence of structural components, from local governments to the global economy, on the attitudes of trust and forms of associational life manifest within a society. Furthermore, critics have pointed out that aggregating indicators of interpersonal trust from the individual to countries or regions de-contextualizes the relations of social capital as they are embedded within particular localities, networks and associations (Fine 1999; Foley *et al.* 2001; Wood 2001). Ben Fine (1999) points out that Putnam-style studies of social capital tend to leap from the individual to the social without considering the processes and relationships through which the social is produced. When it is further assumed that trusting dispositions and associational behaviour are relatively immutable cultural characteristics (Inglehart 1999), these social capital studies feed into a neo-Orientalist political theory that defines non-Western societies as inherently lacking the cultural building blocks for economic or political well-being. Social capital, whether deployed at the neighbourhood or international level, thus risks running aground as part of a 'deficit theory syndrome', that is, 'yet another

"thing" or "resource" that unsuccessful individuals, families, communities, and neighbourhoods lack' (Morrow 1999, 760). By emphasizing both macro-structural contexts (in our comparison of Russia and Turkey) and local contextual factors (at the neighbourhood scale), we seek to move beyond both the individualist biases of sociological approaches and the unwarranted assumptions (associated with Putnam's social capital thesis) that trust is either a characteristic of entire societies or necessarily 'good for' democracy.

Trust is a concept inherent in the Western democratic model that may or may not be transferable across global contexts and about which political scientists still remain divided. Despite the different emphases of various definitions of trust, all draw attention to the central role that risk plays in the meaning of trust. Trust is most commonly understood to refer to confidence or belief in individuals or institutions under conditions of risk; where outcomes or intentions are fully known, trust need not come into play. In this study, we investigate two kinds of trust: trust in fellow citizens ('generalized social trust') and trust in political institutions. As many have pointed out, these two forms of trust are conceptually distinct and not necessarily related (Putnam 2000; Newton 2001). Furthermore, neither form of trust should be assumed to reflect inherent trusting or distrusting dispositions among individuals; in other words, trust is not a character trait so much as it is a response to circumstances, knowledge and experience (Newton 2001). As Newton argues, responses to questions about trust, whether they concern trust in abstract others or in institutions, tell us about how people evaluate the trustworthiness of the world they live in. This evaluation is likely to be affected by a range of factors, both structural and individual. For example, where political institutions and actors have proven particularly corrupt and unresponsive, one might expect citizens to register lower levels of trust in government. At the same time as these larger structural contexts matter, socio-economic status has also proven to be a powerful predictor of both social and political trust, leading some authors to suggest that those who have fewer resources, and who are therefore more vulnerable, are less able to afford trust than the already well-to-do (Offe 1999; Patterson 1999). While measures of political trust can inform us about the operation of the political sphere, generalized social trust provides a different lens through which we can come to understand how individuals,

groups and places are differently positioned in relation to state and society. Social trust is taken here to be a potential element of social capital, that is, a resource that may (or may not) enable collective action and political efficacy.

But do these measures of trust tell us something about 'democracy' in a society? The answer is yes, but not because democracy depends on the trusting dispositions of citizens. On the contrary, democratic governance requires the sceptical deployment of checks and balances, calls for accountability and the negotiation of conflicts of interest in the political arena (Dunn 1988; Warren 1999a). However, pervasive distrust of political institutions and elected officials surely indicates that something has gone wrong in a democracy (Warren 1999b). It is not a question of bad attitudes; we agree with Richard Rose that it is putting the cart before the horse to consider democracy in such societies as Russia or Turkey to be hampered by the distrusting dispositions of citizens, when 'the immediate need is to change the way the country is governed' (Rose 2001, 69). What is important about measures of political trust (or distrust) in a democracy is that they raise questions about the receptivity of existing political public spheres, including parties and electoral systems, to the civic engagement of citizens. Furthermore, the uneven distribution of political and social trust across society and space can inform us of how different people, groups and places experience political institutions and social life. Our urban geography of trust in Moscow and Istanbul is thus situated at the intersection of state and society in everyday life.

### *A framework for critical analysis*

In this paper, we aim to 'bring context in' to social capital studies. We do this not only by using the statistical approach called multi-level modelling to demonstrate the role of locality in relations of governance, but also by viewing social capital through a comparative lens that focuses on how the historical and local specificity of social relations affects frameworks of trust. Rather than reproducing the weaknesses of previous research on social capital, which has tended to underestimate both structural and local factors, we aim to rethink theories of trust and comparative democracy through the urban geographies of two cities outside the orbit of American or Western European democratic traditions. We do this in three ways.

First, we adopt a definition of social capital that remains concerned with political outcomes but does

not presume the Tocquevillian (or Putnam-esque) relationship between associational life, trust and democracy. By defining social capital as *the social resources that enable individuals and groups to engage in politically effective action*, we leave open the question of what kinds of trust and what types of associational engagement may or may not provide individuals and groups with greater access to political structures in a society. Though this definition echoes Coleman's (1988) concern with social capital as making possible the achievement of certain ends, at the same time it incorporates an explicit interest in political, rather than economic, outcomes. Such a definition runs the risk of being dismissed as functionalist, or of appearing to encompass too much. However, as long as the main factors that produce social capital – that is, that enable political action – remain open to empirical study, this definition has the advantage of not presuming a chain of relationships between certain phenomena and certain outcomes. It allows one to ask what kinds of structures, relations and subject positions enable or constrain the political efficacy of individuals or groups in particular contexts.

