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Editorial Foreword

It is a truism that the launching of a new journal always constitutes a challenge in many respects. This was the case of the *Social Analysis* as well. The fact that chronologically we are the latecomers among the *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae* series can be traced back to a number of reasons which we briefly mention here.

We appreciated that in today's Romania there are nearly as many social science – or more specifically, sociological – journals as there are sociological departments, and this consideration applies more or less to other countries of the region as well. Given the restricted nature of the sociological research during the communist regime, this proliferation can be well explained in terms of institutional rehabilitation. Meanwhile, the rising number of sociological journals can be explained also through the imperative of scientometry: in a context wherein academic performance is measured, among others, through the number of publications, to launch a journal seems a taken for granted step. Whatever the reason, there remain many questions which make the decision of launching difficult and dilemmatic. How to differentiate between these journals? Or is it necessary to outline a specific profile for each of them? How to attract authors (others than the members of the departments launching the journal in question)? How to ensure quality? How to respect deadlines and the objective proposed?, etc.

After a relatively long period of deliberation we finally decided to initiate our journal. Our major task consisted in how to determine a specific profile. After screening a consistent number of social science journals throughout the country and the world, we finally concluded that in a context wherein the two extremes are defined by genuinely internationally and extremely locally focused journals, to take a middle course would be a smart decision. Thus, we opted for a journal focused explicitly on the analysis of various social phenomena and processes taking place in the post-communist Europe.

In terms of methodology, our screening proved that one of the extremes is represented by extremely sophisticated quantitative approaches and the other side is dominated by extreme reflexivity. We intended to take the middle course in this sense as well and to provide a stance for comparative perspectives and multiple methodologies in the approaching of various social themes.

After setting the agenda, the question of how to attract authors was, in turn, a challenge. In the light of the questions above, to send an article for a newly founded journal constitutes, by no means, a risky issue. In disseminating the call for papers, we relied on various newsletters and also on the members of the

editorial board. As expected, the diversity of the authors who sign the articles of this first issue, especially in terms of their geographical region and departmental affiliation, is quite limited, but hopefully it will be much diversified in the future. We are however contented that for this first issue, we received a sufficient number of manuscripts among which to trial (through the method of double blind peer review) those thematically and methodologically divergent articles which corresponded to the above criteria and which present, indeed, various social phenomena and processes taking place in the post-communist Europe (particularly Hungary and Romania). Let them be briefly mentioned here.

The first article, written by György Lengyel raises the question of *How do the rich smile?* The answer provided by the author is based on a visual experiment with student participants. In a classroom experiment the author asked students to recognize social status by visual information alone (photos of three multi-billionaires) and then he investigated how students' opinions changed when visual and verbal information were combined. According to the findings, the majority of the participants mentioned upper or upper-middle class as regards social status and the positive features outnumbered the negative ones. However, as the author notes, smiles did not only divide the spectators but also elicited more negative than positive associations. When verbal information was added to the photos, it considerably boosted the number of positive attributes and decreased the negative ones. This article not only revealed a number of important aspects of the sociology, respectively social psychology of perception, but also brought into discussion the fact of how richness is perceived in the context of a post-socialist country.

László Személyi and Márton Csanády discuss one of the most salient social issues of the post-socialist world, that of migration. The article, titled *Some sociological aspects of skilled migration from Hungary*, is concerned however not with migration in general, but with the particular phenomenon of brain drain, in connection with which the authors, based on an online survey, show the motivations, circumstances and opinions of those involved in this flux. Among other facts, the authors note that the emigration of highly skilled people from Hungary occurred in waves in accordance with macro-level socio-political changes (e.g. EU accession). Regarding the target countries of the skilled migrants, the results confirm the centre-periphery theory of migration: Hungarian skilled emigrants went mostly to the USA and Western Europe. On the micro-level, the authors found that the main push factor of the emigration is income, followed by professional development and career opportunities.

Márton Papp approaches a not less salient issue than migration, that is, the social economy in the case of a Hungarian region. The paper, titled *Social economy, as a special section of the informal economy in the Northern Great Plains region of Hungary* is based on a sociological survey and shows that two decades after the regime change, social economy, understood as a not monetized, not registered and

accounted, but legal activity which is not parasitic to the regular economy still plays an important role in the economic behaviour of the residents of the post-socialist countries, especially in rural areas and among certain social groups.

Adél Kiss and Ildikó Fejes turn towards another issue and in their paper *Knowledge and regulation through quality assurance. An analysis* explore some aspects in relation with quality assurance in pre-university education in Romania. By taking a meta-view on a number of narratives collected through interviews, they conclude that the policy of quality assurance represents much more a normative than a functional regulation, and thus practically outlines the bottlenecks associated with turning policy into action.

Two other articles can be grouped together under the generic title Sociology looks to history. In one of them, titled *A sociological school from the communicational perspective. The case of Dimitrie Gusti's Monographic School*, Zoltán Rostás presents and discusses the PR activity of Dimitrie Gusti in relation with promoting early Romanian sociology abroad. The various attempts made by the founder of the Bucharest Sociological School (including here media presence, social pedagogy, monographic activity, international conferences and participation at the world exhibitions in Paris in 1937 and in New York, in 1939, etc.), bring a solid ground to the author's concluding remark that "any intellectual group that wants to make a place for itself in the network of organisations and institutions of the age must develop a public image strategy".

Traditional vs. rational farming. A less known study by Gyula Szekfű in the light of Weber's sociology is the article by László Kupa in which the author looks back to history and presents a particular approach issued by Gyula Szekfű, one of the leader personalities of Hungarian historiography and cultural policy of the early 20th century. Kupa shows that Szekfű considered Hungarian 'spiritual constitution' when approached the contemporary entrepreneurs (i.e. wine producers). In the author's opinion, spiritual factors outlined by Szekfű are relevant for the present day as well, since they can at least partly explain why residues of 'traditional farming' still exist in the East-Central European region's countries with a post-communist past.

In the review section of the journal, Julianna Bodó takes us back to the issue of migration. In her article, *Labour migration in the Seklerland after the regime change. A review of an anthropological research programme*, she presents the main conclusions of a broad research programme centred around migrants and emigrational experiences. She concludes that albeit the researched region is very particular (a quite peripheral region of Romania), two decades after the regime change migrants' experiences and the patterns associated with emigrational flows present the typical characteristics of transnationalism described in the international literature.

Hungarian approaches to social stratification and mobility as reflected in the Szociológiai Szemle journal is a review issued by Balázs Telegdy and provides an inquiry into the process of social transition in Hungary as reflected through changes in social stratification and social mobility, according to theoretical and empirical research published in *Szociológiai Szemle*, the journal of the Hungarian Sociological Association. As a general conclusion, the reviewer assumes that the theory of capitals provides an adequate framework for describing the ongoing changes in the transitional societies. The author concludes also that increased social mobility, which lasts until the crystallization of the newly evolved mobility channels, is an inherent feature of transition. Regarding the middle class, Telegdy notes that in the light of the articles there are two things that can be observed: the middle class in Hungary is very fragmented and provides the highest level of social mobility, consequently, individuals belonging to this stratum comport the most risk of losing their social position.

The book review written by Orsolya Gergely on the Romanian edition of David Kideckel's book *Getting By in Postsocialist Romania: Labor, the Body, and Working-Class Culture*, that is *România postsocialistă. Munca, trupul și cultura clasei muncitoare* (Iași: Polirom, 2010) brings in discussion the adequacy of anthropology in approaching the everyday life of a very specific part of the Romanian public, that is, miners and workers who poise at the edge of communism and post-communism.

Zoltán A. BIRÓ, executive editor
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How Do the Rich Smile? A Study in Visual Sociology

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Abstract. The paper is based on a classroom research. It investigates how students recognize social status by visual information alone, and how their opinions change when visual and verbal information are combined. First, photos of three multi-billionaires were projected without additional information and we asked short characterizations including social status. The majority mentioned upper or upper-middle class as regards social status. For occupation, the respondents wrote businessman, manager, intellectual and clerk most frequently. The positive features outnumbered the negative ones. However, smiles did not only divide the spectators but also elicited more negative than positive associations. The most frequent positive characteristics mentioned were self-assurance, elegance, diligence, authority, openness and good humour. The most frequent negative features for all three persons were conceited, complacent. Spectators often allude to invisible features such as career and family. When verbal information was added to the photos, it considerably boosted the number of positive attributes and decreased the negative ones. The most important common characteristic – self-assurance – remained and even increased after reading the text. By contrast, mentions of conceitedness decreased as did inferences from primary visual information while references to subjective well-being: success and family increased.

Keywords: visual and textual information, high social status, pseudo-spontaneous message, photography, business elite

Introduction

This paper sums up the results of a classroom research in which we investigated how students would recognize social status by visual information alone, what guided their eyes, what characteristics they accentuated, what attributes they used and how their opinions changed when supplementary verbal information was also given.

The investigation took place within a seminar at the Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary, in 2006. At the end of a reliability test, we projected three portraits on the wall without giving any information and asked the students to write a few words about the social status and other characteristics of each figure separately, and what common or dissimilar traits they recognized in them. The three persons – three men – were all among the 100 richest Hungarians but they were not so well-known as to be recognizable even for specialists. The names and faces are not published here, for apart from several positive features the students often wrote unflattering things and it would not be fair to offend the models. The reader has to envision three little known Hungarian multi-billionaires, or leaf through the annually published booklets of the *100 richest Hungarians*.

When a month later the inquiry was repeated, we attached a brief objective verbal description of their social status, which altered the opinions. How come? How do people form an opinion on the basis of visual perception, and what features of the sight capture the attention of several people? Why and how are visual and verbal kinds of information connected, how do they reinforce or weaken, or complement each other? I wish to find answers to these questions in the below study.

On the first occasion of the investigation, twenty-six BA students provided usable answers, on the second occasion twenty-three. For comparability's sake we only elaborated – with the SPSS program – the answers of the participants in both sessions. As required by the encoding instruction, the texts were recorded by two encoders independently of each other in such a way that the doubtful interpretational variants were compared and made unanimous¹.

How do the rich smile? Justification for the title is the smile on two of the three faces, as is common in photos, and the mention of the smile by the students both in positive and negative terms. Before embarking on my topic in the strict sense, I briefly revise the professional impulses I have received from visual sociology and the related disciplines. Then I present the guesses concerning social status and the characteristics stressed by the students in individual portraits or as

¹ Data encoding was done by Erika Bartók and Anna Tóth. The author would like to thank the comments of Tibor Kuczai on a previous version of this paper. Codebook and data are available by request at the author.

common traits shared by the three sitters. Finally, I describe the ways how visual and verbal information is linked up, and summarize the findings.

Some relevant statements in the academic literature

Visual studies have rich research literature, though it is far from the survey-based puzzle-solving paradigm (Bourdieu, Boltanski, Castel and Chamboredon, [1965] 1998; Prosser, 1998; Pink, 2001; Emmison and Smith, 2002; Sztompka 2009). It follows from the nature of the specialty that it is primarily related to descriptive-explorative methods and rarely allows for the testing of hypotheses. Alluding to the literature, Howard S. Becker (1998) points out that the main use of visual sociology might be in the systematic presentation of emotions, interactions and material culture. Speaking of photo interviews, Collier notes that although photos of the familiar circumstances taken during fieldwork elicit far fewer abstract associations than the tests of experimental psychology, the discussion over the photos is often emotionally surcharged and may help explore the hidden contents of value systems (Collier, 1985).

Goffman's photo-related analyses have contributed several useful observations and concepts to the academic discourse (Goffman, 1981). These include his views on the contents of stealthy shots, the interrelation between portraits and models, as well as the distinction between private and public photos, and the handling of verbal information as the interpretative frame of the picture. This is close to the second phase of our research in which the interplay between visual and verbal information is analyzed. In our case it was evident that the photos analyzed were portraits meant for the public, hence the deliberate coincidence of theme and model and the appearance of certain objects and gestures served self-representation.

Among sociological investigations, a similar attempt to ours was Teckenberg's who showed nine photos of situations partly well known from magazines to thirty-nine people, asking them to interpret the sight (Teckenberg, 1982). The respondents sometimes made up stories about a photo that had nothing to do with the visual information.

Barthes' distinction between *studium* and *punctum* – whether the picture provokes thoughts or elicits emotional reactions – might also be of use here (Barthes, 1985). Since during this investigation all respondents saw the same photos yet some reacted more or less objectively, others emotionally, the argumentation must be reversed: *studium* and *punctum* are inherent attributes of the interpreters rather than that of the pictures.

A frequent research field in communication theory, behavioural science and psychology is the interrelation between emotions and facial expression (Buda, 1986). Illustrating experiments with pictures has been a time-tested method in

natural science, education and the dissemination of knowledge for a long time. Duchenne, then Darwin tried to describe the interplay between emotions and facial expression (Darwin [1892] 1963; Ekman, 1973). A part of psychological examinations deliberately uses pictures, not only for illustration. In this regard, the use of the slide-viewing paradigm is perhaps closest to our research.

The slide-viewing paradigm was applied by Ross Buck and his colleagues in several experiments (Buck, 1979). The point is that non-verbal communication, more exactly facial expressions, are studied from the angle of the sender and that of the receiver of the message. While the senders are viewing pictures eliciting various emotions and explain these experiences verbally, the receivers watch this on muted television, and try to recognize the emotions elicited by the pictures on the basis of facial expressions. Experiences have shown that women sent accurate signals in a significantly greater rate, while men proved to be internalizers to a greater degree. Externalizers displayed greater self-confidence and often worded their emotional reactions in personal terms.

Receptivity to non-verbal information has not shown such systematic peculiarities. In experiments designed to measure the ability to decode emotions, students of arts and business proved better than natural science students. In one experiment female students were just slightly better at reception than males, in another experiment there was no significant difference by gender (Buck, Miller and Caul, 1974; Buck, 1979).

As for experiments with small children, it was found that at three years of age, children decoded from facial expression the emotions of their own gender far better. With growing age, this difference remained the same among boys but was reversed among girls, who later recognized the emotions of boys to a greater degree. This phenomenon must be connected to the social learning process of gender roles (Buck, 1979).

Less systematic but interesting results were arrived at by Barthes in a short essay in which he analyzed election photos of politicians. The point to such posters is to eliminate verbal information and condense the social characteristics and message of the politician in an image. What they reveal is the candidate's "social position", the spectacular comfort of familiar, legal and religious "norms" (Barthes, 1983: 134) and what the candidate stylizes him/herself into. Its types are "one who suggests social rank", "the intellectual" ("penetrating glance", transfigured melancholy) and the women's idol, a "men's man". Of course, a lot is known about election pictures: their aims, context, intentions of the senders of the pictures and the typical responses of the recipients. It is also known that they are framed by important textual information: names, political affiliations and sometimes promises and ideological catchwords. There is thus text, though not speech, that helps with interpretation.

There remains the question of how social status can be identified in a photo when there is no framing text. This has encouraged us to check whether there are typical categories and significant deviations in the responses of the participants in our experiment, and to see whether the typical reactions display correlations with other variables and attitudes measured during the experiment.

Another intriguing question to be answered is what correlation there is between verbal and non-verbal communication. In an experiment, photos of facial expressions of basic emotions – happiness, anger, surprise, sadness – were shown to secondary school pupils with sentences attached in such a way that sometimes they perfectly corresponded to the emotions and sometimes they did not match at all (Friedman, 1979). (Fear and disgust – also listed by specialists among the basic emotion types – were omitted for methodological reasons.) One of the questions was how sincere the participants thought the combination of visual and verbal information was. It was found that positive verbal contents paired with positive visual experience was deemed most sincere. Anger and sadness paired with sentences of negative contents was also judged sincere. They judged asynchronous messages less sincere, taking them for irony or sarcasm in the best case. Girls proved more accurate in decoding the sincerity of the messages in this experiment, too.

Another study with relevance to the present research has put the results of several investigations to meta-analysis, trying to answer the question what correlation there is between verbal skills and the symbolic and spontaneous forms of non-verbal communication (Buck and Vanlear, 2002). It was found that there is systematic and significant correlation between verbal and mimic skills. In the authors' view, the reason was that both forms belonged to symbolic communication which was connected to the left hemisphere of the brain. As against that, the decoding of the spontaneous and pseudo-spontaneous emotions belongs to the right hemisphere. Several elements of symbolic communication, such as speech and mime, depend on socially learnt skills and are intentional activities. Spontaneous communication, by contrast, meant the unwitting expression of emotions. The specificity of pseudo-spontaneous communication is being intentional: its aim is to present seemingly spontaneous traits that may generate required emotional responses in the recipient of the message. In fact, pseudo-spontaneous communication is deceit. Sometimes it is pious fraud – like the effort of the parent to conceal his/her headache or the actor's intention to make the audience weep – but it is also a favourite instrument of swindlers.

As regards smile, it has many epithets: the most famous smile is enigmatic, but there are wise, childish, kindly, innocent, serene smiles. In Darwin's view smiling and laughing have a common root, while others question it. Laughter can be diabolic, a smile cannot. At most, a smile is cynical or sarcastic, or, to refer to a different sentiment, resigned. A distorted smile is a grin. A smile convinces the environment that its sender has positive (or, at least not extremely negative)

sentiments toward others. Moreover, a smiling person gives the impression that he/she is on good terms with him/herself, he/she is settled, happy, satisfied with the situation or at least has put up with things as they are.

A longitudinal survey has found that the intensity of the smile on the high-school graduation photo correlates with later success and happiness in love relationship (Coniff, 2007).

The study of facial expressions and their visual illustration goes back to Guillaume Duchenne who lent his name to the ‘genuine’ or Duchenne-smile. Of course, Duchenne also exemplified unnatural smiles: he stimulated the experimental person’s cheekbones with electricity which drew the corners of the mouth spasmodically aside. Darwin showed Duchenne’s photo of this experiment to twenty-four people, twenty-one of whom recognized some sort of smile but most interpreted it as a grin or a bad joke (Darwin [1892] 1963: 159). In a “natural smile”, the muscles both around the mouth and the eyes emanate positive emotions, and that differentiates it from professional or polite smiles in which only the face muscle is stretched for a smile but the eyes do not join in (Kraut and Johnston, 1979; Kraut, 1982; Coniff 2007). Some people condemn the latter type of smile so widespread in commerce, services and we must add, in politics, because of its insincere nature and those who use it impose it upon themselves to extort something out of us (Koetzle, 2003; Coniff, 2007). There might be some truth in this criticism, but this very frequent smile type appears in the postured snapshots which are meant to radiate careless, stylized joy, sincerity, openness.

Results

Perceiving social status

Some four-fifths of the students in our experiment touched on social status and occupation. The decisive majority of allusions to social status referred to the upper or upper-middle class. Though entrepreneur or banker was not uttered, speaking of two photos, synonyms were mentioned: manager and businessman.