We thus recognize that the constitution and operation of social capital is likely to vary across political and economic contexts, sub-populations and localities. Not only will social capital take different forms in different contexts, but access to social capital is uneven and marked by inequality; like Bourdieu, we recognize that the benefits of social capital accrue to some more than others. Within the framework of these concerns, we remain interested in questions of trust (both generalized social trust and political trust), insofar as these attitudes and behaviours provide us with insight into practices of governance and the interrelations between state and society. Our first research question arises from these concerns: *What individual characteristics (such as age, gender, class, ethnicity, etc.) and behaviours (such as political or associational activities) are associated with the formation of social and political trust in Moscow and Istanbul?*

Second, this study focuses on the ways in which neighbourhoods operate as localities where social capital may or may not be produced and accessed by various groups and individuals. As critics have pointed out, most 'individual-level analysis neglects the variety of *locations* in which social capital is generated, accessed, and inhibited' (Maloney *et al.* 2001, 83). Likewise, national-level analyses that use aggregate measures of social capital belie the 'impact

of localized social contexts on its generation' (Foley *et al.* 2001, 267). Comprised of overlapping social networks, neighbourhoods may act as local contexts for the production, maintenance and mobilization of social capital. This study thus asks the question: *What effect does neighbourhood context have on the uneven formation and distribution of social capital?* A recent study of four neighbourhoods in Edinburgh and Glasgow has asked a similar question, interrogating variations in civic culture at the neighbourhood level and suggesting that these differences can be 'partly explained by reference to the compositional characteristics of the population as well as by local effects and traditions and the legacies of past experiences' (Docherty *et al.* 2001, 2229). In order to evaluate the impact of the 'neighbourhood effect' – that is, the effects of local traditions, legacies of past experiences and particularities of place (see Cox 1969; Johnston 1986 1991; Agnew 1987 1996) – on social capital formation both within and beyond the neighbourhood, we use multi-level modelling techniques that allow for the comparison of relationships (between socio-economic status, associational behaviours and political engagement) across Russian *rayoni* (districts) and Turkish *mahalleler* (neighbourhoods).

Third, rather than adopting a 'bottom-up' causal model, in which attributes of individuals (such as their trust in government or their associational activities) are seen as the prerequisites for good governance in Istanbul or Moscow, we are interested in how multi-scalar political and economic practices have situated urban residents in different ways in relation to their governments and societies. It is not our purpose to perpetuate a Eurocentric 'diagnosis' of Russian or Turkish society as being somehow lacking in the cultural fundamentals necessary for the flourishing of Western-style democratic institutions. Attitudes of trust or distrust towards fellow citizens or governmental institutions are considered to be indicators of how governance takes shape through the particular forms of government and social relations that operate within these polities. Our third research question, which we explore through comparison, is thus *how does the local constitution of trust compare across the cases of Istanbul and Moscow, and how does this comparison enable us to reflect back on the theories of social capital derived from Anglo-European cases?*

These three questions, taken together, form the backbone of our study of the local construction of social capital in comparative perspective.

## Comparison of two cities – Moscow and Istanbul

Our research in Moscow and Istanbul is designed both to reflect the specific structures, institutions, meanings and issues of the respective cities and to offer points of comparison beyond the local contexts. The problem of difference and equivalence has a long provenance in comparative politics (see Verba 1968; Przeworski and Teune 1970; Teune 1990; van Deth 1998). Sensitive comparative research must recognize both the limitations and potentialities that arise from the ways in which theories and concepts circulate through differentiated localities. Concepts such as trust, politics and citizenship do not represent stable and unitary ideas or practices, even within polities, let alone across them. The recognition of this variability and its contingent construction does not hinder comparative research, but rather acts as the fertile soil of its germination.

Why compare dimensions of trust in Moscow and Istanbul in particular? This comparison is motivated from two directions. First, we are interested in situating social and political trust within local networks, relationships and political milieus. Within our separate studies of Moscow and Istanbul, this interest has spurred our exploration of multi-level models that examine the role of neighbourhood contexts in the constitution of trust as an outcome of individual and communal factors. Placing these studies in comparison to one another takes this analysis to another level; through this comparison, we are able to bring to the fore the importance of broader cultural and political arenas in framing explanations for social and political trust. In this way the comparative approach builds upon and enriches geographically sensitive analyses in each of the respective cities. Our second motive for comparing Istanbul and Moscow arises from the particular similarities and differences of these two cities (on two-case comparisons, see Freitag 2003; Lijphart 1975). In the following discussion, we trace both differences and similarities between the cases of Istanbul and Moscow across dimensions of democratization, globalization, urban structure and political and social trust. In so doing, we seek to indicate the benefits of a comparison.

### *Democratization*

Both Russia and Turkey operate as what might be called 'illiberal democracies', which is to say that although certain democratic institutional frameworks

are in place, democracy in both countries is mediated by illiberal structures of state authority and control (Zakaria 2003). Although Turkey was part of what has been called the 'second wave' of democratization following the Second World War (Huntington 1991), the Turkish military has periodically intervened in the operation of civilian government, previously through direct military *coups d'état* and more recently through the institutionalized 'consultation' of generals on the National Security Council. At its worst, democracy in Turkey is characterized by state dominance over civil society, political patronage and corruption, and political parties that operate as spheres of intra-elite competition (see Heper 1985; Cantori 1997; Kubicek 2002). Yet these constellations of power continue to shift across state and society, not least as a result of EU-related reforms and the rise of grass-roots political Islamism.

Under the Presidency of Vladimir Putin since March 2000, Russia has increasingly taken on the trappings of a 'managed democracy'. The initial opportunities and promises of an open society in the wake of the collapse of the Communist regime in 1991 have waned as the institutions of the state have come under the control of a re-invigorated executive in the wake of the resignation of President Boris Yeltsin. Though Russia has had four parliamentary elections (1993, 1995, 1999 and 2003), the political options have narrowed dramatically to a choice of 'the party of power' (supporting the President) and weak left and right oppositions. The State Duma (Parliament) has lost its earlier autonomy that challenged much of the Yeltsin policies. Further, executive control of the electronic and print media has grown significantly since Putin came to power. Unlike Turkey, the Russian military does not present a possible challenge to civilian control, but the state security services (from which Putin rose to prominence) are widely viewed as a pivotal element in the state apparatus. Thus, despite the differences between them, Russia and Turkey may be productively juxtaposed as countries in which democratic governance has taken on peculiarly illiberal forms.