Table 1. Guess of social status, occupation based on photos (frequencies)

	A	B	C
Businessman	2	3	4
Manager	1	6	6
Politician	-	2	2
Intellectual, professor	13	1	1
Clerk, lower or middle-range position	2	1	5
Media person	-	5	-
Other	-	5	1
No answer/Don’t know	5	5	4

As for the first photo: the majority thought the model was an intellectual, often professor. The photo showed a grey-haired, bespectacled man with a moustache in a light suit and tie, sitting relaxed in an elegant, comfortable armchair, with a bookcase full of heavy encyclopaedias and gilded tomes in the background. Probably the latter explain the associations with an intellectual.

In the second photo, all parameters of the clothing and posture were similar but the moustache and glasses were missing, the grey hair was thinning and on the modern coloured wall in the background there was a map. The latter probably suggested a media role to the respondents, one student guessing he was a meteorologist.

The third picture showed an elegantly dressed youngish man in a dark suit and tie, sitting in a slightly rigid pose behind a desk, his hand and glasses resting on a large hard-cover notebook open in front of him. In the foreground on the desk there was a translucent table ornament, perhaps some prize, and in the background there was a green plant in a white pot on a shelf. Most respondents said it showed a businessmen or manager, while secondary mentions included first of all a clerk, a medium-ranking official or even a junior clerk.

The first set of responses revealed that the majority assessed the social status, and most of them guessed the manager-businessman status right in two cases. Regarding occupation, the most frequent mentions were leader, businessman, intellectual and official. In addition to the personality, face and figure, probably mimic, posture, clothing and material environment also contribute to the overall impression. The 'telltale' signs in the latter misled a few respondents in all three cases.

The question was whether these marks misled the same persons, or, to put it differently, whether there were a few students who were less sensitive to visual input, had less social experience and had difficulties in decoding status differences, or the different background signs disorientated students differently. This could be tested easily with cross tabulation and it was found that despite strong correlation between the variables – also justified by the small N – there was not considerable overlapping in these cells: the majority of those whose guess was a media person in the second photo guessed a manager in the third, and conversely, those who thought the third person was an official thought the second was a businessman or leader. There was massive overlapping among those who did not mention social-occupational categories in any of the cases: four out of five were the same students.

Attributed positive and negative character trait

Typical features associated with the economic elite: possession of wealth, income, money, power, influence and renown were mentioned so often by the students that everybody could have mentioned them about all three photos. However, the frequency of such mentions was unevenly distributed concerning both the sitters and the respondents. Such properties were over represented in mentions about the sitter of picture B and under represented for picture C.

Table 2. Some characteristics (frequencies)

	A	B	C
Wealth	4	8	2
Income	6	4	4
Power	5	6	3
Money	2	2	0
Influence	2	4	2
Reputation	0	6	0
Together	19	30	11

The latter needs special attention because it was the person who was most often thought to be a businessman or manager. Interestingly, the status of manager or businessman is not necessarily associated with money, power or influence. It was rare that the students mentioned none of the above features, while the brief descriptions by some of them touched on very many social aspects.

The most important positive traits that the characterizations frequently mentioned for all three models was self-assurance, resolve, diligence, authority, openness, elegance and good humour. Among the rest of the frequent positive features, satisfied, happy, sincere, honest were applied to the first two smiling grey-haired gentlemen. Success was mainly associated with them. The second, more widely smiling person and the third man sitting by the desk were thought to be natural, simple, conscientious, reliable and prestigious as shared features. The common traits of the first – “intellectual” – and third persons were authority and honesty. The first elegant gentleman with the moustache was believed to be cultured, experienced, well-balanced, energetic, talented, polite, proud, a family-man, one who cares for his reputation and there is something to him that inspires sympathy. He received the highest number of positive adjectives taking into account all mentions and not only the first three coded ones. The second man received relatively few independent epithets: he feels safe, merry and modern. The latter was probably elicited by the environment, the former two adjectives were probably associated with the wide smile. The third person received again quite a lot

of independent attributes: hard-working, serious, calm, a good strategist, a good coordinator, handles situations well – these were mostly connected to management and work and were possibly elicited jointly by the visual elements of the office environment and the formal posture.

The negative adjectives amounted to about two-thirds of the positive ones, on occasions referring to the excessiveness of some positive trait: too serious, too conservative. Self-confidence, resolve, informality seen as positive traits by some are judged by those with a more critical stance as complacency, self-importance. This is the only negative trait included among the first three mentions for all three persons. The negative adjectives that the first two grey-haired gentlemen of distinguished appearance share are particularly biting: self-conceit, dishonesty, infamy. Nor are the negative attributes mentioned jointly for the second and third persons less trenchant: slyness, foxiness, coldness, aloofness, lack of credibility. Somebody thought that both the first and third persons were upset, anxious. The majority felt they were not at all at a first glance.

Looking at a picture, and particularly when we try to verbalize our impressions, we mobilize a variety of implicit knowledge consciously or unconsciously (Gombrich, 1972; Goffman, 1981). Lots of things can be seen into the picture: learnt routines or life experience, momentary mood, and our own problems. In the first case, we draw on more or less adequate conceptual schemes: here, what we have learnt of self-control, the nature of tensions underlying seeming calm. If we have such internalized routines, we tend to see the world accordingly.

In the second case, we base our judgment on similarity with some person or situation: if it happened sometime in the past, it may also happen now. If a well-known person looked like this little before declaring war or being arrested, it is hard to get rid of the analogies and not to anticipate *mutatis mutandis* similar events. On the other side, the projection of one's own problems has been well known for a long time: apart from its therapeutic utility, it is also a sort of recycled experience – the utilization of some internal, and not external, experience this time (Cronin 1998). This may underlie a student's response who thinks the person of his/her father's age is not fond of his family, works too much to the detriment of his family.

We may also have limited linguistic codes and cannot translate our impressions accurately. When in such a case someone – for example, a student at the end of a seminar assignment – feels he has to reply, there probably emerges discrepancy between his sense of reality and his representation of reality. He does not write what he feels but he writes something that he thinks is expected, and sooner or later he will feel what he writes, or get frustrated.

The first person marked A received few negative epithets which he also shared with others. The second person (B), however, was deemed wicked, a Mafioso, careerist, as well as demure and devoid of authority. The third person,

who appeared serious in positive terms, was now sullen, too morose, reserved, while some also found him enervated, bored, lacking imagination, as well as uncertain, unhappy and not fond of his family.

It is to be stressed again that students associated all these characteristics from the sheer sight. There are undoubtedly some features that may be inferred from the sight with more or less probability: such are self-assuredness, simplicity, naturalness, good humour, elegance, prestige, authority, and other – actually surprisingly many – traits. We sometimes say that someone has a sincere, straight glance. There are other characteristics that are hard to associate with the sight at first glance; such include, for example, satisfaction, happiness, honesty, talent, experience. It must be concluded in this chapter that an impression caused by the sight also contains invisible traits assigned to the observed person.

Positive references, and even the neutral ones, exceeded by far the amount of negative judgments. Contradictory descriptions containing both positive and negative allusions were only found with two students. Such interpretations would not have been unrealistic, because a person may elicit ambivalent feelings, but most students appeared to prefer the unambiguous, mostly positive or neutral interpretation of an aspect.

Perception of the smile

The overwhelming majority of remarks concerned the external appearance and clothing, predominantly in a positive or neutral context. The same applies to carriage. As regards the material surroundings, neutral mentions were predominant, followed by more positive than negative remarks.

When we concentrated on the smile, the situation changed. It is also an external feature, an accentuated feature in a portrait and it is also very personal. More negative than positive responses were elicited by the smiles.

How do the rich smile? Badly – repulsively for the majority. What may underlie that? Something is wrong with the smile of the rich on several counts. One – but less weighty – problem is if they don't smile. The third person (C) who sits by the desk without a smile received negative or ambivalent and neutral remarks. The greater problem with a smile was encountered by the students in the case of B. He was sitting in a light suit in a comfortable leather armchair with a broad smile baring his upper teeth, looking into the camera. This caused a division among the observers. Five found him nice, seven repugnant, and the smile must have been the only external visible trait that generated this judgment, for the rest of the external factors received positive, rather than neutral epithets.

Comparing him with the first person, hardly any differences can be found. Both show their upper teeth in a smile, but the smile is slightly more closed in the first case and also shaded by a moustache. There appears some dental unevenness

in A, but this is not judged negatively (two positive, one neutral and one negative remarks arrived about his smile). His clothing is similar, the only difference being a pair of glasses and his grey hair is not thinning, unlike the second person's.

The first answer to the titular question may be that the rich smile with self-assurance, and it depends on the outlook, frame of mind, socialization or mood of the observer to see it as conceitedness. This statement could only be checked if we had control groups from other strata of society, and also, if it were possible to decompose evaluations into their constituents to define which derives from the smile and which from the rest of the external features. We have no such comparative data, but some sociographic photos can be adduced for illustration. In August Sander's photos, people of the upper classes do not often smile (Sander, 2002). Pondering about these shots, Barthes does not only remark that after the Nazi coup these figures were condemned because they did not fit the archetypes of racial theory, but he also noted that the figures of the *Notary* and the *Executor* were characterized by severity, self-importance, resolve and relentlessness, but "a notary and an executioner would never have inferred these connotations from these photos" (Barthes, 1985: 44). Among hundreds of Sander's photos of peasants and workers one can hardly find a smiling face. The German sitters of the photos taken in the first half of the 20th century probably all felt that they had to represent their occupation or life situation with due dignity. Among Kata Kálmán's old peasants too, few models felt like smiling (Kálmán, 1937). Dorothea Lange's sociophotos later entitled *Homeless Madonna* also taken in the 1930s show a mother of seven children stuck in a tent of pea pickers in California. The mother's eyes are clear and expressive in all five photos, but radiate anxiety and bitterness, just as the children's gestures, clothing and the surrounding milieu do (Koetzle, 2003, vol.2: 28-37). There is a single shot in which the mother's features are in repose and emanate a certain reserved serenity: when she nurses her youngest child.

The poor rarely smile in photos, and if they do, they do so with reservation, often covering their mouth with a hand. Sometimes only their eyes smile, as the unshaven men of the run-down mining region in America (Light and Light, 2006) in whose lives merry events also happen, but not too frequently. In Brassai's scenes of nightlife in Paris we often see cocksure roughs, rowdy sailors and prostitutes, but their confidence always alludes to some tension-laden situation, their laughter and gestures are too wild (Brassai, 1980). Cartier-Bresson's humanist scenes often make the spectator smile, yet those whom he photographed rarely smile (Cartier-Bresson, 1999).

First of all, a rich person smiles as if he was in possession of all his thirty-two teeth, or at least he wishes to make that impression. The rich have no teeth missing, and today an ostensible gold replacement is rare. Also rare is a gap between their teeth (but in A there is). There are cultures in which a set of healthy teeth is an attribute not only of the rich – "the consolidated middle class" – but also of the

majority of society. They spend their childhood at the orthodontist's and are inculcated with the official smile – an indispensable property of positive self-representation – produced by the controlled play of facial muscles. It can often be mobilized by a photo or video camera reflex-like. It is not the case with the rich: they are really self-assured, good humoured, making the impression that there is no problem they cannot solve.

Why are then most descriptions of these smiles in the negative? What first occurs to me is that self-confidence and a carefree demeanour, which might be important positive signals in business life, might exert a contrary effect in a broader circle – at least among the students who are against the collar-and-tie, leather-armchair, self-confident milieu in this age bracket.

A thought should be given to a special interpretation in research: notably, that men's faces express emotions, especially positive emotions, less accurately than women's (Tucker and Riggio, 1988). All three photos show men – the overwhelming majority of the 100 richest Hungarians are men. Here, however, it must be borne in mind that all three men were highly educated and had serious managerial experience, hence it can be presumed that they were in possession of the skills of self-control and sensitivity, and were clearly aware of the communicative situation.

A shade more subtle interpretation of the phenomenon proposes that the ambivalence of the portraits derives from the stylization or miming of sincerity, joy, carelessness and openness instead of their real presence. Indeed, the smile of the second person which elicited the most criticism is rather official than genuine. He was therefore not in possession of the adequate visual codes, and though comprehending the communicative situation, he did not emit the right signals. It was no help to him to know that a portrait for the public was being taken and not his spontaneous reaction was photographed. His smile is not only official but a little laboured as well.

There is yet another aspect to be considered. The gutter press and commercial televisions provide examples galore that self-assurance is not only a characteristic of the upper circles but also of the demimonde. The stock of gestures and self-representation of money-grubbers, tricksters, white-collar criminals do not diverge from those of the elite very much as they want to be alike, representing a more strident variety of the elite. Value systems and selective mechanisms have not crystallized and stabilized yet for the newly recruited elite to keep distance. It was not long ago that they acquired their first billions and the mass media keep inquiring into their origin. In the press the entrepreneur is sometimes the synonym of the criminal, hence a self-assured smile might be self-supportive and self-justifying. The opinions that guess conceitedness beneath such smiles may also reflect the negative stereotypes about the elite.

Table 3. Common and dissimilar characteristics (frequencies)

Common: high social status	11
Common: businessman	4
Common: wealth	6
Common: success	5
Common: self-assurance	3
Common: any positive behavioural characteristics	9
Common: any negative behavioural characteristics	0
Common: any external characteristics (age, clothes, environment)	7
Dissimilar: social status	3
Dissimilar: behaviour, trait	5

At the end of the test we asked the students to sum up the common and dissimilar features of the three persons. If we were to draw a 'phantom' image on their basis, we would get the representative of the 'anonymous billionaire'. The majority of mentions contained epithets for all three persons, none referring to negative behavioural traits. Divergent characteristics were mentioned by few respondents, and even among these different social statuses were under-represented. In the detailed assessment of the three persons the students mentioned far more similar and dissimilar traits than in the summary. When they had to give an overall description of the three persons, they almost exclusively stressed high social status, wealth and positive features.

Invisible features

Returning to the typical traits, two groups of factors were separately examined that are not directly visible but recur in the mentions frequently. One is the question of career, the other is the attitude to the family. For A, career was mentioned in a positive, for B in a negative context, while for C positive and negative overtones were equally present. Why is that possible? Why does our eye guide us to passing positive or negative judgments about an invisible aspect? The only possible answer is that some students inferred conclusions from the overall impression to the presumed forms of the manner of living. They coloured and rounded out reality. As the assignment was to describe the person in the photo and they were given few clues, they constructed a fictitious figure bestowed with features they had very vague ideas of.

The other invisible aspect was the attitude to the family. For A positive, for C negative contexts were guessed. A was sitting in a comfortable armchair smiling, surrounded by lots of books. C does not smile, he is sitting by a desk in an office. These pictures perhaps provide more clues to a lively imagination: a benevolent father is listening to his adolescent's problems the way A is looking at the

photographer, while C gives the impression of a busy and severe boss. Busy and severe bosses have little time for their families, some students might have thought or just sensed when they constructed their stories of family and career. As for C, four mentioned the motif of career positively and four negatively. Checking this question by cross tabulation, we find that most mentions on the career came from other students than mentions on the family. It is not the case that a small segment (some one-fifth) of the students took into account these aspects in all three cases, while the rest did not. We found that some considered this aspect with a positive content in the first case and mostly others with a negative content in the other case. There was only a noteworthy correlation in the evaluation of A's and B's attitudes to career: half of those who mentioned career positively for A applied negative adjectives to B's career. Why they saw B as a pusher, a bully, even a Mafioso is hard to understand. It even occurred to me that B might have appeared in the media with some negative rumours but after checking it we found there was no such appearance. The students' judgment was formulated under the impression given by the sight and the compulsion to perform the requested task. The students were first-year students who had no systematic professional knowledge as yet. Some might have interpreted the task like an essay-writing assignment in secondary school: 'write a description of an imaginary hero' and they gave vent to their imagination. At any rate, this section revealed that we often draw conclusions about the invisible elements from the sight.

We have tested the correlations with several background variables including divergence by gender, but most provided no explanation. The lack of smile was mentioned – somewhat surprisingly – by boys to a greater degree. For invisible characteristics – career and family – not even that much prop could be obtained. By age, the group was homogeneous; as for the rest of the variables, neither gender, nor place of birth or the father's occupation provided any clues as to their inferences to family and career from the visual information. As regards cultural resources – at least the incorporated cultural capital we had the possibility to measure – the group was homogeneous. No explanatory power was found in the differences in social resources, friendships and confidence. Faint correlations were shown by the subjective evaluation of the way of living and the variables measuring deviance, fears and uncertainty, but this correlation was also contradictory. Positive mentions of the family were over-represented among those who felt uncertain to an above-average degree and thought that nowadays they were not in control of their own destinies. Proportionately more of those who were just partly satisfied with their lives and were often afraid tended to make negative remarks about the family. Of course, it must not be forgotten that we operated with a small N, so however compound categories we may work with the correlations might be accidental and only indicative of presumptions. As regards career, very

weak correlations were found; those who are at a loss in their life situations tended to make negative mentions of career.

Correlation between visual and verbal information

As mentioned above, after a month from the original experiment the three portraits were projected again at the end of a class, with brief biographical commentaries. The commentary included the name, occupation and qualifications, and the position taken in the list of the 100 richest Hungarians, the size of fortune and a few other important data. The text was a real frame to the visual information. The first and most conspicuous change was the drop in the number of associations with richness, income, money, power, renown, influence. The main reason was that the text made all this obvious. In the case of B who was earlier believed to be a media figure by many, such mentions – first of all references to power, income and fame – dropped to a third of the former rate. As for the other two persons, the aggregate of mentioned qualities did not change in essentials, but became more concentrated: mentions of wealth and money increased and those of income and power decreased.

All things considered, the rate of positive adjectives largely increased – especially for the first two persons – which means that textual information massively contributed to the positive overall impression. A particularly great rise was registered in the rate of those who now saw the three rich men as family-loving successful and self-confident figures. There was also a rise in the number of those who thought these people were hard-working, well-balanced, satisfied, happy and joyful. More felt sympathy for them, more thought they were cultured, talented, honest and generous. The registration of impressions by perception only decreased or disappeared (such as bossy, elegant, open, energetic, etc.)

The set of negative adjectives shrank, because the read text changed the evaluation of B considerably for the better. A, who earlier received a negligible number of negative mentions, earned now twice as many, and even so he received the fewest critical remarks and the most positive epithets. Such qualifications as conceited, bumptious, wicked, Mafioso, untruthful, unhappy or lacks imagination ceased, and references to hard work to the detriment of family life increased. Textual information considerably boosted mentions – both positive and negative – of the family. This was caused by the information that B and C were married and had so many children.

Who felt compelled to give a positive, ‘family-loving’ description? The social background variables did not provide any useful clue again. The tendency was that negative remarks about the attitude of the model to his family were written by those who were more self-assured than the average and felt their own families had a high place in the social hierarchy.

Concluding remarks

In sum, it can be concluded that the assessment of social status on the basis of visual information was successful. The majority answered the question and guessed right. The overwhelming majority of remarks referred to upper or upper-middle class as regards social status. For occupation, the respondents wrote businessman, manager, intellectual and official most frequently. The frequency of the mentions of fortune, income, money, power, influence and fame was distributed unevenly among the persons in the photos.