### *Globalization*

Turkey and Russia have experienced neo-liberal economic restructuring, the globalization of their economies, and the rise of informal economies in the past two decades. Furthermore, Istanbul and Moscow are prime basing points in global networks

(on Istanbul, see Keyder 1999; on Moscow, see Kolossov and Vendina 1997; Kolossov *et al.* 2002; see also GAWC Atlas of Hinterworlds, <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/> Accessed February 2005). While Moscow has undergone neoliberal economic transformation since 1991 of a breathtaking dimension, the liberalization of Turkey's previously statist, import-substitution oriented economy gained momentum after 1984. In Istanbul, this new regulatory regime meant the opening of a stock exchange market and the enticement of foreign and transnational firms to the city (Isin 2001). Likewise, Moscow has added financial services to its economic profile and the Moscow stock exchange has now recovered from the economic collapse of 1998. While both Istanbul and Moscow have become basing points for global capital and headquarters cities for domestic enterprises, liberalization has also been marked by corrupt practices, informal economies and growing socio-spatial inequality in both societies (on Moscow, see Vendina 2002; for Istanbul, see Güvenç and Işık 1996).

### *Urban structure in the two cities*

*Rayoni* and *mahalleler* (neighbourhoods) are the smallest administrative units in each of the two cities, but their administration reflects differences in practices of urban governance in Istanbul and Moscow. Istanbul's 644 *mahalleler* are much smaller in area than Moscow's 124 *rayoni*, and do not have independent budgetary control. *Mahalleler* are run by an elected headperson, or *muhtar*, who acts as a conduit for passing on the concerns of the neighbourhood residents to higher levels of urban administration. The Greater Municipality of Istanbul is composed of 27 districts, run by locally elected councils and district mayors, who then sit on the Municipal Council headed by the generally elected Greater Municipality Mayor. Since the 1970s, trends towards state decentralization have increased the fiscal and administrative responsibilities of municipal governments in Turkey, although an enduringly top-down political vision has led to what has been described as 'a basic distrust of the localities' and 'a perception of lower-level governments as tools at the disposal of higher-level ones' (Heper 1989, 8; 1986; Kalaycıoğlu 1994; Köker 1995).

In Moscow, the ten prefectures of the Soviet city have been divided into 124 districts (*rayoni*) of about 85 000 citizens (Colton 1995). Beginning in 1997, these districts have been the focus of attempts to promote a local democracy with elections to district

councils every four years. Each district has a local administrative office, a *rayon* president and an elected council. Turnout in the rayon elections has been very low and most residents are unaware of or distrustful of the activities of the *rayon* administrative structures (only 12.9% indicated that they trusted the local council in our April 2000 survey). The local councils in Moscow have become local representatives of the Mayor Luzhkov political machine and act as conduits of local concerns to the city authorities. Like Istanbul, they become 'tools at the disposal of higher-level' governments.

### *Trust in Turkey and Russia*

Both Turkey and Russia rank low on various forms of trust according to the World Values Survey of 71 countries, though the respective ranks vary by key measures of social and political trust. Details on comparative indicators of trust on several dimensions are given in Table I. In general, confidence in political institutions is higher in Turkey than for the respective institutions in Russia.

A higher preference is evident in Russia for a 'strong leader', but while the Turkish national sample supports the institutions of democracy, satisfaction with these institutions in Russia is dramatically lower. Both samples rate the current political system very low (less than 10% in both cases) as the distinction between the principles and practices of democracy are evident to the citizens.

**Table I Political trust in Turkey and Russia (World Values Survey data 1997)**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Turkey 1997</i>	<i>Russia 1997</i>
Armed forces	92.5	67.7
Democratic system	86.5	45.0
Police	66.3	32.4
Legal system	66.2	38.1
Civil service	60.5	46.1
Parliament	50.9	33.0
National government	47.1	34.5
Strong leader	34.8	42.6
Parties	27.9	17.5
Rate political system now	9.1	1.3

Measures are in percentages – Confidence in armed forces, legal system, police, national government, parties, parliament and civil service (sum of 'great deal' and 'quite a lot') Political system, strong leader and democratic system (sum of 'very good' and 'good')

Source: World Values Survey data (ICPSR University of Michigan <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu> Accessed February 2005)

Armed forces are by far the most trusted political institution (both countries have conscription).

On the indicator 'trust in fellow citizens', Russia ranks 36th of the 71 countries with 29.9 per cent agreeing that they 'trust completely' or 'trust somewhat', whilst Turkey ranks as 67th (17% trusting). Similar indicators for 'trust in parliament' in Turkey and Russia in relation to a handful of other countries show that Turkey ranks 14th with 51.7 per cent indicating 'trust completely' or 'trust somewhat', while Russia occupies the 50th rank with 33 per cent trusting the State parliament. In interpreting these scores and rankings, it is important to reiterate that distrust of government is best understood as an outcome, rather than a cause, of failures of democracy (Newton 2001; Kim *et al.* 2002). Furthermore, while these national-level statistics (and the urban-level ones below) provide a general context for a comparison of trust across these polities, we argue that social and political trust are best understood as products of locally embedded relationships that vary not only across national and urban contexts, but, more meaningfully, across the neighbourhood spheres of daily social and political practice.

Given the problems of democratization and neo-liberal economic restructuring briefly outlined above, as well as the national trends portrayed by the World Value Survey data, relatively low levels of generalized social and political trust should be expected in the contexts of Moscow and Istanbul. Our surveys in these cities confirm these expectations. Despite commonalities between the two cases, patterns of trust are also clearly different in Istanbul and Moscow (Table II). Moscow residents were almost three times more likely to report trusting their fellow citizens than were Istanbulites, who reported very low levels of generalized social trust. It is possible that low levels of generalized social trust represent the flip side of high levels of interpersonal trust within networks and communities. In our Istanbul survey, 86 per cent reported trusting kinship networks, and 53 per cent reported trusting neighbourhood networks. Although these questions were not directly asked in the Moscow survey, the reliance of Russians on informal networks of friends and neighbours is well-documented (Gibson 2001). Thus informal, face-to-face networks of association and the 'thick trust' that inheres in them may prove more salient to both Moscow and Istanbul residents than trust in unknown others.