The positive features mentioned in the descriptions outnumbered the negative ones. The most frequent positive characteristics mentioned were self-assurance, elegance, diligence, authority, openness and good humour. The most frequent negative features for all three persons were conceited, complacent. Especially the third person who did not smile in the photo was tagged morose, grim, cold, and aloof. The epithets dishonest, sly, foxy were also used. These negative qualities were associated with the smile, as they were mainly bestowed upon the person whose smile divided the spectators. While positive features outnumbered negative ones in general, smiles did not only divide the spectators but also elicited more negative than positive associations. The rich intentionally smile with self-confidence and carelessness, but most viewers regarded their smile as a sign of complacency. In a portrait meant for publicity the presentation of happiness is a pseudo-spontaneous message and someone who does not succeed in pretending this emotion well will be punished by the recipients of the message for the lack of sincerity.

Another interesting finding of the experiment is that spectators often allude to invisible features in addition to the perceptible traits. Several remarks were made at career and family, some in a positive and some in a negative context. The spectators probably make inferences as to the invisible properties on the basis of the overall impression, and the impressions are made sharper by the compulsion to verbalize them in the experimental situation and in this process they mobilize several elements of implicit knowledge. Negative attitude to the family inferred from the visual information was mainly emphasized by those who were dissatisfied with their own lives and struggled with fears. When the photos were supplemented with text, the correlation was reversed: negative remarks were over-represented among self-confident respondents with a high social background.

The students in the experiment mentioned more common than dissimilar characteristics. The most frequent common traits included high social status, some positive behavioural trait, wealth and success.

When verbal information was added to the photos, the attributes related to fortune, renown and power decreased in number and became more concentrated. Associations with income, reputation and power decreased and those with fortune

increased. There was more to this change than the intention to avoid repeating the verbal information. Textual information considerably boosted the number of positive attributes and decreased the negative ones. Obviously, the students' judgment was not guided by the stereotypic images of the rich. The most important common characteristic – self-assurance – remained and even increased after reading the text. By contrast, mentions of conceitedness decreased as did inferences from primary visual information while references to subjective well-being, i.e. success and family increased.

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Some Sociological Aspects of Skilled Migration from Hungary

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Abstract. The emigration of highly skilled people from Hungary happened in waves, according to the latest records shown in this article the last wave was at the millennium and the EU accession. While Western Europe is challenged by the threat of their professionals moving to the USA, if we look at Eastern Europe and in this case Hungary, apparently not only the USA seems to have this kind of pulling attractiveness but also some Western European countries, especially the Benelux states, UK and Germany. In this article we will first show the data available on the size of the Hungarian skilled migrant population. Afterwards we examine the latest wave of emigration from the view of the people who encountered it: results of two online survey-based sociological researches will be presented. Since this method is relatively new in approaching skilled migration, we address the usability and burdens of online survey in this situation.

Keywords: brain drain, skilled migration, Hungary, online survey

Introduction

In the scientific world Hungary ranks high on the list of Nobel Prize winners per capita¹. For the sake of this paper it is worth noting that the majority of these

¹ With 1 Nobel Prize per 835,000 inhabitants.

winners' awarded work was carried out outside Hungary². The emigration of highly skilled individuals from Hungary happened in waves: beginning with World War I, increasing again in the 1930s, again after World War II, again during the revolution in 1956 and followed by another smaller wave occurring at the end of the 1970s which continued into the next decade. According to the latest records shown in this article, another wave began with the millennium and the EU accession as well.

While the emigration of highly skilled and qualified people is a problem more or less all across Europe, it is worth noting that there is an important difference in Hungary. Western Europe is challenged by the threat of their professionals moving to the USA as the latter offers an almost unmatched mix of money, research personnel concentration and meritocracy. However if we look at Eastern Europe and in this case Hungary, apparently not only the USA seems to have this kind of pulling attractiveness but also some Western European countries, predominately the Benelux states, UK and Germany.

Developing the idea, we can also note a tendency among the ethnic Hungarians living in the neighbouring states since the Trianon peace treaty in 1920. The Treaty of Trianon redrew the borders of Hungary, separating 2/3 of its territory and causing the loss of 60% of its population. Consequently 1/3 of the people with Hungarian as their mother tongue found themselves outside of Hungary. Even today 3 million ethnic Hungarians live as minorities in the neighbouring states (Hungary has 10 million inhabitants). These Hungarians, most of them to the North and the East of the present borders of Hungary, tend to relocate to Hungary, making it a local centre while still being a periphery in the global way described before. In our opinion these migrations are proof and result of the step by step hierarchy of centres and peripheries in the modern world. This hierarchy is historically well described in Berend and Ranky (1982) and actualized by Janos (2000).

As it can be easily observed, the above mentioned emigration waves occurred during or immediately after large crises or changes in the society. There is only one exception: the transformation of the political system in 1989, since in the early nineties no emigration wave can be observed. This can at least partly be attributed to the euphoria of the people anticipating the hopefully upcoming freedom and social wealth. In this article we will examine the latest wave of emigration (after the millennium) from the perspective of the people who experienced it: the results of two survey-based sociological researches will be presented. Before this we will

² For example Albert Szent-Györgyi who discovered vitamin C had spent half of his life abroad, just like George Bekeşy who won the Nobel Prize for his research on hearing. Dénes Gábor, world famous physicist left Hungary during his university years, while John Harsányi who worked with John Nash on game theory equilibrium left 8 years after graduating – and there were more.

briefly mention the terms and theories currently in use and the data available on the size of the Hungarian skilled migrant population.

Concepts and theories

The international phenomenon of brain drain has been disputed over more than 50 years now from the aspects of economics, sociology and cultural studies. Proper account of the evolution of terminology is given in Cohen (1997), Salt (1997), Mahroum (1998), Davenport (2004), Giannoccolo (2004) among others. In the following paragraphs we will summarize the information in these articles.

The creator of the term ‘brain drain’ was The Royal Society when describing the emigration of their scientists to the USA and Canada in the 1950s and 1960s. ‘Brain’ marks in any case the carrier of useful knowledge and ‘drain’ means that the extent of the emigration from a given country is large, while the extent of return or immigration of qualified people is relatively small. Among the concepts describing the phenomenon of brain drain one can find terms like ‘human capital’, ‘human resources in science and technology’ (HRST, the people valuable due to their productivity), ‘highly qualified’ (i.e. the elite within a profession) and ‘tertiary educated’. From the 1990s the term brain drain was exchanged for the more ideologically neutral ‘skilled migration’.

The definition of skilled migration – as we use the term here – comes from the brain drain definition of Salt (1997: 5): i.e. *the movement of people with special skills and qualifications from a country “where the net flow [i.e. emigrants minus immigrants] is heavily in one direction”* (our emphasis).

In the literature most of the papers deal with the positive and negative effects of skilled migration. The process in its simplest form is that a certain part of the productive knowledge elite from the sending country migrates to the receiving country, depriving the country which invested into them of the fruits of their work. In the 1980s this concept was augmented with two others; one is ‘brain exchange’ which is the case when a country is sending and receiving brains at the same time, the other is ‘brain waste’ which designates the case when qualified people have to take jobs – in many cases, blue collar jobs – in which they do not use their knowledge due to lack of opportunities in their profession.

In the 1990s changes in economic relations in the world resulted in another new term. Countries which had been low developed embarked on a rapid growth, many countries from the periphery getting closer to the wealth level of the developed countries. Primarily in the case of these countries, a significant number of the highly qualified people who had emigrated returned and the actual emigration meant no longer a lifelong move but only a relocation for a couple of years to gain international experience. In these countries ‘brain circulation’ supplanted brain drain.

Until the 1990s it was widely accepted that emigration of every skilled person does harm to the sending country. Then, due to some arguments, the negative effects of skilled migration became questioned or at least debated. Stark, Helmenstein and Prskawetz (1997) argued that the possibility of a successful international career is an incentive for the people to study, therefore in a country there will be more highly qualified people if brain drain exists than if not and they designated this process with the new term ‘brain gain’. Many authors underlined the advantages of a scientific diaspora and international experience (Avveduto and Brandi, 2002; Dickson, 2003b; Davenport, 2004). Some developed mathematical models – like Beine, Docquier and Rapoport (2001), Bucovetsky (2003) or Haupt and Janeba (2004) – that treat brain drain as an optimizable phenomenon and suggested methods to compute the ‘desired’, ‘beneficial’ level of skilled migration.

However, these suggestions and concepts do not disprove that detrimental effects of brain drain are significant. For, with their knowledge and continuous innovation, highly qualified people increase the quantity and quality of production, they are affecting positively the economic growth of the country they work in. Groizard and Llull (2006) examined GDP growth and skilled migration in 170 countries and they showed in a regression that 10% higher brain drain goes with 0.8% lower GDP growth at an average. Moreover, they disproved the hypothesis of ‘brain gain’: in the countries experiencing a higher brain drain, the ratio of tertiary educated people is not higher (controlled for several other variables such as working capital inflow, investments, ethnic homogeneity and population increase).

The majority of the articles dealing with brain drain describe potential solutions. We summarize what the reader can find in Barrere, Luchilo and Raffo (2004), Chu (2005), Dickson (2003a and 2003b), Faini (2003) and Giannoccolo (2004). To counteract the detrimental effects of brain drain, there are at least three methods known for decades now. First and simplest opportunity is to decrease the quantity and quality of emigration. This can be achieved by administrative constraints on migration (either at country level or using international organizations), or – assuming the willingness of the government of the sending country to spend resources on the problem – by financially motivating the people considering emigration, especially the most talented, to stay (this means well paid, secure and promising jobs in the first place).

The second opportunity is to make the emigrants pay for the loss they cause. Payment should be made either by the migrant itself (extra tax on skilled migrants, tuition grant repayment in case of emigration) or the receiving country (by aids for instance). A highly significant problem with these suggestions is that – mainly due to difficulties in computing the loss and partly due to the obvious risk for the government to lose popularity – these have never been in place anywhere. (Aid is of course continuously present but it is treated as a humanitarian act and not made proportional to skilled migration.)

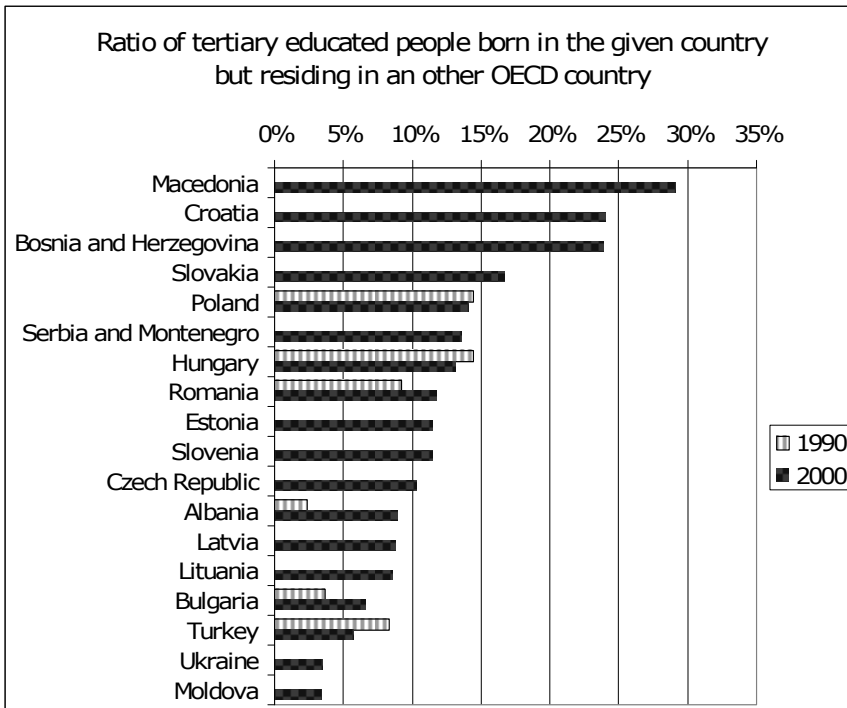
The third opportunity is the ‘diaspora option’: to maintain intensive relationships with highly qualified emigrants and incorporate their knowledge and contacts to the economic and scientific life of the sending country. Ways to achieve this include short educational trips, guest lecturer invitations, conferences, joint research programmes and websites and databases which enable actors to organize these activities. Good examples are Italy (see Becker, Ichino and Peri, 2003) and some countries in South America (especially Colombia, Argentina and Chile) as described in Barrere, Luchilo and Raffo (2004). The risk in this opportunity is that if the scientific and technological infrastructure is underdeveloped then the country cannot utilize the knowledge and contacts of the diaspora, and due to improved relations even more professionals leave.

Skilled migration from Hungary

In this paper we are not trying to present any effect of skilled migration. We concentrate on showing the motivations, circumstances and opinions of skilled emigrants from Hungary. As to the number of highly skilled emigrants from Hungary, until the early 2000s one could rely only on professional estimations. Pál Tamás, former director of the Sociological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, mentions 1,000-1,500 scientists (COST, 1997) between 1985 and 1995, Tóth (1999) from the Central Statistical Office in Hungary estimates 10,000 highly qualified intellectual emigrants in the 1990s, while geneticist András Dinnyés speaks of 5,000 scientific emigrants (Burgermeister, 2004) from 1989 to 2004. Owing to the extensive data collection efforts in OECD and World Bank in the last decade, of which one of the most important outcome is Docquier and Marfouk (2005), we now have data on tertiary educated persons residing in OECD with Hungarian origin in 1990 and in 2000³. Unfortunately, this is the latest time for which there is published data available for the censuses of the individual OECD countries to be used by authors. Since the next censuses are due in the years 2010-2012 in these countries, we expect the data becoming available in 2014 at the foremost.

In 1990 there were 115,000 skilled Hungarian emigrants resident in OECD excluding Hungary (versus 32,000 skilled immigrant inhabitants in Hungary), while in 2000 it increased by 8,7% to 125,000 (versus 54,500 immigrants). Since there are 2,3 times more emigrants than immigrants, we consider this a flow heavily in one direction, in other words a brain drain. If we consider that from those who were abroad in 1990, some may have returned to Hungary and some may have died, we can estimate the net outflow of tertiary educated to 15-20,000 from 1990 to 2000.

³ This data is also available for 173 other countries in 1990 and 190 other countries in 2000.



Graph 1. Ratio of highly skilled people living outside their native country.
(Authors' computation based on Docquier and Marfouk, 2005)

If we compare the ratio of highly skilled people living outside their native country (Graph 1), we can describe the Hungarian skilled migration rate as an average one. However, if we consider the labour shortage in several positions requiring higher education which is a very troublesome problem at present in Hungary, a 13% skilled migration is a high enough rate to consider it an issue. Accordingly, the 'brain export' was and is a day-to-day issue in conversations regarding economy, science or intelligence as well as a phenomenon in which the majority of Hungarians who participated in higher education have some first-hand experience either personally or through a friend or relative.

We mention only two examples of the public debates over the 'brain drain'. An ad hoc committee has been appointed by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to examine the predominately outwardly directed skilled migration in 1990. The outcome of the work was published for an academic debate in Hoch, Lovász, Marx, Személyi, Tamás, Venetianer and Vizi (1991: 734) warning that Hungarian scientists' "connection to the World Science is no longer manifested only in their publications – which is the traditional way of output – but in their free international

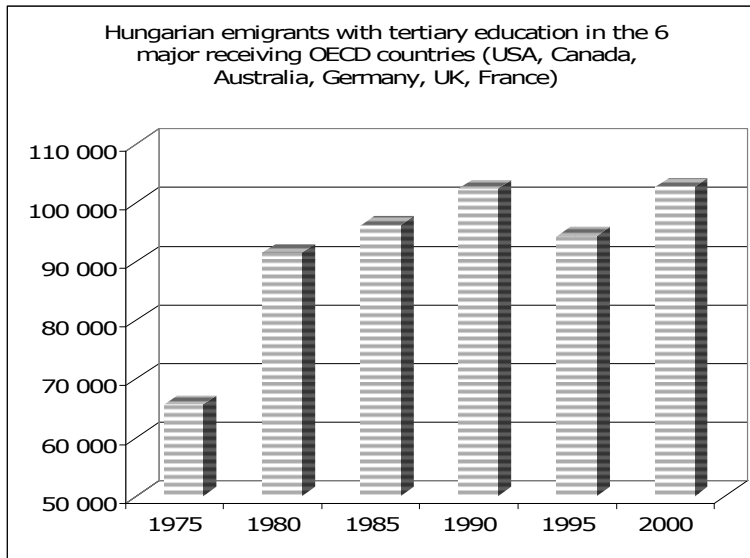
movements as well". Two successive publications (e.g. Anveiler, Tóth and Marton, 1993; Berényi, 1993) concluded that while the migrating scientists are for the most part of the best quality and the brightest mind (e.g. regarding the impact factor of their publications), one cannot do much unless the tools and financial background of research – especially in natural and medical sciences – are significantly improved. Berényi (1993) suggests that if cooperation between Hungarian research institutes and big international centres of research is improved significantly, the Hungarian researchers may feel less necessary to move abroad and only travel from one time to another.

Another example of the attention to the matter in scientific and R&D environment is related to a non-profit initiative named Project Retour. This organization has been dealing with return migrants from 2003, primarily through assisting the migrants in finding a job and re-integrating into the Hungarian scientific and skilled worker community but also by involving themselves in some social research and conference activities in the matter.

It was the first organization who asked the migrants and some homecomers in a research about their opinions and reasons behind leaving Hungary and coming back (Saphier and Simonovits, 2004). This research was not intended to be scientific and it was not published but on the website of Project Retour. Their methodology was based on a questionnaire made available on the website of the organization as a Word document to the visitors for a couple of months in 2004 and the respondent could send it filled in as an attachment to an email address. They had 120 respondents, half of them were still living outside Hungary while the other half were returnees. In short their conclusion was that the main factors were money reasons and lack of career opportunities while the majority of those still living abroad felt homesick and planned to return sometime.

Project Retour helped a number of return migrants and had a wide network all over the Hungarian scientific world. Due to the lack of sufficient fundings, Project Retour temporarily stopped its services in 2009.

Regarding the dynamics of the emigration, we can turn to Docquier and Defoort (2006). They published data on the number of highly skilled migrants by country of origin, residing in the 6 major receiving OECD countries (USA, Canada, Australia, Germany, UK, France) from 1975 to 2000 in 5-year periods. These countries had 88.5% of skilled Hungarian immigrants in OECD in 1990 and 82.5% in 2000, which is high enough as the tendency of Hungarian brain drain (Graph 2). We can observe the last two of the emigration waves mentioned in the introduction. Compared to the numbers of Docquier and Marfouk (2005) we find that while in the 6 major receiving countries the number of skilled Hungarian immigrants was stagnating, in the whole OECD their number increased by 10%. Therefore the emigration surplus had gone to other OECD countries not shown on this chart.



Graph 2. Tendency of the Hungarian brain drain
(Authors' computation based on Docquier and Defoort, 2006)

Research methodology

In order to introduce a bottom-top approach to the understanding of Hungarian skilled migration, we were the first to ask the opinions of the Hungarian skilled emigrants in 2005 using an online questionnaire with snowball sampling (Csanády and Személyi, 2006)⁴. Our research targeted those who had a Hungarian diploma, had left after the political system transformation in 1989 and had been working abroad for at least one year and were still abroad, yielding more than 250 respondents.