Social organizations (*dernekler* and *vakıflar* in Istanbul and *obshchestvennie organizatsii* in Moscow)

**Table II Indicators of social and political trust in Moscow and Istanbul (citywide samples)**

	Trust %		Neutral %		Distrust %		Missing* %	
	Moscow	Istanbul	Moscow	Istanbul	Moscow	Istanbul	Moscow	Istanbul
Fellow citizens	42.3	14.7	27.2	20.4	20.8	64.9	9.7	0.1
Social organizations	17.1	23.8	20.8	32.5	52.2	43.4	14.9	0.5
Rayon/mahalle administration	16.6	52.3	19.2	24.2	42.1	23.2	22.0	0.3
District government	20.4	45.2	21.6	26.9	39.3	27.7	18.6	0.4
City government	23.7	50.3	21.4	25.2	42.1	23.9	12.8	0.7
Mayor	56.3	50.4	15.2	23.6	24.6	25.4	6.0	0.6
National parliament	16.6	27.9	16.4	16.8	58.2	55.3	8.8	0.2
President (Russia)/Prime Minister (Turkey)	36.3	14.7	13.3	20.4	28.0	64.9	22.3	0.1

\*Don't know or decline to answer

Source: Data and results based on surveys in Moscow in April 2000 and Istanbul July 2002

are similarly distrusted in Istanbul and Moscow. This low level of trust in social organizations may reflect the relatively low level of penetration of formal associations within both of these cities. According to our surveys, only 23 per cent of Istanbul residents are members of any kind of club or association, while in Moscow, an even lower proportion of the respondents (6.3%) belong to any social organization or club, partly as a result of the Communist heritage when social organizations were dominated by Communist party interests.

The cities' patterns diverge when it comes to local and municipal government. Istanbulites are more than twice as likely to report trusting district and city governments than Moscovites, and over three times as likely to trust in their neighbourhood administration. One explanation for this divergence is the unusually strong approval for the Islamist party administration (at this time *Fazilet Partisi*) of the city. Another factor is the relative longevity of electoral politics at the municipal level in Istanbul compared to Moscow, which has only been administered in this manner since 1991.

While the Istanbul survey shows that a higher proportion trust the national parliament than is the case in Moscow, for both societies this represents a relatively low level of trust in what can be considered the premier institution of national democratic governance. While we shall explore factors related to trust in parliament in our analysis, we interpret the general finding that trust in the State Duma or the Grand National Assembly is relatively low to reflect the corruption, elitism and lack of transparency that plague electoral politics in these polities. Finally, at the time of these surveys, Moscovites

were almost two and a half times more likely to report trusting President Vladimir Putin (then newly elected) than Istanbulites were to report trusting then Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, whose administration was on the verge of collapse. This latter measure of political trust, which reflects trust in an individual rather than an institution, was thus strongly affected by the current climate in each of these national contexts.

Trust in fellow citizens and trust in parliament, the two measures of social and political trust, respectively, that we choose to further explore in our analysis, are not significantly associated with one another in Istanbul and Moscow (Table III). This is generally in keeping with findings from elsewhere in the world (Newton 2001). However, while the measures do not betray a strong relationship over all, as an examination of the diagonal entries shows, *distrust* of fellow citizens and *distrust* of the Duma are related for the Russian case. This higher figure is probably related to alienation in the Moscow sample. As an indication of the depth and extent of the pauperization of the population since 1991, even in Moscow (by far the richest city in Russia), more than half are in dire financial straits (54.6% can afford only basic necessities and an additional 26.6% lack even enough money for food). Blame for the decline in the standard of living is dissipated among state institutions, crime networks and fellow citizens, and this inability to target blame is given as the reason for the lack of direct political mobilization and demonstrations in Russia. Instead, a sense of apathy, alienation and dissociation increasingly pervades Russian society (Javeline 2003).



**Table III Relationship between trust in fellow citizens and trust in parliament in Istanbul and Moscow (% within categories of 'Trust in fellow citizens')**

Trust in fellow citizens (%)	Trust in Russian State Duma/Turkish Grand National Assembly							
	Trust %		Neutral %		Distrust %		Missing* %	
	Moscow	Istanbul	Moscow	Istanbul	Moscow	Istanbul	Moscow	Istanbul
Trust	25.1	31.5	17.1	14.1	49.8	54.3	8.0	0
Neutral	14.3	24.2	21.3	24.3	58.3	51.5	6.1	0.2
Distrust	6.6	28.3	11.6	14.9	77.5	56.8	4.3	0.2
Missing*	8.3	0	10.4	60	52.4	40	29.0	0

\*Don't know or decline to answer

Source: Data and results based on surveys in Moscow in April 2000 and Istanbul July 2002

## Methodology

Political geographers and political scientists have been engaged in an ongoing debate regarding the relative importance of neighbourhood context in the expression of political behaviours and attitudes. As Johnston *et al.* (2004) have recently demonstrated for electoral choices in Great Britain, the evidence for contextual effects is growing as the methodologies become more sophisticated and the data more specialized. Two factors that had limited geographers' abilities to identify contextual effects were reliance on regression analyses of aggregate data and the design of questionnaires. Surveys conducted by political scientists typically do not pay attention to the locational attributes of the respondents – presumably because the investigators do not believe that such attributes are important. While political scientists have underplayed contextual effects, other disciplines such as criminology, public health, education and medicine have designed methodologies to integrate contextual measures with individual attributes. In these disciplines, multi-level modelling has assumed a prominent place (O'Loughlin 2003).

There is, of course, a huge difference in showing contextual effects and being able to account for them. Political geographers resort to two sets of explanation, one based on social interaction and one connected to historical memory and tradition. In the social interaction account, the explanation revolves around the argument that 'people who talk together vote together' (Pattie and Johnston 2000). People who converse about politics with family and neighbours supporting a political party are more likely to switch to that electoral preference.

The 'friends and neighbours' effect has been widely discussed in geography since its introduction into the discipline by Cox (1969) and in political science, Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995) have been its most prominent supporters. In the historical memory account, emphasis is placed on the long-term idiosyncrasies associated with a place. Thus, Johnston (1991) and Agnew (1987) could show the significant deviations from regional political trends of localities in Britain and Italy, respectively. Individuals are socialized into the traditions of the place and newcomers can also take on the attitudes and beliefs of the locality through personal communication, thus linking the two traditions of context-making in political geography.

In a regression framework using spatial analysis, it is fairly easy to show the persistence of local deviations from national and regional trends and to show that the persistence is not due to differences in the socio-demographic composition of the geographic units (see O'Loughlin *et al.* 1994). But to demonstrate the interactive effects of personal attributes and local contexts, it is necessary to design a study that is based on contexts and to choose a statistical methodology that examines the separate and integrated impacts of different scales of analysis, from the individual upwards. Therefore, we designed a survey procedure that incorporated the diversity of the neighbourhoods of Moscow and Istanbul into its sampling design whilst meeting the requirements of random sampling. Like the neighbourhood-level studies of Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995), we allowed the effects of the location of the respondent to enter the explanation of political attitudes by assuming its possible presence in our study design.

The surveys in Moscow and Istanbul were conducted in April 2000 and July 2002, respectively, and both surveys had questions in common as well as questions reflecting the specific political and economic circumstances operating in the cities. Each questionnaire had an average length of 40 minutes and about 150 questions (main and sub-questions). Questions included the usual array of socio-demographic characteristics, confidence and trust in political and social institutions, and engagement in formal and informal politics. Questions also probed attitudes towards the respondent's neighbourhood and beliefs about local and national trends in economic, political and religious developments. In this paper, we report only the comparative study of generalized social trust (trust in fellow citizens) and political confidence (trust in the Parliament). The total sample size was 3476 in Moscow and 4005 in Istanbul and both surveys have a margin of error of less than 4 per cent.

The samples were obtained in a stratified neighbourhood procedure of data collection. In each city, we collected the most recent data (Census and local planning data) by neighbourhood and clustered the respective units on the basis of factor scores. In the case of Moscow, we had 46 population, housing and environmental indicators that yielded nine different clusters of neighbourhood types. In Istanbul, two dimensions (land value, as an indicator of class status, and change in voter population, as an indicator of migration rates) with five categories each yielded 25 clusters of *mahalleler*. Within each cluster, we randomly selected neighbourhoods (17 in Moscow and 72 in Istanbul) for surveying and the number of respondents within each neighbourhood was proportional to its population. Within each neighbourhood, we identified possible respondents by random selection of apartment/street address. Experienced surveyors conducted the survey face-to-face on the doorstep. In Moscow, 82 per cent of the eligible residents who were contacted agreed to take the survey, whilst in Istanbul the corresponding response rate was 50 per cent.

Because of the stratified neighbourhood sampling design, the data are structured in a clustered fashion. Rather than disaggregating all the data to the lowest (individual respondent) level and applying the usual statistical procedures, we adopt multi-level statistical procedures in our analysis. As noted by Jones and Duncan (1996, 80), there is an over-emphasis on order and consistency in social science and not enough consideration of the variance (between-place

variability). Obviously, since we obtained a sufficiently large sample in each neighbourhood, we could fit separate equations for each one or alternatively, we could add dummy variables to measure its independent effect. Either way, a regression analysis would become unwieldy and unfocused. The alternative, multi-level modelling, allows the contextual effects to be considered in a single equation and in taking full advantage of the methodology, we can estimate possible interactive effects of individual composition and neighbourhood context as well as their independent effects. In this manner, we provide the estimates of the average effect of the independent variables (e.g. age) on social and political trust over the sample neighbourhoods in the two cities, as well as the extent to which that effect varies over settings. Details on multilevel models are now readily available from many texts (Goldstein 1995; Kreft and de Leeuw 1998) and from explications in electoral and social geography (Jones 1991; Duncan *et al.* 1996; Jones *et al.* 1998; Subramanian *et al.* 2001). The major distinction in regression is between the 'fixed effects' (intercept and slopes of the predictors) and 'random effects' (captured by the residuals). The typical regression assumptions of residuals with a mean (expected value) of zero and no autocorrelation (independence) is dropped in the multi-level framework. Additionally, fixed effects can also be dropped and intercepts and slopes allowed to vary between the higher-level units. All of our models were estimated using the specialized multilevel modelling software, MLwiN (Rasbash *et al.* 2000).

## Results: social and political trust in Moscow and Istanbul

In building a multilevel model, the usual procedure is to start with a variance components model to determine if there is any variance in the second or higher levels, in addition to the variance at the first level (the individual voters). Should there be no evidence of higher-level variance across the geographic contexts, a simple regression model is appropriate. In the variance components model, only random parameters are present. Depending on the nature of the information available and the quest for either model building or model testing, fixed parameters are added in a stepwise manner or all independent predictors are entered simultaneously. Our measures of social and political trust are binary variables. Trust (1) is either a response of

**Table IV Variance of social and political trust across neighbourhoods in Moscow and Istanbul (estimates and standard errors)**

		<i>Istanbul</i>	<i>Moscow</i>
Trust in fellow citizens	Intercept	-1.761 (0.054)	-0.139 (0.098)
	Variance	0.062 (0.034)	0.136 (0.055)
Trust in parliament	Intercept	-0.954 (0.050)	-0.495 (0.142)
	Variance	0.088 (0.030)	0.303 (0.117)