Using the experiences gained in our research in 2005, we conducted another research in 2008 on behalf of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and with the help of Forsense Ltd., a market research company. When preparing the design, we also made use of published experiences gained in two other surveys on the subject, one dealing with brain drain from Africa (Ndede and Amadi, 2002) and another with brain drain from Turkey (Gungor and Tansel, 2007).

Our data collection came from an online survey. We used snowball sampling, with extensive input of primary email contact points (Hungarian email lists,

⁴ Though there was a survey one year earlier conducted by Project Retour, the non-profit organization for homecomers mentioned earlier, it was aimed at homecomers and only half of its respondents were located outside Hungary at the time the survey was conducted and most of them were planning their return.

diplomatic institutions, academic network and respondents of the research in 2005 – all of these were invited to participate in the research directly by us); the questionnaire was open to fill in on a website for more than a month⁵.

When we closed the survey, it turned out that two thirds of the over 350 respondents were informed about the survey by us and one third of them by a respondent. Snowball sampling is generally considered a non-representative method. Though we intended to use network weighing methods in order to make the results representative as described in Heckathorn 1997, the high ratio of direct contact with the respondents rendered us unable to do so since these methods need a number of levels in respondent-to-respondent recommendations.

In the following section we present the results gained from the second survey and also some comparisons to the first one where appropriate. It is necessary to restate that neither of these surveys were representative, though the data for both were collected from a vast variety of emigrants from 20 target countries in 2005 and from 27 target countries in 2008. The surveys contained respondents from all fields of science. Therefore we suggest relying less on the simple ratios but on the relationships between the variables.

Research results

Country distribution (Table 1) seems to verify the centre-periphery theory of migration: people tend to move from the peripheries to the centre while movements between peripheries are negligible; most of Hungarian skilled emigrants went to the USA and Belgium (17-17%); other major destinations were Germany (11%), Luxembourg (8%), UK and Italy (6-6%). As for the year of emigration (Graph 3) it is obvious that the EU accession accelerated skilled migration from Hungary, though at present it seems it had only a one time effect on the flow.

Survey respondents were remarkably qualified. One quarter of them had degrees in at least two science fields, 10% had educational qualification higher than PhD and 4% were member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Our research results indicate that skilled emigration is very unequally distributed among science fields (Table 2). The ratio of emigration amongst graduates in the fields of law, economics and especially natural science is much higher than amongst graduates in arts, education, health and other fields.

We tried to estimate the ratio of emigration in natural sciences between 1990 and 2000. According to governmental statistics, in the Ministry of Education in 2002 there were 294,000 issued diplomas during this period, of which 4.8% (Vamos, 2000), i.e. around 14,000 were in natural sciences. As we mentioned earlier, we estimate the net outflow of skilled migrants to be 15-20,000 during this

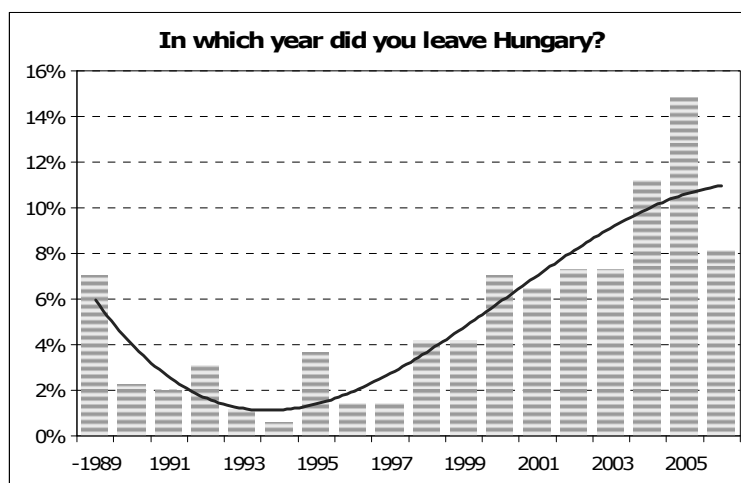
⁵ From the 22nd of February, 2008 until the 24th of March 2008.

period, of which (according to our data) approximately 20% i.e. around 3,500 had degrees in natural sciences. This means that in the case of natural sciences, the field most affected by skilled migration, for every 4 issued diploma there was an emigrant during this period.

Table 1. Distribution of the country of residence in our sample

	Frequency	Percent
USA	61	17.1%
Belgium	61	17.1%
Germany	39	11.0%
Luxembourg	33	9.3%
UK	24	6.7%
Italy	23	6.5%
Finland	19	5.3%
Canada	14	3.9%
Switzerland	13	3.7%
Norway	11	3.1%
France	9	2.5%
Austria	8	2.2%
Netherlands	7	2.0%
China	7	2.0%
Poland	6	1.7%
Ireland	4	1.1%
Sweden	3	0.8%
Spain	2	0.6%
South-Korea	2	0.6%
Israel	2	0.6%
Australia	2	0.6%
Thailand	1	0.3%
Romania	1	0.3%
Japan	1	0.3%
Czech Republic	1	0.3%
Denmark	1	0.3%
Singapore	1	0.3%

Source: authors' research



Graph 3. Distribution of the sample in regard to year of emigration

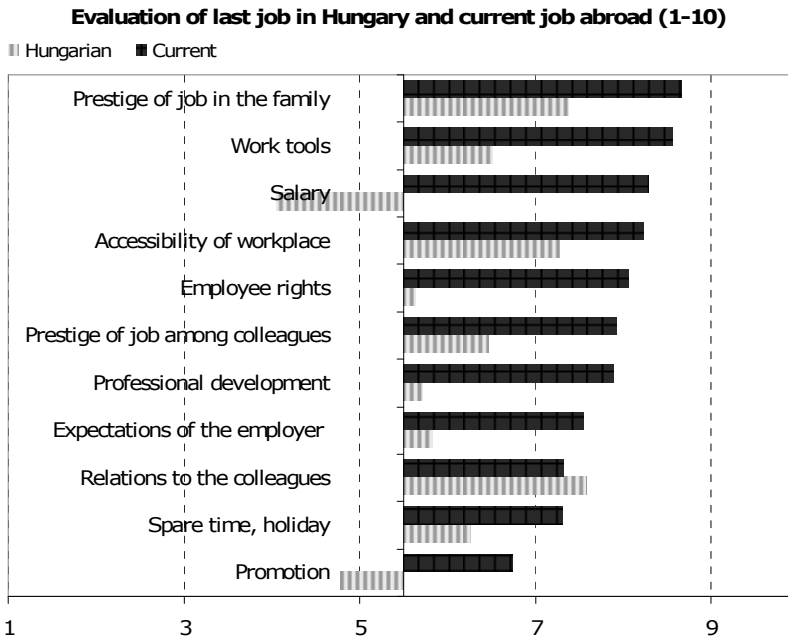
Source: authors' research

Table 2. Emigration by field of degree

	1	2	3	4	5	2/5
Field of degree	Number of diplomas	Proportion of field	Students in higher education 1990	Students in higher education 2000	Issued diplomas 1995-2000	Ratio of proportion in sample and in issued diplomas
Arts and education	127	27.55%	31.80%	29.80%	38.80%	0.71
Technical and engineering	72	15.62%	23.60%	24.30%	19.70%	0.79
Economic	88	19.09%	9.40%	15.90%	12.00%	1.59
Natural sciences	90	19.52%	6.50%	6.50%	4.80%	4.07
Health	15	3.25%	12.60%	8.30%	7.00%	0.46
Law	29	6.29%	4.70%	5.80%	5.30%	1.19
Other	40	8.68%	11.40%	8.4%	12.40%	0.70
Total	461	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	

Source: columns 1 and 2 from authors' research, columns 3 and 4 from Hrubos (2000), column 5 from Vamos (2000)

As to the motivation structure of emigrants, the results in 2008 were exactly the same as in 2005: the main push factor is income, but professional development/career opportunities and the overall political situation in Hungary⁶ are also significant. At the destination countries they usually find what they felt to be in need of: satisfaction in current job is higher in every respect than it was in Hungary (Graph 4).



Graph 4. Opinions about current job and last job in Hungary (if applicable)

Source: authors' research

We were curious about the typical channels of emigration. We could identify three of them: education, administration and friends/relatives living abroad. First of all, 38% of emigrants were enrolled in higher education (graduate/postgraduate) in the year they left Hungary (17% abroad) and 35% taught (8% abroad). In total, 60% of our respondents were active in higher education when emigrated. The category administration essentially refers to the EU. We only have indirect proof that

⁶ This political situation is hard to define but it is present in the motivation of a great proportion of the respondents. Among other things it surely includes corruption, political division by the two major political parties on the left and right side, moral problems with the government regarding economic transparency.

Hungarian emigrants are employed there, namely the fact that 28% of our respondents live in Benelux states where the majority of EU institutions reside. Though not everybody, an impressive 71% of these emigrants work in public administration, compared to 23% in the total sample. Regarding the influence of friends and relatives living abroad, we have to mention we had comments from the respondents on the related questions that even if an individual had friends abroad it had nothing to do with one's decision to emigrate. Keeping this in mind we still introduce the following result as the third emigration channel of tertiary educated Hungarians: 23% had relatives in their destination country and another 24% had friends.

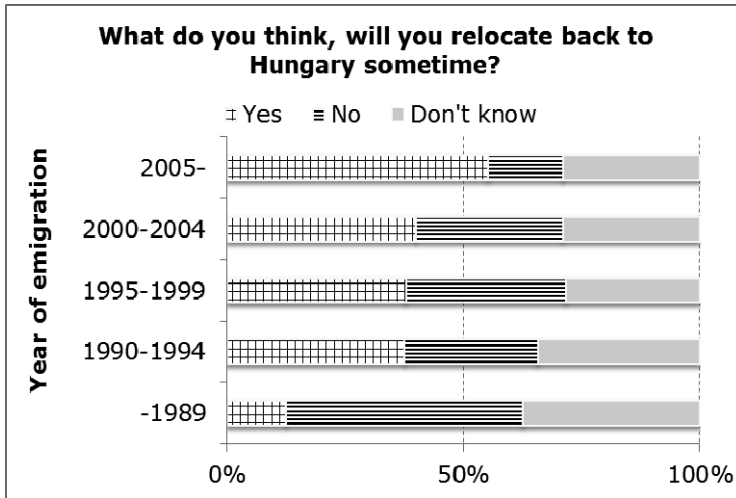
In the literature on brain drain we find an important argument in support of the hypothesis that this kind of migration can be beneficial to the source country. The argument is the following: though skilled emigrants working for another country do not generate GDP directly in the country they left (in the form of taxes, added value or shopping) they tend to send money home in the form of remittances and the amount is usually significant, which then strengthens the demand side with a positive effect on GDP.⁷ The amount of this contribution can even be higher than if they had stayed. Being aware that this argument is questioned in the literature (see Faini, 2003), in our questionnaire we tried to test it asking the respondents about the money they send home as well as the earnings at their current position and at their last job in Hungary.

We found that about 65% had already sent money to their relatives or to a nonprofit organization in Hungary, at least once. The amount is typically between 100,000 and 1,000,000 HUF per year (around \$550-5,500) to family and under 100,000 HUF to organizations. In their last job in Hungary they earned (corrected for an average yearly salary increase in Hungary since the year they left) typically between net 1.5 million and 3.5 million HUF (around \$9-20,000) per annum, while currently their salary is between 6 and 16 million HUF (around \$35-90,000). This means that while they earn an average of 4 times the money they would earn if they had stayed, they only send to Hungary a few percents of their current income (and at most, 20 percent of their Hungarian income, supposing they did not leave). The amount is even less if we calculate with those who never sent money to Hungary. Therefore we tend to reject the hypothesis that this kind of benefit of brain drain is substantial.

We also examined the emigrants' plans for the future. 40% answered yes to the question of returning to Hungary, though one third of them only after 10 years. 30% were unsure, a further 30% said no. In line with this, 75% of the participants answered affirmatively to the sentence 'I settled here for the long term.' This is a

⁷ For instance remittances can amount to 10% of GDP in Central America according to Barrere and Luchilo and Raffo (2004). In our opinion the amount of remittances might vary significantly among different sending countries.

significant increase from 2005 where this ratio was only 60%. In both researches we confirmed that the longer the emigrants stay the lower their willingness to return, though a considerable portion (around 1/3) of people emigrated 15-20 years ago still think they will return sometime (see Graph 5).



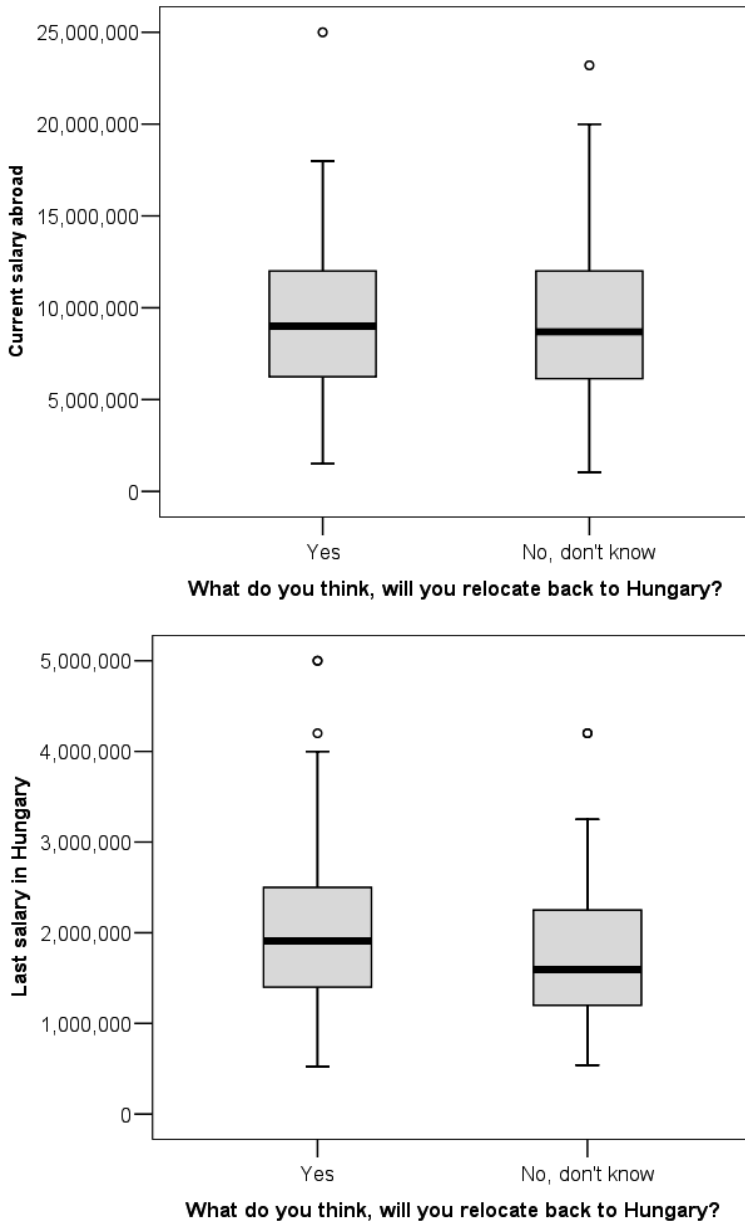
Graph 5. Year of emigration and return plans

Source: authors' research

Since from the reasoning of emigration it was absolutely clear that money related issues were the biggest motivation, we also examined the connection between willingness to return and current salaries⁸. On Graph 6 we show the boxplot for the distribution of last salary in Hungary and current salary abroad separately for those willing to return to Hungary and those who are not (or do not know). The main takeaway is not the significant difference between Hungarian and developed world salaries, which might be attributed to some extent to inflation and career advance during the average 7.9 years passed since emigration. What is interesting is that current salary levels are all the same whether the emigrant plans to return or not, while the last salary levels in Hungary are higher among those who plan to return⁹.

⁸ Unfortunately quite a few respondents did not answer the question regarding salaries: 57% missed current salary and 67% missed last salary in Hungary. But still we had 154 respondents for current and 100 for previous salary.

⁹ ANOVA F-test is significant only at 0.09, but we consider this the problem of low sample size. First we thought that this could be a result of a common reason: the less years since the emigration occurred the more likely the emigrant is to return and the more likely the last salary in Hungary was higher. But this is not the case: there was no correlation between the years spent abroad and the last salary in Hungary.



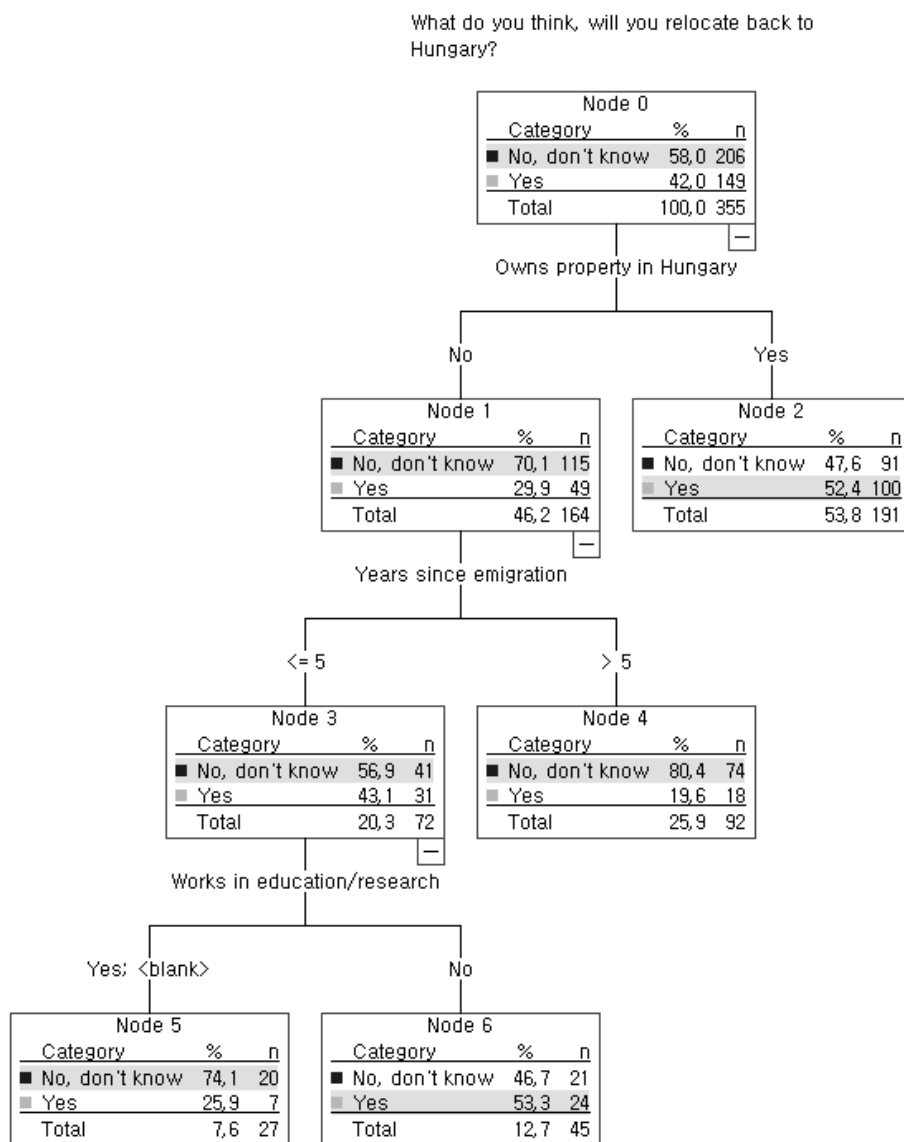
Graph 6. Salary levels and return plans (amounts are in HUF)
Source: authors' research

We also tried to build a model for the groups most likely to return. We applied CHAID methodology to the dataset and created a decision tree (Graph 7) split to nodes ordered in accordance with the effect size of each explanatory variable¹⁰. The figure shows that those who own property in Hungary, emigrated no sooner than 5 years before taking the survey, and do not work in the education/research sector are the most likely to relocate back to Hungary. What is at least just as interesting is that a number of other variables made not enough difference to be included in the tree. Whether the respondent is married or not, has child(ren) or not, worked in Hungary before emigrating or not, the current salary of the respondent – just some of the variables one might think about, but it seems they don't matter.

Six decades after the time when brain drain was first observed, the world is quite different in terms of communications and contact management. Talking, writing, traveling is much more affordable now and the daily practice of emigration is much more complex: people moving from a country are more able to keep in touch with their remaining contacts than ever through email, Skype, mobile phone and low-cost airlines. Consequently we thought it necessary to examine the contacts of these emigrants with their home country. In 2005 we asked questions about family and friends in Hungary, while in 2008 we focused on professional and cultural relations.

Almost everyone answered yes to the question 'Do you keep in touch with your Hungarian contacts?' Regardless of years spent abroad; most of them maintained at least 6 contacts. It is worthwhile to mention that half of them also often meet Hungarians in their current country of residence. Talking about other connections, one in six is a member of a Hungarian professional institution in Hungary, and only 5% are members of a cultural one. If we compare it to such relations in the current country we find the ratios of 15% and 50%, respectively. It seems common in this group that professional relations to Hungarian institutions in the country of residence and in the source country are equally important (or the latter is somewhat more important considering the energy surplus necessary to keep such relations in the distant home country). At the same time, nation-related cultural needs are mainly considered as being fulfilled locally.

¹⁰ The first two splits are significant at 0.01 level, the last split (by PhD) is only at 0.069 level, but we assumed that this higher significance level can be attributed to the small sample size and we kept this split.



Graph 7. Decision tree on return plans.

Source: authors' research

Summary

We have shown the extent and outlook of the skilled migration from Hungary at the turn of the millennium using OECD data and two online network surveys. According to our results, this type of movement primarily emerges from the differences in personal wealth and professional opportunities between Hungary and the developed countries. Another important thing is the new channel of emigration created by EU accession: the bureaucracy of the EU offers remarkable opportunities for interested and talented Hungarians. It seems that for at least half of the emigrants their movement is final, although there are many potential returnees. Return is more likely if the respondent owns property in Hungary, emigrated no sooner than 5 years before taking the survey and does not work in the education/research sector. Our results suggest that as long as the above mentioned differences do not decrease significantly, return migration will be moderate. So will the emigration continue while these differences prevail. Current emigrants are also pushed by the limited job market in Hungary for professionals in the natural and technical sciences, especially in R&D.

There is nothing sentimental in the focus on skilled emigrants and the wish that they should feel comfortable in Hungary. The more highly skilled inhabitants a country has, the faster the pace is at which the country grows. In addition we found insufficient evidence for the money transfer to Hungary being substantial therefore it cannot compensate for the loss of human capital. In this kind of situation it is extremely important that Hungary should not lose connection with its emigrants and thus enable itself to utilize their knowledge and professional relations in order to maintain the possibility of their homecoming as well as to gain economic momentum. Our research showed that Hungarian skilled emigrants keep in touch quite often with their family and friends, however only a small portion of them has connections to Hungarian professional institutions; therefore, professional relations with Hungary could be improved.

In an international context our research is also highly relevant because of the method used. We found that an online survey combined with snowball sampling was particularly useful for the study of skilled migration. Since there are a number of countries for which the skilled migration rates are available for 2000 (and perhaps also for 1990), we see plenty of opportunities to continue testing the method for use in understanding international skilled migration patterns.

Acknowledgements

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contact emails possible, we were helped by the National Office for Research and Technology, Project Retour, as well as numerous friends and colleagues. In the second survey in 2008 we worked in the name of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences using their extensive international network of scientists and researchers where our partner was Tamás Gergely Kucsera. The methodology and data collection were made with substantive help from Zoltán Kmetty and Gergely Tarján at Forsense Ltd. Here we shall restate our gratitude to those respondents who promoted the survey among their friends in the Hungarian emigrant communities.

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Social Economy, as a Special Section of the Informal Economy in the Northern Great Plains Region of Hungary

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Abstract. This paper aims to examine a phenomenon often referred to as social economy and its presence, different forms and extent in contemporary Hungary, specifically in the Northern Great Plains region. The first part is a brief overview on the evolution, junctions and debates over the concept of informal economy and social economy. After this, it summarizes the findings of the informal economic studies on the post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, mainly focusing on the history and description of the social economic activities in Hungary in the socialist era, through the transition period until recent times. The second part of the paper is the detailed analysis of the data gathered during the project *Employment and job searching willingness in the lower employment segment*, carried out by the University of Debrecen, Department of Sociology and Social Policy. The paper is concentrating on the data collected about the social economic activity of the respondents and the factors that determine the participation in these activities.

Keywords: informal economy, social economy, substantive economy

The concept of informal and social economy

Informal economy, including social economy is an indistinct object of the social sciences, with a great number of vague and overlapping terms related to it (*unofficial economy, hidden economy, underground economy, shadow economy, parallel economy, social economy, black economy, second economy*) (Lippens and Ponsaers, 2006). There was much debate and vagueness about definitions, in order

to examine the large and diverse sector of economic activities outside formal economy (Henry and Sills, 2006). The concept of informal economy has not been used widely in sociology, although it gained more attention in economics (Portes and Sassen-Koob, 1987).

According to Stuart Henry, informal economy can be described by three basic characteristics: informal economy includes production, consumption and trading of goods and services, for cash or for a social reward. These are mostly part-time activities, and are unofficial, as they do not explicitly form part of the state accounting systems, and are not registered by its economic measurement techniques. Beyond this, characteristics are less generally applicable (Henry, 1982).

The first, groundbreaking study of the field was ethnographic in nature, and was carried out by Louis Ferman in Detroit, in 1958. While examining the time structure and usage of the members of a black community struck by heavy unemployment in a slum area of the city, he surprisingly found that a great proportion of the respondents were involved in some kind of “off-the-books” work – some of them involved crime, but the majority was legal.

There was a “series of irregular economic activities serving as community responses to the blocked opportunity structures of the larger economic system... It was Ferman’s original sociological identification of informal economic production and exchange as means of survival among the urban poor of American cities that served as the major corrective to our perception of the hegemony of modern industrial and commercial rationalism¹, while also showing that the formal and informal, regular and irregular, are integrally related” (Henry and Sills, 2006: 266). As Ferman quoted: “*At the time, our finding seemed important, but not revolutionary. We had no idea that it was to mark the start of what was to become a whole area of study*” (Ferman, 1993: vii-viii, cited in Henry and Sills, 2006).

In his latter works, he and Louis Berndt made a distinction between the irregular economy and the social economy. In his approach, irregular economy means “that sector of economic activity that is not registered by the economic measurement techniques of the society but which uses money as a medium of exchange” and social economy means a sector of economic activity, which is “(...) *not registered (...) and not uses money as a medium of exchange*” (Henry, 1982: 461).

¹ Ferman’s early observations about the connection between lower class marginality and the participation in the informal economy were being supplemented by other ethnographic studies. Stack described that the limited amount of goods were being continuously redistributed in an African American community through mutual aid networks based on kinship (Stack, 1974, cited in Henry, 2006). Lowenthal found the same kind of mutual aid networks as a survival mechanism of an isolated working class community, for which he also used the term “social economy” (Lowenthal, 1975, cited in Henry, 2006).

In the 1970's, the anthropological wisdom that goods and services can be produced and distributed in local networks, communities and families instead of registered, legally constituted enterprises was beginning to be rediscovered. In these early founding studies, participation in the informal economy, which exists independently from the formal economy, is seen as a survival mechanism, the mode of "getting by" of the poor and marginal groups in the society (Henry-Sills, 2006).

In the early '80s, Gershuny and Pahl saw informal economic activities as early indications of future development and progress of the post-industrial society. Gershuny was interested in the way technological development affects the change of societies (Gershuny, 1987). He argued that growth in labour productivity leads to constant unemployment, and the high prices in the service sector bring a new, self-service economy where the work and service in the household for the household will be superior to the public services and welfare provisioning (Pahl and Wallace, 1985). Under the circumstances of an economic crisis, cheap foreign labour and rising productivity of work, he and Pahl argued that fighting unemployment with state interventions is not a possible way, and the society has to cope with large-scale unemployment in the long run (Pahl, 1987). People are increasingly turning to their household, their neighborhood and their local informal economy to provide the goods and services that they could not afford from the formal economy. Thus, as Gershuny and Pahl say, "our present stage of economic development appears to be one in which jobs are displaced, not only by automation within the formal economy but also by export to an informal economy" (Gershuny and Pahl, 1981: 77).

With this theoretical background, R. E. Pahl carried out a large-scale research project on the Isle of Sheppey, in a working-class community struck by high unemployment rates, between 1977 and 1984. In an article at the beginning of the research project, he stated:

"Earlier assumptions that the service sector of the economy would expand to absorb displaced labour are now being seriously questioned... For present purposes I intend to focus on the consequences of a shift out of "employment" into "work", which may be highly productive, although hidden in terms of national accounting. I further want to explore the implications of this and other shifts within local labour markets and how these interact with the household economy" (Pahl, 1980: 1).

Pahl insisted that by participating in this kind of informal activity, the unemployed can maintain the "work identity" even if the "employment identity" is lost, and in certain situations, if the opportunities in the formal economy are bad and they are good in the informal economy, unemployment could be a positive benefit (Pahl, 1980). The survey took place on the Isle of Sheppey, Kent, in 1981, from a one-in-nine random sample of households, yielding 730 cases with a

response rate of 79 percent. It was specifically designed to avoid gender bias by the random selection of equal numbers of male and female respondents. In practice, four types of informal economic activities have been discovered which were the following (Pahl, 1987):

- (1) Work done by members of the household with their own tools and in their own time for themselves, providing goods and services (referred to by others as “domestic” or “household economy”. Pahl preferred the term “*self-provisioning*”).
- (2) Work done for others outside the household repaid in favours or in kind.
- (3) Work outside formal employment for others, outside the household, which is remunerated (“*working on the side*”).
- (4) Work outside the household to obtain food or materials without involving anyone else, or without it necessarily being illegal. (Fishing, ferreting etc.).

The findings of this study marked a change in the general view of the informal economic activities: the idea that these activities are more likely to be done by unemployed people and by households in a worse economic position has proved false. Instead, Pahl found that employed people are slightly more likely to engage in these kinds of activities (Pahl, 1984)².

Gershuny and Pahl also divided the term “social economy” of Ferman, into two distinct categories. They identify a *household economy*, “production, not for money, by members of a household and predominantly *for* members of a household, of goods and services for which approximate substitutes might otherwise be purchased for money”. They also identify the *communal economy*, which is “production, not for money or barter, by an individual or group, of a commodity that might otherwise be purchasable and of which the producers are not principal consumers” (Henry, 1982: 461).

Henry brings another dimension to the scene, differentiating Ferman's irregular economy (Table 1). He differentiates between black work, moonlighting and other economic activities, which are mostly related to normal, formal employment and can be described as “parasitic” on the formal economy – and the social economy, which is autonomous in the sense that it operates more or less independently from the formal economy.

By doing this differentiation and summarizing the predecessors' work, he brings a quite useful and clear typology of the field (Henry, 1982). According to this typology, *social economy means the type of economic activities, which are*

² Overall, in all fields of informal economic activity, employed respondents were more likely to participate than the unemployed were. These findings were confirmed by other studies, for example in Brighton, Kidderminster and South Wales – and led Pahl to see the informal economy not as a possible survival mechanism of the poor and unemployed, but a new dimension of social polarization with an underclass which is deprived both in the field of formal and informal work.

*not parasitic to regular economy, not monetized, not registered and accounted, but legal*³.

Table 1. A typology of informal economies

	Parasitic to the regular economy	Uses money as a medium of exchange	Accounted and measured by economic measurement	Legal
Irregular	+	-	-	-
Hidden	+	+	-	-
Unofficial	+	-	-	+
Social	-	-	-	+

The studying of informal and social economy had its peak at the turn of the '70s and the '80s. After this era, critical assessments and general neglect was typical on the field⁴. The debates are still present, however even the more skeptical academics *challenge social scientists to examine those fields of economic activity which are problematic to describe with the terms and theoretical frame of the classical economic point of view* (Roberts, Finnegan and Gallie, 1985). The potential of examining this phenomenon in drawing a much sharper and more correct picture of the human economic behaviour is beyond doubt, and there are recent important studies rooting in this theoretical heritage.

The informal economy in Central and Eastern Europe

Being a universal phenomenon, the informal economy is socially and economically embedded, and it can take different forms and meanings in different social and economical environments. So, after examining the history of the concept in the Western, British-American theoretical frame, the next thing we should do is to see how we can apply these ideas in a different environment.

³ For other examples of using monetization and legality as the dimensions dividing the types of the informal economic activities see Schneider and Enste (1999), Rose and Haerper (1992).

⁴ By the mid-1980s, many were beginning to be critical towards the entire perspective on the informal economy. Some argued that the whole concept is too wide to be examined as one phenomenon (Smith, 1987), others, such as Huber, tried to find a universal definition (Huber, 1985). Connolly felt that in so far as the concept grouped together a whole range of disparate activities into one category, it was unhelpful and further, that it amounts "to an apologetic and mystifying discourse" which should be abandoned altogether. (Connolly, 1985: 86, cited in Henry and Sills, 2006). Harding and Jenkins offered "the most critical analysis of the field arguing that the hidden economy did not exist; it was a myth created by social scientists...even the most formal contexts are comprehensively penetrated by and implicated in informal social relationships" (Harding and Jenkins, 1989, cited in Henry 2006: 274).

The post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe are providing an especially interesting field for such examination. In the socialist era, the widespread “second economy” was a partly illegal way to cope with the inadequacies of the socialist planning system (Sampson, 1987), and it is presumable that under the circumstances of rocketing unemployment, falling living standards and inadequate welfare systems, many people have “retreated” to their household and community to provide subsistence.

As a great example, Wallace, Haerpfner and Latcheva (2004) concentrated on the informal economic activity in the transition countries of East-Central Europe, using the data of the New Democracies Barometer from between 1991 and 1998. Their basic findings were the followings (p. 1-2): The informal economy was important in the socialist era as well as it is in the present market economy of these countries. In 90% of the households, some form of participation in the informal economy is necessary for economic survival. In most of the cases, the household is combining different elements of the informal economy – the own production of the household being the most important. The successful economic transition brought a decline in the household production over time in some countries, but in countries with failed economic transition, there is even an increase in these activities.

“The most autonomous and least integrated forms of household economic behaviour are the social economy and the household economy (being two distinctive categories in this study). Increasing dependence on these economies in these countries is associated with older, poorer people and those in peripheral areas. It leads very often to withdrawal from public and social life”.

The social economy in Hungary

Hungary had a special situation among the socialist countries in the sense that instead of oppressing the small-scale production to force the large-scale agricultural production on state-owned farms, the government tolerated, and even supported it. The aim of emphasizing the household and small-scale production was to absorb the surplus workforce of the agricultural population and to satisfy the needs of the rural households. Most of the rural households were involved in household food production. The “second economic” activities, however, were far from being limited to self-provisioning – for many, it generated even more income than the wages of the formal economy. It had high importance in keeping the standard of living relatively high in the beginning of the recession in the early ‘80s (with the cost of heavy self-exploitation, putting more and more effort into the second economy) (Harcza, Kovách and Szelényi, 1994).

Sík (1992) argued that with the decomposition of the socialist system and with the population experiencing inflation, economic recession, pauperization of low-

income people and erosion of the middle-income groups (like most of the transition countries), the formerly significant second economy can (and most likely will) transform into an even wider informal economy. He also argued that the growing importance of family business expands the scope of subsistence and self-service – there is nothing cheaper than self-exploiting subsistence, especially in a situation where there is no chance of getting a job, not even casual work. In rural areas, due to the extremely rapidly rising unemployment, a combination of subsistence, petty commodity farming and black market work may often be the only possibility for survival⁵.

A case study carried out by Laki in a peripheral, rural area in the middle of Hungary has shown that the former “second economy” changed its form due to the massive unemployment after the collapse of industry in the area and the falling income of the population, and also the lost support of the collective state farms (vehicles, fodder etc.). The production descended, and the main type of household production changed its character. The goods produced by the household are mainly consumed in the household instead of being sold (both because the pinching local markets and the lack of resources to keep up the high-scale production). Laki quotes a local agricultural expert, saying that the Hungarian peasant, the rural population endeavours to set up self-provisioning. A similar case study in the Northern regions of Hungary came up with quite similar results: after the disintegration of the collective state farms and the privatization of the land, the aim of the household production is the self-provisioning and the reduction of expenses rather than a quasi-entrepreneurial activity (Nemes and Heilig, 1996).

Brown and Kulcsár (2001) examined the household economic behaviour and interhousehold exchange in the conceptual framework of the social embeddedness of economic behaviour (Granovetter 1985), partially with the aim to determine the prevalence of self provisioning and producing goods and/or services for interhousehold exchange in contemporary rural Hungary (with 751 respondents from three distinct areas of the country: Bereg, Middle Tisza and Vend). Although they described the harsh economic conditions and the falling living standards of the post-socialist Hungarian county, they argued that these circumstances are not the only factors that drive people to be active outside the formal economy, but these activities can also be an instrument of maintaining social relationships – “from an economic perspective, households produce goods and services for interhousehold exchange as part of a livelihood strategy to generate income and/or to reduce the need for income. In addition, generalized reciprocity may be involved; thus even in the absence of immediate returns, households providing goods and services for

⁵ According to a survey of the Hungarian Statistical Office in 1991, the number of part-time farmers younger than 50 increased and the overwhelming proportion of them produces only for self-consumption and do not want to become full-time farmers.

others may expect a return sometime in the future. From a social standpoint, interhousehold exchanges contribute to the establishment and maintenance of social networks: exchanges that seem irrational from a strictly economic standpoint may be ‘reciprocal and solidarity activities’ central to developing and maintaining social networks and community ties” (Brown and Kulcsár, 2001:169).