Source: Data and results based on surveys in Moscow in April 2000 and Istanbul July 2002

**Table V Multi-level models for binomial 'Trust in fellow citizens' across neighbourhoods (*mahalleler/rayoni*) in Istanbul and Moscow**

	<i>Istanbul</i>	<i>Moscow</i>
Constant	-3.671 (0.262)	0.875 (0.265)
Age	0.012 (0.004)	-
Outside neighbourhood participation	0.500 (0.093)	-
Gender	0.415 (0.094)	-
Protest participant	0.247 (0.199)	-
Zyuganov voter	-	-0.250 (0.138)
Dacha owner	-	-0.244 (0.107)
Length of residence	-	-0.083 (0.033)
Education	-	0.090 (0.040)
Currently employed	-	-0.083 (0.033)
Neighbourhood level variance (initial variance components model)	0.412 (129)	0.136 (0.055)
Neighbourhood level variance	0.060 (0.034)	0.140 (0.064)
Number of cases	4005	3476
Number of neighbourhoods	72	17

Source: Data and results based on surveys in Moscow in April 2000 and Istanbul July 2002

'trust a great deal' or 'trust somewhat' and no trust (0) is either 'neither trust nor distrust', 'distrust somewhat', 'distrust greatly' or 'don't know'.

All of the estimates in Table IV are significant and much larger than their standard errors. From the values, we can estimate that the median proportion of social trust in Istanbul is 0.147 and in Moscow, 0.465. Political trust is estimated as 0.278 for Istanbul and 0.378 for Moscow. Since these estimates show significant variation across the neighbourhoods for both cities, we will explore this variance by first removing the effects of the compositional variables (the attributes of the respondents) and examining the residuals. Though it might be possible to conclude that social and political trust are modulated through the neighbourhood contexts in both cities, we cannot conclude that this is the case until we control for the differences in the composition of the neighbourhood samples.

In adding predictive variables to the model, we opted to take the specific urban contexts into

account by putting city-specific predictors into the models rather than trying to standardize predictors across the cities. We had the same general sets of explanatory variables for the two cities. The results in Tables V and VI show different combinations of explanations in the two cities.

If we take respondents at random, their variance is the sum of level 2 (neighbourhood) and level 1 (individual) variances, 1.412 for Istanbul and 1.14 for Moscow, converting to a between-neighbourhood variance of 0.291 on Istanbul (0.412/1.412) and 0.122 in Moscow (0.14/1.14). The fact that the ratio is approximately double for Istanbul is noteworthy, suggesting stronger contextual effects as a result of the greater distinctiveness of the *mahalleler*. However, this conclusion cannot be made until the controls of the individual attributes are introduced. When this is done (Table V), the second-level variance dropped from 0.412 to 0.060 in Istanbul but remained approximately the same in Moscow (0.136 to 0.140). When the individual controls are

introduced, the contextual effect in Moscow at 12.2 per cent of the total variance is approximately double the effect in Istanbul (5.6%). The distinctions between the two cities also emerge when we examine the final model residuals which have a weak spatial pattern in Moscow and no obvious geographic or socio-economic correlates in Istanbul.

Table V also shows that different factors account for the variation amongst individuals in social trust (trust in fellow citizens) in Moscow and Istanbul. For the Moscow samples, socio-economic factors predominate, but in Istanbul the predictors are a combination of socio-demographic measures (age and gender) and of organizational activism. In the Turkish city, more participation (in protests and in social and political activities outside the neighbourhood) is associated with more trust in fellow citizens, a kind of Putnam-like virtuous cycle of civic engagement. The relationship between age (older people are more trusting) and gender (men are more trusting) and trust in fellow citizens probably reflects the same relationship between broad, extra-neighbourhood associational activity and social trust noted above. Men in Istanbul tend both to be more mobile in the urban environment and to associate more widely (see Secor 2003).

It can thus be concluded that trust in fellow citizens in Istanbul is most significantly related to practices of association and mobility within the urban environment, a finding that seems to support the cosmopolitanization thesis, which holds that individuals who are most active outside their communities have the greatest levels of trust (Freitag 2003). Reflecting upon this conclusion, however, necessitates a consideration of what the survey question, and especially the term 'citizen' (*vatanlı*), is taken to mean in the Turkish context. Indeed, we would suggest that the weakness of the liberal-democratic citizenship concept and its limited circulation is likely to account both for what appears to be the generally low levels of 'trust in fellow citizens', and for the greater salience of this generalized social trust to those more engaged in activities associated with liberal democratic governance. In other words, 'cosmopolitanization' may operate by inserting subjects into relations of citizenship, participation and governance in a particular way that gives meaning to the idea of 'trust in fellow citizens'.

In the multilevel model for social trust for Moscow, five factors are significant. Four of these are socio-demographic factors, and the fifth is

political ideology. Income measures are notoriously unreliable in the Russian case and consequently alternative measures are necessary to gauge the socio-economic status of respondents. *Dacha* (cottages on the rural outskirts of the city) ownership is a commonly used index. Since *dacha* ownership and 'currently employed' are negatively associated with trust, we can conclude that higher socio-economic status is negatively associated with trust in fellow citizens. This is the reverse of what we might expect from the 'Luke theorem' that is popular in social capital research. In this perspective, richer people can afford to trust since they have benefited from the existing nature of society, whilst poorer people should be less trusting (especially of the political institution) since they are relatively deprived in society. Trust in others is a product of life's experiences (Putnam 2000). In the Moscow case, many poor citizens have become alienated from the post-Communist society, but yet they trust their fellow citizens more than they trust political institutions. The relationship for education fits the theory's expectations: the better educated are more trusting of fellow citizens. In Moscow, education is not strongly correlated with income because of the pauperization of the educated class (privileged in Communist times) since 1991; the richest segment of society are the young entrepreneurial individuals who have taken advantage of the capitalist opportunities that have appeared in the past decade.