According to their study, 60 percent of households derive half or more of their consumption of plant products from their own gardens; 16 percent grow all the fruits and vegetables they consume. Their data indicate that 54 percent of all survey households produce goods and/or services for interhousehold exchange. The strongest reason of participating in such activities is economical (“One has to get by” – stated by 84%), but non-economical factors are also relevant (statements “We can help our neighbours”, “We can be our own boss” and “We can work at home” are roughly around 65% each) (Brown and Kulcsár, 2001: 169).

Analysis of the survey data

The project *Employment and job searching willingness in the lower employment segment* was started in January 2009, with the sponsorship and support of the Hungarian National Office for Research and Technology, at the University of Debrecen, Department of Sociology and Social Policy. The aim of the project was to give a complex answer to the question: Why is it that the employment of the lower employment segment (and therefore the whole population) is so low, when all the structural economic circumstances would presume the opposite.

According to the theories of the economics of work, it is the interests that determine the behaviour of the employee: the monetary investments have to be in balance with the monetary benefits. However, the sociology of economics is paying more attention to the “market externalities”, those substantive economic factors that cannot be monetized but can be understood as interests and needs connected to work and employment. From this point of view, labour market behaviour can also be marked with the substantive fulfillment of needs⁶. Economic behaviour of the individuals can be influenced by non-market necessities, and material needs can be fulfilled by non-market activities – the sources of the welfare redistribution, participation in reciprocal exchange systems and the self-provisioning household production can be an alternative or supplementary secondary income source. An important characteristic of these activities is that they are not institutionalized, or, at least in the case of welfare incomes, are incompatible with institutionalized market-incomes. Thus, in the authoritative political and scientific discussion, these substantive practices are often underrated and underappreciated. However, if we consider the fact that the unemployed and

⁶ On the sociological interpretation of the substantive economy, see: Hopkins ([1957] 1971).

underemployed people and households can also have notable resources, such as skills, time and materials, there are interesting questions arising.

These substantive and external aspects presumably influence the decisions and behaviour of the lower segment more due to the depressed wage expectancy, the rural character of the undereducated people – in pursuance of either residency or ancestry. Along with these, there is supposedly a generational difference between the market-socialized, interest following younger and the older, who are more influenced by the embeddings of norm and rules of the recent and not so recent past (the norms of the rural, peasant life form and the “almost-norm” of the socialist second economy).

To avoid exaggeration and to refine our conception, there are important points to be made. First, we did not expect to find complete alternatives of the formal employment in the informality, but a sort of “pattern” of small informal activities, self-provisioning, self-service and reciprocal exchange of goods and services repaid in favours or in kind. Second, even if these activities are often referred to as survival or economic “strategies”, we do not imply that actors in the informal economy are consciously and consequently separating themselves from the formal economy, but rather that they “get by” as they can, and this results in a mixture of market, “half-market” and non-market activities. Third, as the classical literary, ethnographic and sociographic works have shown us, even in the practice of extreme self-provisioning, there are important needs that cannot be supplemented without some connection to the formal economy – people need materials and goods that they simply cannot produce themselves. It follows that – confirmed also by studies mentioned before – those who are on the worst position in the formal economy tend to be on the bottom of the informal economy too.

The project lasted between January 2009 and March 2010. The data collection was done in two waves, among the undereducated residents of the Northern Plains Region of Hungary between the age of 18 and 65. In the first wave in the summer of 2009, 30 detailed sociological interviews were made by students and researchers of the University of Debrecen with the purpose of having a more detailed look on the target audience, and thus to help us design an adequate questionnaire for our survey. The second wave lasted from December 2009 to February 2010, on a random sample of 1000, among undereducated residents of the Northern Plains Region between age of 18 and 65.

In our sampling method, undereducated meant that the respondent had lower education level than high-school graduation (the graduation exam qualifies as a minimal requirement for many jobs and is an entrance exam for higher education). 41,6% of the sample had finished elementary school as the highest educational level, 53,8% completed technical secondary school (and became a skilled labourer). 3,6% did not finish elementary school.

The respondent household was chosen by random walking, and the respondents from these households were chosen among the household members who met the sample criteria using the last-birthday method.

The questionnaire was designed to collect wide range data about the respondent and their household – detailed demographic data about the household, particular data on every household member’s income, the school experiences, the whole work history, competences and skills, attitudes toward employment and work conditions and the time usage and structure of the respondent. Most importantly for the topic of the informal and social economy, we got detailed information⁷ about the household production, storing habits, reciprocal exchange, and on the ownership of or access to agricultural properties and edifices.

Results

Overall participation in the social economy

As I have stated before, I use the term *social economy* as the field of economic activities that are not monetized, not parasitic to the regular economy, not registered, but legal. In our data collection, we have two sets of data indicating the participation in the social economy: the household production and the participation in reciprocal exchange systems.

Our first indicator is the overall participation in the social economy, based on the series of data collected about the consumption of the household. The table below shows the percentage of products supplemented at least partially from the social economy⁸.

Our data suggest that on average, 21.8 percent of the products were supplemented at least partly by the social economic participation of the respondent. Linear regression analysis between the product ratio partially and product ratio exclusively substituted from the social economy is very strong, which means that the social economy has a definite “substitution” role, in the sense that if a certain

⁷ Our concept was to try to measure the wideness of the production rather than the quantity of it. We listed 21 products (precisely: potato, beans, tomato, parsley, peach, apple, grapes, eggs, chicken breast, sausages, wine, spirits, salami, pork meat, bacon, cheese, bread, lard, beverages, toothpaste. By picking these products, we intended to cover the typical products consumed in the household, and also to differentiate between “low-prestige” and “high-prestige” goods) and asked how the respondent gets it (producing own, get it in kind, buy it occasionally, buy it in large amounts). By doing so, we got a detailed picture of the consumption and the production of the household.

⁸ The gross ratio of the products from the social economy/all products would be misleading since not all households consumed all the products on the list, so instead the products from the social economy/consumed product ratio was used in this case.

product has a source from the social economy, most of the time it does not have a formal market source ($R = 0.928$; $p < 0.001$).

Table 2. Percentage of products supplemented at least partially from the social economy

Groups based on social economic activity	Number of households	% of households
not involved in the social economy	445	44.9%
less than 25% informally	174	17.6%
25-50% informally	217	21.9%
more than 50% informally	155	15.6%

Household production

We found that 43% of the households are engaging in household production, which means that at least one product is produced within the household.

Table 3. Ratio of products supplemented at least partly by household production

Groups based on social economic activity	% of households
0 to 10 percent	59.4%
10 to 25 percent	11.4%
25 to 50 percent	17.6%
50 to 75 percent	9.0%
more than 75 percent	2.6%

The study mentioned earlier about the informal economies in CEE countries reported similar trends about the importance of household production in Hungary: 12% stated that the household economy was the most important source of income, which is consistent with our findings (11.6% stated that more than 50% of the consumed products come from the household production (Wallace, Haerpfner and Latcheva, 2004).

Growing vegetables and fruits are the most prevalent type of household production: 40% of the respondents stated that there is at least one type of plant grown for the household's own consumption. Most households do not have monoculture plantations in the sense that the majority of the households grow various types of vegetables and fruits. Only a quarter of the households grow less than four types of plants, and a quarter of the households grow all the plants listed in the questionnaire. All these data signal that gardening is the basis of the household production. Moreover, 28% of the sample keeps livestock in the

household for the household's own consumption. Half of them only one type of domestic animal, half of them both kinds (usually pig and poultry).

Six percent of the respondents stated that they produced alcohol in the household. This kind of activity is quite prevalent in the countryside, and in our opinion, the prevalence can be higher than stated. We also have to take into consideration that alcohol production demands a large amount of materials and means of production, and is higher in the groups having access to these: 25% of the households owning either an orchard or a vineyard produce alcohol.

Barter connections

Barter connections, according to our data, are far less prevalent and important than household production (Table 4). Linear regression analysis has shown a significant, but very weak connection between the intensity of the barter connections and the household production ($R = 0.83$; $p < 0.01$).

Table 4. Ratio of products supplemented at least partly by barter

Groups based on social economic activity	% of households
0 to 10 percent	84.1%
10 to 25 percent	8.6%
25 to 50 percent	5.4%
50 to 75 percent	1.3%
more than 75 percent	0.6%

Factors in connection with the social economy of the households

The wide range of collected data allowed us to seek connection with many factors that can possibly affect and/or encourage the participation in social economic activities. When we designed the questionnaire, we had preliminary assumptions about which factors are determinative. In the followings, we describe if these connections are present or not. The factors we examined in relation with the social economy are income of the households, size of the households, age structure of the households, employment structure of the households, residence and developmental level of the subregion. The dependent variable is in each of the cases the ratio of products supplemented by the social economic activity of the household.

Income of the household

We measured household income through the household's yearly income per capita. Our assumption was that the social economic activities will be typical in households with lower income (who cannot afford to buy certain goods from the formal market), with the exception of the households with the lowest income (who lack the materials and money even for these informal economic activities).

Our data have shown, however, almost no connection between the income of the household and the social economic activity. The middle income groups have slightly higher participation rates, but income does not have a strong effect (Table 5).

Table 5. Crosstabulation: income of the household with social economic activity

Income per capita (quintiles)	Groups based on social economic activity			
	not involved in the social economy Row N %	less than 25% informally Row N %	25-50% informally Row N %	more than 50% informally Row N %
1. quintile (lowest income group)	53.3%	14.1%	19.6%	13.1%
2. quintile	47.7%	19.3%	19.3%	13.7%
3. quintile	39.7%	21.1%	23.6%	15.6%
4. quintile	40.2%	14.6%	25.6%	19.6%
5. quintile (highest income group)	43.7%	18.8%	21.3%	16.2%

Cramer's V=0,073 with Approx.Sig.=0,190

Size of the household

Regarding the size of the households (i.e. the number of individuals living together in the household) our hypothesis was that in a larger household there is more workforce and need of these kinds of supplementary techniques due to larger overall consumption.

Crosstabulation of the household size and the groups based on social economic activity revealed a significant, but weak connection. As Table 6 shows, the distributions are fairly even between the different household sizes.

Table 6. Crosstabulation: size of the household with social economic activity

Size of the households	Groups based on social economic activity			
	not involved in the social economy Row N %	less than 25% informally Row N %	25-50% informally Row N %	more than 50% informally Row N %
1 member	60.0%	11.8%	17.3%	10.9%
2 members	33.9%	18.6%	25.3%	22.2%
3 members	42.8%	20.9%	22.8%	13.5%
4 members	44.3%	15.5%	23.3%	16.9%
5 members	49.2%	16.9%	18.5%	15.3%
6 or more members	52.9%	19.6%	18.6%	8.8%

Cramer's V = 0.106 with Approx.Sig = 0.004

Age structure of the household

We measured the age structure of the households as the ratio of the household members over the age of 45 among the household members over 18. Age is an important factor in our consideration, because older members of the household can be affected by the norms of the household production rooting in the traditional peasant way of living and later the socialist second economy, and, derived from this, they are more likely to have the required skills.

The age structure of the household had a significant effect on the social economic activity since households with older age structure tended to participate more in the social economy (Table 7).

Table 7. Crosstabulation: age structure of the household with social economic activity

Ratio of household members over 45 among all adult household members	Groups based on social economic activity			
	not involved in the social economy Row N %	less than 25% informally Row N %	25-50% informally Row N %	more than 50% informally Row N %
No household member above 45	53.6%	17.8%	15.7%	12.9%
50% or less above 45	45.0%	15.6%	25.6%	13.7%
More than 50% above 45	34.8%	18.6%	26.3%	20.4%

Cramer's V = 0.130 with Approx.Sig = 0.000

Formal economic activity of the household

Economic activity is a key factor, and it is approached differently by the researchers of the field. We measured the formal economic activity of the household as the ratio of the economically active household members⁹ among the household members over 18 and assumed that the best situation for extensive informal activities is that in which there are both active and inactive members in the household (thus the resources, time and workforce are all present). This assumption was partly confirmed by the analysis: the group with the highest participation rates is where more than half of the adult members of the household is employed, but there is at least one adult member without former employment (Table 8).

Table 8. Crosstabulation: employment structure of the household with social economic activity

Ratio of employed household members among all adult household members	Groups based on social economic activity			
	not involved in the social economy	less than 25% informally	25-50% informally	more than 50% informally
	Row N %	Row N %	Row N %	Row N %
0-25% employed	43.2%	18.8%	21.6%	16.4%
25%-50%	41.7%	17.1%	24.1%	17.1%
more than 50% employed	38.3%	12.1%	33.6%	15.9%
all adult members employed	56.9%	19.0%	12.3%	11.8%

Cramer's V = 0.99 with Approx.Sig.= 0.001

Residence

Regarding the location of the households, we took into account both the population number of the settlement wherein the household is situated and the development level of the subregion the settlement is situated in.

The type and population number of the settlement are important in the sense that presumably the residents of smaller and rural settlements are more likely to engage in these kinds of activities¹⁰ due to normative pressure, deeper interpersonal

⁹ By economically active household member, we mean a household member who has income from the formal labour market or from entrepreneurial activity or employed as a communal worker by the local government (which is highly prevalent due to certain government programmes aiming to "lead back" the unemployed to the labour market).

¹⁰ "Rural households are embedded in a cultural system that provides a 'tool kit' which guides nonmarket work and attests to its social and economic value. Moreover, nonmarket economic activity has been part of rural life in Hungary for generations, and it has become institutionalized as part of

relationships, and most importantly, the resourcefulness of the rural areas (gardens, fields etc.). Overall, the type of social economic activities we were collecting data about in this survey has a definite rural character.

Our assumptions were partly verified by the analysis of the survey data. There is a significant connection between the size of the settlement and the engagement in the social economy. According to the statistical indicators, this connection is not particularly strong, but if we take a look at Table 9, we can see that the activities are highly prevalent in the smallest settlements, and much less common and wide in the larger settlements. The study of Brown and Kulcsár on household economic activity in rural Hungary had the same outcome (Brown and Kulcsár, 2001).

Table 9. Crosstabulation: size of the settlement with social economic activity

Size of the settlement	Groups based on social economic activity			
	not involved in the social economy	less than 25% informally	25-50% informally	more than 50% informally
	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
less than 1,000 residents	14.3%	21.4%	14.3%	50.0%
1,001 – 2,000 residents	34.5%	16.1%	28.7%	20.7%
2,001 – 5,000 residents	32.2%	17.8%	24.6%	25.4%
5,001 – 10,000 residents	51.4%	15.9%	23.9%	8.7%
10,001 – 20,000 residents	41.1%	18.2%	22.9%	17.8%
20,001 – 50,000 residents	54.4%	26.3%	15.8%	3.5%
50,001 – 100,000 residents	88.9%	4.4%	4.4%	2.2%
100,001 residents or more	53.5%	18.5%	19.5%	8.5%

Cramer's V=0.189 with Approx.Sig.=0.000

The connection with the residency of the respondent household becomes clearer if we take a look at the development level of the subregion wherein the household is situated¹¹ (Table 10).

Data suggest that the importance of the social economy tends to be considerably higher in the less developed subregions. This outcome is supplemented by the data

village social structure. Hence, given the economic insecurities facing many rural households, it is not surprising that they participate in self-provisioning and interhousehold exchange. Moreover, these households are embedded in a rich cultural system that promotes nonmarket work for utilitarian gain and attests to its value as a method of social reproduction” (Brown and Kulcsár, 2001:177).

¹¹ The indicator of the development level of the subregion is based on the following factors: income per capita, functioning economic organizations per thousand residents, unemployment ratio, migration, number of phone stations per thousand residents, number of cars per thousand residents. Source: <http://www.nepszamlalas.hu/hun/kotetek/fogalmak/111.html>

from the New Democracies Barometer which indicates that overall economic growth leads to a decline in household production (Wallace, Haerper and Latcheva, 2004).

Table 10. Crosstabulation: development level of the subregion with social economic activity

Subregions - development level	Groups based on social economic activity			
	not involved in the social economy Row %	less than 25% informally Row %	25-50% informally Row %	more than 50% informally Row %
2 nd development level (3,11 - 3,57)	58.3%	17.2%	17.2%	7.4%
3 rd development level (2,64 - 3,1)	44.9%	15.9%	24.3%	15.0%
4 th development level - underdeveloped (2,2 - 2,63)	47.2%	17.1%	19.7%	16.0%
5 th development level - highly undeveloped (1,51 - 2,19)	29.4%	19.0%	27.8%	23.9%

Cramer's V= 0.148 with Approx.Sig.= 0.000

Discussion

Our findings and other studies about the informal/social/household economies clearly indicate that for many households in Hungary and in Central and Eastern Europe, the sources other than the formal economy have a high importance as a supplementary or even the main source of livelihood and welfare. The production in the household and the interhousehold/interpersonal exchange still plays a major role in the economic behaviour of the residents of the post-socialist countries. Half of the households in our sample participated in some degree in the social economy, mainly in the form of household production. *15% of the sample got more than half of its consumption from informal sources.* It follows from these indicators of high participation that we cannot take informal economic activities out of consideration when we examine the consumption, well-being, employment status and overall economic behaviour of the households in contemporary Hungary.

The social economic activities have a definitive rural character in the sense that these practices are highly present in small settlements and economically underdeveloped regions with high unemployment rates and low economic output. However, the social economy does not have a “substitution role” in the sense that it has no definitive connection with the employment status of the household, does not work as a “backup” employment in case of unemployment.

The age structure of the household also has a great impact on the social economic activities – in older households, the participation rates are higher. This can

be attributed to the different norms and experiences of different age groups – the extensive second economy in the socialist era and the traditional peasant way of life provided an “inventory”, modes of getting by in economic hardship for the elderly.

According to our analysis, social economic activities are the most prevalent in not fully employed, older households in the middle income groups (where experience, skills, time and some money to invest are present) in rural, underdeveloped areas and smaller settlements (where land is available for household production and the economic situation makes it necessary).

However, the fact that the social economic activities are observable in the whole cross-section of the society suggests that we also have to take non-economic and non-demographic factors into consideration, which are difficult to examine with the survey method. The further, deeper analysis of the survey data and the sociological interviews conducted in our project can help us draw a more precise and valid picture about the nature of these activities and the different motivations and meanings behind it.

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Knowledge and Regulation through Quality Assurance. An Analysis¹

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Abstract. The main point of the article is to explore some of the normative and cognitive dimensions of the standard based regulatory instrument: quality assurance in pre-university education. In methodological terms the article processes sections from case studies and interviews made within the international comparative research, KNOWandPOL. One of the orientations of the project approached the relationship between knowledge and policy through knowledge-based regulatory instruments. Since policies encompass different kinds of knowledge, the focus here was put on the users, street level actors' knowledge, questioning (1) what kind of perceptions and interpretations could the regulation induce, and (2) whether the process of regulation could lead to transformative or paradigmatic learning at users' level. The introductory sections describe the context of the research and of knowledge-based regulatory instruments, while the second chapter discusses the relationship of knowledge, policy and regulation through the presentation of the national political and knowledge context, social mapping in quality assurance together with the normative aspects and cognitive dimensions of regulation. The article argues that knowledge as a process can be tracked in this regulation, but since it lacks synthesis and summaries, the evidence accumulated here cannot generate action, the use of users' knowledge is limited. Since practice has not really brought radical or qualitative changes,

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paradigm shift cannot yet be considered; however, signs of paradigmatic change are visible. Consequently, the tool calls for improvements in order to develop the instrument so that it could strengthen the functional aspects of regulation.

Keywords: knowledge based regulatory instruments, cognitive dimension, paradigm-shift, transformative learning

Introduction

KNOWandPOL² is a research project on the role of knowledge in the construction and regulation of education and health policies in Europe. Twelve research teams from eight different countries are engaged in the analysis of sector-based policies in respect of the education and health sectors. The multinational and multilevel project looks at the aspects of knowledge and governance at local, national and international levels. Through the complex set of research the KNOWandPOL project intends to move – both in theoretical and practical terms – towards a sociology of knowledge–policy relation (Delvaux and Mangez, 2008).

The research was organized around three complementary research orientations³, each of these orientations being already completed. The first section intended to identify the knowledge sphere of decision-making processes. For this reason the research teams mapped the knowledge potentially available to decision makers and traced the relationships between the actors holding or producing knowledge and actors who take the policy decisions⁴. The second orientation served to analyze decision-making processes through public actions (Comaille, 2004). This phase of the research paid special attention to processes of meaning making, understanding and learning. The central issue was the role of knowledge in the complex process of public action, and the aspects of policy learning⁵. The point of departure of orientation three was the growing use of regulatory instruments (Salamon, 2002), consequently the researches focused on the use of knowledge as an instrument of regulation at international and national scenes. Here special attention was paid to the role of knowledge in the fabrication, production and dissemination of the instrument, to the diffusion and use of information by the actors – especially decision-makers – for whom they are intended⁶. The knowledge-based regulatory instruments were interpreted as tools specifically concerned with the diffusion of a particular kind of

² www.knowandpol.eu. The 5 years project started in 2006.

³ <http://www.knowandpol.eu/index.php?id=15>

⁴ For the research reports of this phase see: <http://www.knowandpol.eu/index.php?id=245>

⁵ For the research reports of this phase see:

http://www.knowandpol.eu/index.php?id=235&no_cache=1

⁶ For the research reports of this phase see: <http://www.knowandpol.eu/index.php?id=257>

knowledge in order to shape the behaviour of actors at a given policy field (Afonso, Carvalho, Costa, Freeman, Smith-Merry and Sturdy, 2009).

The present paper connects to orientation three, and discusses some aspects of the national knowledge-based regulatory instrument the Romanian education team⁷ chose to study: quality assurance in pre-university education. This instrument consists of external school evaluations and internal self-evaluations, the two representing the base for quality assurance. Within these actions the institutional capacity, the efficiency of education and the management of quality at the level of schools are evaluated. All quality assurance procedures function based on standards, taken over from the international level (EU Quality Assurance policies, procedures and guidelines), aligned to national conditions. The two evaluation procedures involving the management of quality (which means the organizational structure managing the activities and processes that satisfy quality requirements) are interconnected between each other. This interconnectedness gives the possibility to get a more exact view on the relationship between knowledge and policy.

The paper focuses on the functioning mechanisms of this regulation, aiming to discover through the experience-based knowledge of the users the impacts of quality assurance procedures. Through this approach we aim to capture the aspects of possible or supposed movements towards a paradigm shift in quality assurance. We assume that the last years' practice started only a kind of paradigmatic change that cannot yet be considered paradigm-shift.

In methodological terms we draw on two main sources: on the interviews conducted with target persons (experts, school inspectors, principals, teachers and so on), and field research (visiting schools to study the perceptions and thinking on the external examination and self-evaluation procedures of quality assurance).

Theoretical context for knowledge-based regulatory instruments

The KNOWandPOL project uses the term 'governance' in the context of knowledge-policy relation. According to the definition of de Boer, Enders and Schimank (2007), the governance perspective means 'the rise of a profound skepticism about the possibilities of hierarchical control of complex social systems' (p. 137). Following this idea the governance perspective is an open analytic tool for the analyses of the state of governance (de Boer et al., 2007; Altrichter, 2010) within a given context. Since educational governances are changing intensively – from 'hard' to 'dual' or soft-governance forms – (Altrichter, 2010), questions of new modes of regulation (Mangez, 2007) and new public management (Hood, 1991) arise. After Mangez (2007) the new modes of regulation combine different levels of power and evolve a growing number of actors, consequently result in

⁷ <http://www.knowandpol.eu/index.php?id=55>

much more complex relationships between knowledge and policy. The run of multi-actor and multi-level policies is possible where a shift towards new, post-bureaucratic modes of regulation happened or happens. This condition means the terms and possibilities of soft-governance as well. The new modes of regulation emphasize the autonomy of actors and organizations and the relevance of negotiation and persuasion, while they reinforce the key role of knowledge in legitimating the policy making process, achieving thus knowledge-based decision-making (Afonso et al., 2009).

The project distinguishes – according to the Durkheimian approach – between normative and functional regulation. In this context the goal of normative regulation is to ensure commitment to the political system or to a given set of local or professional norms, while the functional regulation is to ensure efficiency and effectiveness (Barroso, Freeman, Ramsdal, Sturdy and van Zanten, 2007). Through the case studies of orientation three the research is seeking – in the case of regulatory instruments under study – to what extent they represent a normative or functional instrument of regulation. Furthermore, the distinction between regulation and self-regulation is also emphasized since the identity of the actor responsible for the regulation is of major importance: regulation is in general carried out directly by the government or by an appointed body, while in case of self-regulation the government allows a social or economic actor to set its own standards and to ensure that they are met (ibid).

The specifications and guidelines of this research phase (Barroso et al., 2007; van Zanten and Ramsdal, 2010) use Salamon's (2002) definition of policy instrument. According to this a regulatory instrument might be a mechanism, object, tool or process which defines, specifies or structures the work of information gathering, planning, coordination, implementation, accounting or evaluation in a given domain of public action. In the case of the national instrument we consider quality assurance rather a mechanism or process, which defines and structures the work of examination and evaluation in educational quality assurance. This instrument gives a push for the actors from the field of education towards consciousness and towards doing something they otherwise might not do (or not in this form). Creating the instrument did not mean a completely new concept and practice at a national level; however the new structure, the renewed concept and the quality assurance based on standards and performance indicators meant novelties in pre-university education. The intention to diffuse a particular kind of knowledge (quality assurance based on standards coming from the international – mostly EU – level as an aspect of Europeanization) and the introduction of a particular kind of action (external school evaluation and internal self-evaluations) is to shape behaviour, consciousness, accountability and education quality management issues at a national level.

According to the literature, qualifications frameworks, quality indicators, standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European education space are partially to solve the challenges which national education systems are facing due to globalization and increased marketization (Cort, 2010). This is particularly prevalent for countries which have just recently joined the EU. These frameworks, indicators and standards frame the perception of how education should be organized and managed. The regulatory instrument is based on values and principles⁸, therefore it calls to follow, practice and accomplish them. The international sources of this instrument⁹ direct our attention to the possible processes of reception, reinterpretation, translation and adaptation in the context of policy formation. In this case the overall aim is to improve the quality of education corresponding to standards. Standard based quality assurance targets common understanding on issues of quality and the improvement of transparency, comparability and accountability.

In the project the instrument of regulation is understood as a knowledge-based instrument of regulation. Various forms of knowledge are considered here; however, the new, emerging forms of knowledge – representing the results/consequences of mutual conscious or unconscious acts of construction (Ozga, 2010) – are important as well.

Researching knowledge, policy and regulation

The national political and knowledge context

Through the short description of the national political and knowledge context we aim to discuss the most important preconditions for the introduction, operation and development of the standard-based quality assurance system.

The period of 1998–2005 prepared the issue of quality assurance in the Romanian education system, when – due to international trends, pressures of modernization, national developments and EU pre-accession requirements – professional and political discussions came to the forefront. However, the national education context in which the quality assurance policy had developed contained weaknesses and difficulties as well. The national education reforms of the last two decades consisted in series of initiatives and processes where actions were not built consistently one after the other (Rostás, Kósa, Bodó, Fejes and Kiss, 2009). Therefore the diversified efforts did not contribute to achieve consistency within

⁸ See: ‘Declaration of Principles’ – <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c628/> – and ‘Values and Principles of Quality of Education’ – <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c627/>.

⁹ RAQAPE (Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance on Pre-University Education) Strategy for the period 2007-2010, p.3. <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c629/>

education. Of course, there have been lots of positive attempts, efforts and plans in education, but the overall picture is quite heterogeneous, mosaic-like and contradictory. In general, reforms and practices are somewhere between rational and random (Crişan, 2008), and there is difference between policy narratives and reality, consequently the gap between policy rhetoric and policy socialization is significant. Since the education system faces unexpected challenges, it gives sudden and accidental reactions and responses. In reforms, successes alternate with stagnation. Due to this the position and role of educational institutions is, as well, uncertain and changing. For all these deficiencies Crişan (2006) mentions the need to move towards the democratization and opening up of the elaboration of education policies, interactive decisional mechanisms, interactive policy learning, definite, coherent and continuous education policies, financial projecting and the moral maintenance of policies.

The importance of these needs is also supported by globalization trends, Europeanization and international regulations. However, the systematic construction is mostly hindered by an important paradox, namely that although there are several discussions, regulations, policies that encourage and accelerate the full-scale reform of the education system, this reform is limited by centralization, since the announced decentralization could not yet happen (Biró, Biró and Kiss, 2010). And there is also a kind of limitation on the part of society as social actors are not yet partners in issues of education; society does not assume responsibility in promoting school and learning. These are the reasons why education reforms are always on agenda.

Furthermore, the national political and knowledge context is also defined by the lack of long term education policy agreement between political parties. This way the priorities settled by the new governments are dominant in every governmental period. Structurally the central administration of education often re-examines the logic of governance, and its priorities are stronger than the governance's priorities. Since decentralization could not yet happen, the chances to move towards soft-regulation and new public management are limited.

In this seemingly negative but real situation most of the actors perceive and discuss these problems. The professional discourses and narratives pay more attention to it. Nevertheless there is no such alliance between educational actors that could result in public action whereupon education policy could exit the political game or could overwrite it in order to professionalize.

Social mapping and antecedents in quality assurance

Establishing the quality assurance system was a process of learning and construction that through translation from the international context and re-constructing the national device turned into a process of shaping and reshaping,

this way providing meaning to the regulatory instrument. Different actors (specialists and experts) and institutional bodies (political and professional) took part in the preparation of the decision. However, introducing this system remained a political decision and act: the efforts to modernization, the pressure coming from the representatives of private education institutions, target persons and experts nominated by the Minister, professional issues approved by the Minister of Education – all served (and serve) the strong political direction (as a matter of fact, control) not only in decision-making, but in the whole practice as well.

The involvement of some professionals (in a very limited number), school inspectors and experts (former external examiners) in the shaping of the instrument shows a macro level network in a process of translation (Callon, 1986). Although there have been different interests and views of groups and individuals that contributed to the social construction of knowledge on quality assurance (theoretical aspects, concepts, content, methodologies), the process of construction of the regulatory instrument could not be a multi-actor process because of the lack of power and alliance between the different actors, and the excessive political control and interest over the tool.

The quality assurance system has its institutional, professional and political antecedents. The first means the former institutions and bodies engaged in quality control and quality assurance at national level; the second refers basically to the EU and OECD documents regarding the quality standards; while the last is connected to the country's EU pre-accession process. From the point of view of knowledge we can say that the social mapping and antecedents show a gradually developing structure and practice, which needed the national political approval defined by the external/international trends. The fabrication of this instrument was – in the first step – a process of reception, but also an adaptation to the international standards, the incorporation of these into the national practice. This intention of harmonizing with the international standards, accepting their effects on the processes within national context, and the intentions for development (especially in the last three years, accelerated with the country's EU accession) is an aspect of Europeanization (Vink, 2003). This instrument considered as knowledge-based regulation tool (KRT) aims to be embedded into the wider national education policy, however, the standard-based quality assurance presents an individual/separate way of action compared with other education regulations; it seems to encompass the national educational evaluation policy.

The normative aspects of regulation

Introducing the quality assurance system at pre-university level happened relatively quickly compared with the general practice of introducing education reforms. According to the interviewees, it was exactly this quickness which caused

the first difficulties actors had to deal with: the lack of knowledge about the institutional framework and the system of quality assurance, about putting theories into practice, and the lack of knowledge regarding practical solutions and general expectations. Since the social debate – that could contribute to the circulation of knowledge – gained only little ground, the introduction of this instrument started with a kind of knowledge deficiency. Though the hierarchical structure of the education system (through the County School Inspectorates) and the given administrative knowledge present in it (routines in managing tasks) the instrument managed to be operated.

The process of evaluation and quality assurance was started during school year 2006–2007. Ever since, the concrete operation of the instrument is represented by two procedures: (1) the external evaluation of pre-university education institutions (especially the particular institutions and those state institutions which start new study programs or specializations), and (2) the internal evaluations (in form of self-evaluations) on the level of each school, in order to assure the management of quality. The two procedures are not exclusively linked, but are neither independent from each other: the internal (self) evaluation is a constant activity at the level of schools, while the external evaluation is its audit. Self-evaluation prepares schools – at the level of documents and practice – for the external evaluation.

The external evaluation of schools takes place in certain school units (mainly private schools) and in those state financed (public) school units which want to introduce new study programmes or specializations. In compliance with the given standards, a committee of 4–6 experts verifies – on the basis of documents and school conditions – whether the school conditions meet the quality requirements (whether the institutional capacity, the efficiency of education and the management of quality meet the standards). In case of negative judgment the institution is given suggestions for development, and after carrying them out can ask for starting the evaluation process over again. This practice aims to ensure that schools function systematically, based on a unified acknowledgment, and it tries to put into practice a normative regulation, which ensures commitment to a set of professional norms, standards. By entering such an evaluation system, some types of schools (state and private schools) and levels of schools (kindergartens, primary schools, high schools, post-lyceums) can contribute to the forming of a unified picture about educational institutions. Consequently it becomes possible to see and understand systematically the institutional capacity, the educational content and the management of quality.

Internal evaluations go parallel with the external evaluation procedures meaning constant action at the level of schools. There are school committees¹⁰ for

¹⁰ CEQA – Committee for Evaluation and Quality Assurance

this purpose being in charge of all issues related to the quality of education in a given school. These help schools to achieve self-evaluation and to make the results public. Thus it serves the creation of community knowledge and raises the awareness on the school's (community's) goals and plans, serving in the same time the proper functioning of the school. Ideally, actors who are able to be reflexive on their work and critical considering the strengths and weaknesses of the school are willing to work on improvements, consequently in practical terms the management of quality is realized.

The procedures of quality assurance could only start with the involvement of specialists and experts. For this reason it was necessary to enroll/employ experts for external evaluations. Followed by preparation and training, this action tried to familiarize participants with the elaborated materials (concepts and methodologies), in order to form a widely significant knowledge-base. Trainings were part of dissemination, and were offered to school inspectors and teachers. However, trainings were preceded by autonomous and informal learning processes since the lack of necessary knowledge for the procedures of quality assurance resulted in an instrumental learning process (Skogstad, 2007). Training and learning aimed to clear up some notions, to become acquainted with the concepts, and to find answers to the questions of practical utilization. This way the possibility was given for the participants to learn a lot not only from specialists, but also from each other. During training, besides the preparation and practical work, special emphasis was put on particular case studies and situational practices. At the same time training was also a possibility to get in touch with people from other counties and to exchange experience with them, a possibility for interpersonal relations and informal discussions. After the first training it is a permanent task for the County School Inspectorates to continue dissemination, to initiate methodological days and discussions on issues of quality assurance. These institutions are regular partners of school committees, contributing to the knowledge-flow on quality assurance, offering information and consultancy. There is an expressed demand for this, because questions related to concepts or practices arise continuously, and actors permanently call for information to update their knowledge. Furthermore, trainings ensure these actors' role as advisers, which helps legitimating the procedures of quality assurance.

In conclusion we can say that the external and internal school evaluations and the trainings and discussions initiated within this regulation represent a significant knowledge-flow and translation between the different level actors aiming to achieve understanding and a degree of consensus related to this instrument of regulation.

Cognitive dimensions of knowledge and regulation: how the instrument functions

This section gives the snapshot of a few cognitive aspects, discussing important experiences on how the external and internal quality evaluations are perceived, experienced and used by principals and teachers, which are the actors' general reactions and actions, how are the social relations among actors determined, and how the roles and identities of actors change through their involvement in quality assurance procedures.

Reactions

The observation of the experts doing external evaluations is that during school inspections they meet a community, which shows a very sensitive society (the elite schools are characterized by an increased sensitivity), where people are quite sensitive to critics and to evaluative opinion. As one of our interviewees said: *'this [external evaluation, examination] is not something we are used to'* (expert, principal). This is why street level actors are offended by the inspections, being hostile towards them. According to one of the experts this reaction is a matter of mentality. Since school communities do not see the added value of education, do not focus on the school performance and are very much engaged in complaints over the unpleasant situation of low performance, it is really hard to achieve developments through quality assurance procedures.

At the end of the external evaluations a general report is written, consisting of three chapters and a summary, which will be made public. This publicity is the reason why sometimes schools are very critical with the experts doing the evaluation. As we found out, the experts are also quite sensitive when they are criticized, the difference being that they need to handle these critical remarks in a flexible way (showing patience, awareness and self-confidence) due to their work and the concept they represent.

The internal practice of evaluation and quality assurance is viewed by several street level actors as a burden, as extra work. Its reception at a local level is rather ambivalent. It is a general experience that these actors define the practice of continuous self-examination and self-evaluation as an extra work that brings no supplementary income and as an obvious burden (especially those who have not chosen but have been given the task). However for the principals and for those who are more deeply involved into the procedures of quality assurance, and are responsible for the successful functioning of the school, this work is considered as a benefit, an added value. It helps to understand the situation of the school, contributes to accountability, serves finding the deficiencies and supports drafting developmental strategies.

As a matter of fact there is a very strong complaint-mechanism functioning on system level, these complaints arise connected to the implementation of new initiatives, policies and tools. Usually there are two reasons: either because the kinds of innovations/initiatives which arise are not coherent with the educational practice, or because there is no appropriate financing/supplementary income that comes with the new tasks. This kind of attitude – the expectations, complaints and outcries – can be explained by the significant amount of administrative work in education and by the low or medium financial allowances. But there are some exaggerated complaints as well. We could discover such problems in connection with procedures of quality assurance as well; however, here the counter-reaction was evoked by the way the central apparatus tried to put quality assurance in practice (forced, obligatory, demanding more paperwork, and obligating uncomfortable, unpleasant external inspections upon schools).