In Moscow, those respondents with the longest length of residence have less trust in fellow citizens. Returning to the cosmopolitanization thesis, it can be assumed that these long-term residents are less mobile, and thus less cosmopolitan. Finally, voters for Gennady Zyuganov (the Communist party leader and Presidential candidate) have less trust in fellow citizens. The typical Communist voter is older and female and it is likely that these voters are less mobile and more ingrained in their communities (Colton 2000). These two indicators (long-term residence and Communist party voting) are surrogates of cosmopolitanism and the results here confirm the validity of the cosmopolitan thesis about social trust. At the same time, the processes which under-gird the relationship between mobility and social trust may vary across the Istanbul and Moscow cases. There is no significant geographic pattern to the distribution of the model residuals in the two cities, as quick mapping indicated. Our examination of the slopes of the independent predictors also showed little significant variation.

**Table VI Multi-level models for binomial 'Trust in parliament (Grand National Assembly/Duma)' across neighbourhoods (*mahalleler/rayoni*) in Istanbul and Moscow**

	<i>Istanbul</i>	<i>Moscow</i>
Constant	-0.004 (0.173)	0.460 (0.396)
Gender	-0.352 (0.074)	-
Protest participant	-0.460 (0.117)	-
SES	-0.135 (0.042)	-
Outside neighbourhood participation	-0.231 (0.088)	-
Contacted political officials	-0.214 (0.120)	-
Economic situation in Russia	-	-0.394 (0.066)
Relative material condition	-	-0.189 (0.036)
Volunteer in electoral campaign	-	-0.389 (0.104)
Education	-	0.124 (0.037)
Signer of petition	-	0.283 (0.075)
Age	-	0.009 (0.003)
Neighbourhood level variance (initial variance components model)	0.165 (0.105)	0.303 (0.117)
Neighbourhood level variance (final)	0.079 (0.029)	0.251 (0.100)
Number of cases	4005	3476
Number of neighbourhoods	72	17

Source: Data and results based on surveys in Moscow in April 2000 and Istanbul July 2002

We can conclude that the general models as shown in Table V are acceptable for explaining political trust in Moscow and Istanbul.

#### *Political trust in Istanbul and Moscow*

Our models of political trust for the two cities continue to show significant variance between the neighbourhoods even after the controls for the individual predictors (Table VI). The estimates for neighbourhood-level variance are quite large and support the argument that context matters in understanding political attitudes, even in non-Western cities where few studies on this question have been completed. While the mix of significant predictors varies greatly between the two cities, the presence of the neighbourhood contextual effects is similar.

Once again, there is much stronger evidence for neighbourhood contextual effects in Moscow. Of the total variance (sum of neighbourhood second level and individual level), the second level accounts for 14.2 per cent of the total in Istanbul and 23.3 per cent in Moscow for the parliamentary trust initial model. Stated another way, the results suggest a much stronger contextual influence on political attributes in the Russian capital compared to Istanbul. These results hold up after controlling for the compositional effects (individual attributes) as can be seen from the diagnostics of the final model. The second level variance in Istanbul drops from 0.165 to 0.079, but only slightly decreases in Moscow, 0.303 to 0.251. Again, the individual attributes (the

distribution of individuals of specific socio-demographic and ideological attributes) across the *mahalleler* of Istanbul accounts for most of the inter-neighbourhood variance. By contrast, the varied distribution of individual attributes across neighbourhood contexts remains as a more significant element in the Moscow political landscape than in the Turkish city.

For Istanbul, two socio-demographic and three social activism factors enter the model as significant predictors. Lower socio-economic status subjects, as well as women, were more likely to express trust in the Turkish parliament. These findings likely reflect the role of political critique, disaffection and cynicism regarding Turkish democracy among higher socio-economic status circles (Navaro-Yashin 2002). Further, the activism factors are all consistently negative: various forms of participation (including taking part in a protest, ever contacting elected officials and participation in social or political activities outside the neighbourhood) are *negatively* associated with trust in parliament. This is the reverse of the model for *social* trust in Istanbul, in which we found that protest and association were positively associated with trust in fellow citizens. Distrust in parliament is actually associated with higher levels of engagement in political activities (as well as higher socio-economic status); apparently, those who are dissatisfied with their elected bodies nonetheless expect that they may be able to effect change through direct action within the system. In our

model, the activism variables are predictors, but if one is to reverse the causality arrow, less trust in parliament is better for democratic action in the form of involvement with civic engagement! In an illiberal democracy, the expected relationship between association and trust no longer obtains; it is a case of what might be called 'virtuous distrust'.

In the model for trust in parliament for the Moscow sample, the predictor variables are a combination of socio-demographic factors (four factors) and activism (two factors). Increasing age is associated with more trust in parliament, as is higher level of education. Wealthier people (those who think the situation in Russia is good or who have better material conditions) have less trust in the Duma. As in the model for social trust (and as in parliamentary trust model for Istanbul), the haves are less trusting than the have-nots (the reverse of the Luke syndrome). Direct activists (those who would sign petitions in the event that economic conditions continue to get worse) have more trust in the political institution, a measure of faith in democratic procedures. By contrast, those who would volunteer as electoral activists (if economic conditions worsen) have less trust in the Duma. These results show again that *distrust in political institutions* may be associated with democratic action (sign a petition, join a campaign, protest etc.) in transitional countries like Turkey and Russia! In countries with elite domination of politics and widespread corruption, and where political parties have little ideology, often serving as the vehicle for the interests of one powerful person, it makes sense that concerned individuals who are increasingly distrustful of the most iconic of all democratic institutions (the elected assembly) would increasingly consider direct political action.

Through this comparative analysis of the construction of social and political trust in Istanbul and Moscow, we have found significant neighbourhood effects but not much pattern in the residuals. In other words, we have been able to show that there are contextual effects, but our analysis has not been able to explain them. In neither Moscow nor Istanbul was it necessary to fit differential slope multilevel models. Since we cannot see any evident pattern in the residuals (no geographic pattern nor strong association with aggregate neighbourhood indicators of income, status or land use), we have to conclude in the presence of significant variation that local factors must be accounting for the variance. The measures of socio-economic status vary

by the metropolitan context. While our general explanatory indicators were similar between the two cities, the individual measures vary; dacha ownership is not a useful measure in Istanbul, for example. Each sample is examined on its own terms and, certainly, the number of higher-level units (neighbourhoods) and individuals examined are within the parameters for multilevel study. (Simulations of samples of varying size by Maas and Hox (2004) show that estimates and tests for the coefficients are accurate with samples of modest size; Hox (1999) and Snijders and Bosker (1999) offer further discussion of sample sizes.) The important comparison is on the coefficient values compared to the respective standard errors and not to the relative size of the coefficients between the two cities.

Why do our models for political and social trust fit to greater or lesser degrees across neighbourhoods in Moscow and Istanbul? Neighbourhoods may have an impact on how social capital is constituted, accessed and distributed, but why? Scholars of the neighbourhood effect have opted for 'friends and neighbours' or historical memory explanations, but neither of these approaches offers a satisfactory explanation for our findings. First, measures of neighbourhood association (for example, frequency of talking with neighbours, or the presence of neighbourhood associations) were significant neither in the social and political trust models nor in our analyses of residuals in these cases. Secondly, we can only speculate about the historical memory or local cultures of *rayoni* and *mahalleler* in Moscow and Istanbul respectively – and if we are to speculate, we expect that the cohesiveness and longevity of these spatial units will vary dramatically within and across these cities. Finally, our surveys cannot tell us how particular constellations of social and political relations have come to differentiate neighbourhood sites within the urban environment. Only local case studies could hope to portray how individual neighbourhoods are variably inserted into the relations of power that obtain across levels of government and within formal and informal networks of association. Indeed, a recent ethnographic study of one neighbourhood in Istanbul (Kuzguncuk) has shown that the neighbourhood is not merely an administrative unit, but a social space produced through everyday practices and collective memory (Mills 2004). Another recent study of Moscow by Pavlovskaya (2004) shows how individuals cope with the privations of post-Soviet life through the

development of multiple economies (both formal and informal) and intensively use social networks in the neighbourhood for support, in turn shaping the nature of the urban society.

### **Conclusion: trust, social capital and context**

Neighbourhoods are not necessarily the only, or even the most important, territorialized arenas of social and political life. Yet what our study affirms is that, to varying degrees, neighbourhoods matter for how political and social relations, experiences and attitudes take shape. At the same time, one of our most significant findings is that the strength of this effect is more marked in Moscow than it is in Istanbul, a comparison that points to differences both in the political and socio-spatial organization of these two cities. Furthermore, we have found that social and political trust are differently constituted in Istanbul and Moscow. For example, trust in fellow citizens (social trust) in Istanbul exhibits a positive relationship to associational activities, while in Moscow social trust can be explained predominantly in terms of (lower) socio-economic status. At the same time, important similarities emerged between the two cases. For social trust, in both cities the 'cosmopolitanization thesis', which holds that those who associate more widely are also more trusting of fellow citizens, generally applied. Further, in both cities, residents with *lower* socio-economic status (though in Moscow this is complicated by education) and *lower* likelihoods of engagement in direct political action were *more trustful of parliament*. While this is the opposite of what we have been led to expect based on Western democratic polities, we argue that this is a reasonable outcome of illiberal democratic governance. Where there is widespread disaffection within corrupt, ineffectual and unaccountable political systems, and yet where democratic government remains a salient ideal, segments of the population may find themselves engaged in 'virtuous distrust', as they participate in direct political action, both despite and because of the failures of the system. Social capital in Istanbul and Moscow appears to be of a rather different nature than liberal democratic theory has led us to expect.

Through this comparative study of social and political trust in Istanbul and Moscow, we have aimed to bring context into studies of social capital. Critics of social capital theory, whether addressing

Putnam's ideal of democratic social capital or Coleman and Bourdieu's more economic and individual conception, have argued that what is lacking from current studies is an understanding of how social capital is constructed within and through particular historical and local conjunctures. Our research adds further grist to the mill by suggesting that social capital is indeed likely to be variously constituted across polities, and even across neighbourhoods. We have focused on social and political trust as two elements that, although not related to one another, are frequently thought to contribute to social capital – that is, to provide social resources upon which individuals or groups may draw for their political efficacy. Keeping an open mind about whether either form of trust may or may not prove to contribute to social capital in these studies, we sought to investigate the constitution of trust at neighbourhood and individual levels, and at the same time to query social capital as a concept for cross-cultural research. Our findings have affirmed both that locality matters, in that the neighbourhood effect proved significant, and that social capital may indeed be constituted in very particular ways in illiberal democracies such as Russia and Turkey. Under conditions of illiberal democracy and capitalist transition, the relationship between society and state becomes marked by alienation and disaffection. As our study shows, the impact this alienation has on relations of trust will play out differently depending on place-specific, contingent factors. Depending on how it is formulated, social capital, as a concept, is not without value; the question of what it is that enables some, more than others, to act politically in different contexts is critical. What we have tried to show is that concepts such as social capital do not *travel* so much as they are *transfigured*, which is to say that they are always formulated through the particular languages, structures, linkages and conjunctures of locality.

### **Acknowledgements**

Funding for this research was provided by National Science Foundation grants number BCS-0137060 (Secor) and BCS-9819911 (O'Loughlin). The authors thank their Turkish and Russian research partners, especially *Sosyal Araştırmalar Merkezi* (Istanbul) and Vladimir Kolossov, Grigori Butyrin, Yuri Averin, Olga Vendina and Elena Shomina (Moscow). The comments of three anonymous reviewers are gratefully acknowledged.

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