Besides the complaints, there is no real opposition, but rather a constrained acceptance of the practice. Some actors try to protest against being directed from the central level (there is only little local, institutional autonomy regarding the main educational issues), against quality assurance based on standards (they would support the quality assurance principles complied with the different levels of education) and against the inspection of external experts. But this is mostly an individual and passive resistance. Most actors are aware of the fact that they share the same opinion, but there is still no collective and organized action connected to these complaint-narratives.

This situation raises the question whether the actual practical work is accurately and correctly done, or the work is rather perfunctory. For our questions connected to this issue we basically got positive answers. The school inspectors share the opinion that at the beginning one could feel the superficiality concerning the work, but the experiences and practices of the last years helped to change these attitudes. This way, on the level of schools and school committees there are more and more actors who admit the importance of this work, taking it seriously and trying to do the best for the assurance and development of quality. The number of actors directly involved in this work is increasing, but it cannot be completely generalized to teachers, auxiliary staff or social actors.

In cases of authorization, accreditation or periodical monitoring, the documentations of the procedures are sent to the central level (the Ministry) for approval. This generally takes a long time since procedures slow down at this central level, which causes more confusion, discontent and criticism from the part of street level actors. Furthermore, the difficult communication between the different levels contributes to the formation and strengthening of complaint mechanisms coupled with strongstave off mechanisms.

Meaning making

Regarding the regulatory instrument, special emphasis was put – from the beginning – on the sense and use of evaluations, self-evaluations and quality management activities, seeking why these initiatives are important. As one of our interviewee said: *‘The use of this regulation is to encourage people to work more and better. To list the negative indicators and to make changes.’* (school inspector) However, the opinion of the street local actors and of those working in the field is divided. There are actors who – based on the experience of the last four years – consider these initiatives to be positive, and there are some very critical views as well, especially when it takes the external inspection. There is a definite knowledge on what the quality of education means: *‘it is an issue known by all principals, it is evident, obvious, and it is based on human resources: on the skills and competences of the teachers and on the potentials of the students.’* (principal) This opinion refers to the significant empirical – but somehow lay – knowledge of the street level actors.

It is an issue of reception to see the extent to which the actors concerned with quality assurance (school inspectors, principals, and teachers) understand the use of this regulation. In case when the experts see the school-staff looking for the main principles and conceptions of the school in the documentations, it is obvious for them (who are external observers) that there is no common conception that the school shares. The aim of the documentations and paperwork in quality assurance is to help the actors understand the main principles. Because *‘if inside the system people do not understand the reason why things happen in a certain way, then it is very difficult to achieve meeting the standards. It is important to be aware of things, not just to work mechanically. This is about to work consciously with responsibility.’* (principal, expert in external evaluation)

Actions

Regarding street level actions, a form of communication has developed between some schools which discuss between them how they compile some given documents, what proposals they put forward for certain problems, and so on. This was necessary because the new tasks coming from the central institution were different compared with the earlier practices. According to school inspectors this kind of exchange of experiences and communication has a positive effect on the cooperation between schools in a region and on the formation of informal relationships between them.

The external evaluations need to be paid, and the amount of money necessary to this process is considered significant by most actors. This aims to make those working in the field of education aware of the fact that certain educational services have a price, the state cannot cover all expenses and the financial problems of the

school are of community responsibility. However, it is much more important that this situation determines the relationship and cooperation between schools and their maintainers. Our case studies showed remarkable impetus and basically positive courses of negotiation between the parties.

With regard to actions, misunderstandings appear even after the last four years of evaluation. Some schools still mix up the standards of different kinds of evaluations, do not show seriousness in filling the papers, are quite poor in their ideas of quality improvement, take self-evaluation to be a formality, and so on. Based on the evaluation report of the 3rd year¹¹ the culture of quality management is (still) missing from the national education system.

Proposals and options

Evaluations do not involve sanctioning. The overall aim is to draw attention on the weaknesses and threats, to show that further changes and developments are needed in order to improve the quality of education. Consequently, solutions are advised for schools to follow, suggesting the necessity to engage in learning at school community level. As one of our interviewee said, this means – beyond the critical remarks – a certain kind of security and help in their work. Since more and more street level actors share this opinion, this kind of attitude and act can be interpreted as a sign of a move towards grounding soft-governance in a bureaucratic and still centralized education system.

Experts doing external evaluations can see and understand the situation of schools (and of the education system) more deeply because of the empirical knowledge gathered during inspections. However, the use of this kind of knowledge is limited, sometimes ignored by decisional actors. It cannot always be incorporated in the written expertise, although it is an important type of knowledge regarding both the functioning of the system and the effects of regulation. We may partially consider it tacit knowledge, but it is rather epistemological knowledge about quality assurance. It has a significant potential which could help the better functioning of this regulation and the use of knowledge; however, until now there was no decisional actor interested in it. Since some street level actors formulate – based on their experiences – even solutions for the improvement of the quality assurance system, it seems necessary to engage in the use of this kind of knowledge, because it could serve to bridge the gap between experience and ‘great expectations’. These solutions support decentralization, since they suggest more autonomy for the County School Inspectorates and for schools. In this view the Inspectorates know most schools in the given county, so they have the potential to contribute to quality assurance at regional level for example. This might be a solution that would necessitate less financial and human resources, and the

¹¹ Activity Report of RAQAPE, 3rd year of functioning, 2007-2008.

delegation of tasks to lower levels would make resolving the problems less difficult. The suggestions also contain messages on how it would be possible to create regional schools (in case of minority education), and to produce high quality education in these schools. Furthermore street level actors differentiate between those who are more deeply involved into this work of quality assurance and those who are less involved. The former are certainly more aware of the benefit of this regulation, and they can better use their experiences for thinking on developments. But all these kinds of potentials have not really been exploited so far.

Regarding future visions, street level actors think that if there will be further changes in development, these will not necessarily affect schools and street level actors in a positive way. Most people are pessimistic; they presume more paperwork, less allowance, complications, and so on. There are fewer street level actors who consider and mention the possible positive future tendencies of quality assurance. In the opinion of some experts, the future of quality assurance depends very much on the political power relations and the general economical (financial) situation; however, intensified street level engagement, consciousness and responsibility in action could lead to self-determination and autonomy at the level of schools. The practice possesses a good chance by itself, but probably the progress of decentralization will significantly motivate schools to compete and to do the management of quality more efficiently.

To sum up: there are different scenes in regulation representing variable knowledge flows and ways of using knowledge. Quality assurance here represents a process in which knowledge, perceptions and practices of the regulator and the regulated co-evolve, and they commonly contribute to the co-construction of reality. The question – as Ozga (2010) mentions – is whether the actors are aware of the work of construction. The ideas from the conclusions will probably illuminate this question.

Conclusions

Through the snapshot on cognitive dimensions we could meet different kinds of knowledge: significant epistemological knowledge – as the result of the work of external and internal evaluations – is present, a great amount of practical empirical knowledge comes into limelight, which is a kind of mixture of lay knowledge (Sturdy, 2008) and tacit knowledge. All these can be considered as the knowledge capital of the local knowledge culture. However, based on the street level actors' lived experiences, the knowledge defined often lacks formal coherence and logical consistency, which limits the use of knowledge. Similarly, the form of regulation – as a central, top-down initiative – gives less space for individual ideas and novel practices, narrowing down the space of instrument and regulation to the usual and routine practices. When it comes to practical realizations, there are reservations –

varying from acceptance and compliance to resistance and opposition –, explicable with the knowledge deficit problem related to the theory and practice of quality assurance. Since this regulation lacks synthesis and summaries, the evidence accumulated here cannot generate action. Although the developmental suggestions given to each school determine the individual perceptions and actions, and promote shared responsibility in the improvement of the school, in overall it is not the experience-based knowledge of the street level actors that governs this regulation.

The different scenes give the general impression that the standard-based quality assurance initiated is considered meaningful, while objective obstacles determine the more ideal use of knowledge in the process of regulation. In spite of the significant investments into financial and human resources, our experience is that at the most important level – among schools and teachers – the concept and practice has not really brought radical changes. This way the practice could not change or transform so far. But the street level practice of the last years contributed largely to the beginning of a paradigmatic change, which cannot yet be considered a paradigm shift, as it has not yet caused a qualitative change in attitude even in the most open and active actors. So, the promotion and support of self-reflection and self-evaluation would be much more useful, as there is a need of deeper recognition and awareness on the level of street level actors. Building on the positive aspects and best practices, we can say that the regulation tool has partially reached its aim, but it could not use its full/complex potential. The narratives and discourses connected to the quality of education let us conclude that in the concept of quality there is more, consequently ‘a comprehensive understanding of the complex nature of education quality in schools’ is needed (Cheng and Tam, 1997). For this reason systematic conceptions on school development and quality improvement that could contribute to paradigmatic learning within actors are welcome.

Because of this explicit need and necessity we can say that the regulatory instrument represents much more a normative than a functional regulation. It ensures commitment to a set of standardized professional norms, objectifying in methodological guidelines, trainings, deontological codes, standards; the procedures of evaluation give less arguments on aspects of functional regulation: the supposed results on efficiency and effectiveness are not yet clearly visible. Consequently, the results so far call for action and improvements of the managers of regulation that should integrate and use the users’ knowledge, the experience-based knowledge of street level actors in order to induce a paradigm-shift, and to develop the instrument so that it could strengthen the functional aspects of regulation.

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A Sociological School from a Communicational Perspective. The Case of Dimitrie Gusti's Monographic School

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Abstract. In the following work we shall look at the communication strategies perfected by Romanian Professor Dimitrie Gusti (1880-1955), the founder of the Bucharest Sociological School, in order to popularize his innovations in the area of university organization and new methods of fieldwork. Likewise, we shall examine the activity of the Prince Carol Royal Cultural Foundation and the method of promoting a new system of social intervention in the Romanian villages. At the same time, we shall analyze the process of promoting Romanian sociology abroad and of organizing an international conference of experts in the field. Finally, we shall not pass over the fact that it was Professor Dimitrie Gusti, in his capacity as commissar general, who conceived and executed the Romanian pavilions for the world exhibitions in Paris (1937) and New York (1939), which enjoyed great success.

Keywords: Dimitrie Gusti, Bucharest Sociological School, Romanian sociology, communication system

Introduction

The history of sociology mentions Professor Dimitrie Gusti¹ as the author of a sociological system, the founder of a school of sociological monographs and, as a

¹ Gusti, Dimitrie (1880–1955), sociologist, philosopher and politician. University Professor at Jassy and Bucharest. Parliamentarian and senator. Minister of Public Education, Religions and Arts (1932–33). Founder of modern sociological education and the Bucharest Sociological School. Under his

tributary of these, the creator of the Museum of the Village in Bucharest. Lesser known is his work, with many ramifications, in the capacity of reforming minister of education, in 1932 and 1933, and as innovative director general of rural development for the Prince Carol Royal Cultural Foundation, from 1934 to 1939. Likewise, it is probably very little known today that he was also a leading specialist in what we today call public relations and branding. Here, it is not a question of the invention, under the impact of contemporaneity, of one implicit attribute of the Professor's career, but of the revelation of one of the sociologist's areas of conscious concern. Consequently, in the following we shall look at strategies to popularize, through the press, university innovations, new methods of research in the field, and a new system of social intervention in the villages. We shall analyze the process of promoting sociology, the activity of the Prince Carol Royal Cultural Foundation, and the exhibition methods employed in rural, university, national and international environments.

After being awarded a doctorate in philosophy by the University of Leipzig in 1904, under the supervision of Professor Wilhelm Wundt, Dimitrie Gusti continued his studies in Berlin, where he prepared a second doctoral thesis, this time on the phenomenon of the press. On the basis of thorough studies, in the forensics seminar of Berlin University he gave a lecture entitled *Fundamental Ideas on Freedom of the Press*, which he published in 1909. The attentive reader of Gusti's introductory study will realize that he did not examine the institution of the press as a jurist, but as part of a broader vision, as a sociologist open to the praxis of modern social communication, conferring upon it particular importance. What emerges from this study is the fact that Gusti did not limit himself to observing the existence of the press as an institution and its causes and effects, but also thought about its direct and mediated uses. If we take together his knowledge of the press and his knowledge of social pedagogy, we may understand that the professor also trained for the praxis of strategic communication, aiming at precisely defined target audiences (Gusti, 1969: 123-225). Dimitrie Gusti was original, professional and efficient not only in sociology and in heading the only school of sociology in Eastern Europe during the inter-war period, but also with respect to his bringing research activities and results to the public eye. Moreover, the founder of the Bucharest Sociological School became, in the 1930s, a builder of Romania's international image when he held the position of commissar general of the Romanian pavilions at the world exhibitions in Paris in 1937, and New York in 1939 (Rostás, 2005: 137-147). Researchers today might discover in Gusti's

direction, the *Encyclopaedia of Romania* (4 vols., 1938-1943) was published. Member of foreign societies in his field. As president of the Romanian Academy (1944-46), he laid the foundations for the National Council of Scientific Research.

strategies of communication, in his production of an image, a lesser-known inter-war model of European intellectual comportment.

Beyond projects to popularize the activity of the Romanian Social Institute and the conferences it organized, the first inklings of public visibility for fieldwork are detectable as far back as the first monographic campaigns, i.e. those conducted in Goicea Mare (1925), Rușețu (1926), Nerej (1927), Fundul Moldovei (1928), Drăguș (1929), Runcu (1930) and Cornova (1931). The fact that Professor Gusti invited a professional photographer to accompany each campaign is not in itself surprising, given that photography is auxiliary to all social research. But in this case the camera lens was not pointed only at the subjects of research, but also on many occasions at the researchers themselves. Team members appear in larger or smaller group photographs, in the dining room or in carefully choreographed “compositions”, in which they can be seen working around a table, surrounded by standing peasant onlookers. The head of the School deliberately encouraged this practice, which was not scientific in nature, but which he considered necessary in order to construct an important component of the public image so important to the School.

The most eloquent example of a strategy to construct a public image is the famous photograph, republished many times over the decades, which provides infallible proof of Gusti’s status as a researcher. In the left of the photograph we see a young peasant woman, wearing traditional costume and wiping the nose of the child she is holding in her arms. In the right of the picture, Professor Gusti, as elegant as ever, is taking notes of the conversation between the two of them. What is the message of this photograph? In the first place, it is that the intellectual, the scholar, is bound to the folk, that he goes to the villages, that he bends his ear to the petitions of simple people. The photograph – the same as others of its kind – was intended to communicate the ideological position of the Gusti School, not to the village, to the peasantry, but to the political class and to the intellectuals. These photographs immortalize a construct of reality. The images in question are not research documents, but rather they document the intention to influence by means of the press, posters, exhibitions etc. a political medium upon which funding for research depended.

The well-known photograph of Gusti with a young peasant woman would have demonstrated in my eyes the evident quality of the professor as a researcher, had it not been for the fact that as part of my oral history project I obtained wholly different information from his disciples. In the 1980s², I asked one of the

² Besides Professor H. H. Stahl, as part of an oral history project about the Bucharest Sociological School, I also interviewed Lucia Apolzan, Ernest Bernea, Harry Brauner, Lena Constante, Ion Costin, Roman Cresin, Nicolae Dunăre, Gheorghe Foça, Marcela Foça, Coriolan Gheție, Paula Herseni, Gheorghe Macarie, Ștefan Milcu, Constantin Marinescu, Mihai Pop, Gheorghe Reteganu, Gheorghe Serafim, and G. Vlădescu-Răcoasa.

professor's closest collaborators, H. H. Stahl³, about the first methodological pointers he had received from Gusti with regard to the 1926 fieldwork campaign in Rușețu and was given an unexpected answer: "Gusti was unable to give me any pointers, because he did not have any experience in this domain. He was not a social researcher. (...) In Rușețu, for example, he did what he knew. He went to the village library, for example. Gusti had been the one who organized the Jassy University Library⁴. He was a specialist in the organization of libraries. (...) After that, he went to a stud farm near Rușețu, which interested him. He wanted to see it, to understand what such an enterprise was by speaking with the director and veterinarians there. Not with the villagers. He was able to speak with the veterinarians and was a good researcher at that level, not at the level of the peasants. (...) He was like a German professor. Very rigid, very distant. The poor man strove to be a man of the people, but he just wasn't able. (...) In both the town and the village, he always took pleasure in being well dressed. He was always immaculately turned out, with a buttonhole. He was amiable, affable, but he wasn't a researcher. The researcher has a different attitude. (...) At his age it was not even appropriate to act the 'simpleton', because that is what you sometimes have to do. To descend to the level of the peasant and lead the same life as them. He couldn't do it. He was a professor. Social research presupposes a whole series of roles, which do not fit with the dignified bearing of a professor" (Rostás, 2000: 52-53).

The discrepancy between the photograph which was circulated in the press, books and posters and the actual work of Gusti in the rural setting was therefore also conscious; it was intended to legitimize research at the political and intellectual level. As such, the procedure was neither surprising nor an isolated case in the competition for resources between different intellectual groups. What might nevertheless be surprising is the fact that the history of Romanian sociology has not perceived this discrepancy between the discourse of the photograph and the reality of Gusti's abilities. It seems that this has not been due to any lack of information, but rather the deliberate attempt to create a myth around the figure of Gusti has been preponderant in the perpetuation of this image/advertisement. Having begun in the 1930s, this

³ Stahl, Henri H. (1901–1991), sociologist, historian, jurist, academician, Dimitrie Gusti's principal collaborator, and Professor of Sociology at the University of Bucharest until the discipline was abolished in 1948. Leading participant in the re-establishment of sociological teaching and research after 1965. He played a decisive role in the elaboration of the methodology of monographic fieldwork. He took part in almost all the School's monographic campaigns, and in 1939 was the author of the first complete monograph, about Nerej. He was the founder of Romanian sociological history. Likewise, he was the first in Romania to use statistics and the methods of historical archaeology in historical research. He proposed a new periodization of Romanian history.

⁴ Disgusted at the lack of professionalism at the university library, in 1913 he wrote a study entitled "The Need to Reorganize the Central Library of Jassy University" and in 1914 a further study entitled "The Establishment of the Library and Seminars of Jassy University: A System of Proposals with Numerous Appended Documents and Plans" in *Opere* vol. 3, Editura Academiei RSR, 1970, pp. 39-56.

process of myth-building was resumed in the 1960s in the context of the rehabilitation of the sociological and monographic school headed by Gusti. The image constructed in the spirit of the transition from the principle of the class struggle to that of the incipient national communism of the 1960s persists to this day, without taking account of the legitimacy of the surprisingly modern and effective inter-war praxis of communication promoted by the Gusti school, on the one hand, or the anachronism of its contemporary reproduction, on the other. Knowledge of inter-war social history in and by means of the modern study of the Gusti School therefore requires the identification of the promotional manifestations of the school's activity and its derivations of social intervention, in order to examine, albeit summarily, the school's forms of communication. This investigation refers to the method of external organizational communication, which was directed both at the national and international intellectual sphere and at the archaic environment of the Romanian village. It likewise refers to the fact that the School as a team of experts contributed both to the promotion of Romania in international exhibitions and to the dissemination of the cultural policy of King Carol II of Romania within the framework of the Prince Carol Royal Cultural Foundation.

The School's forms of communication

The following is a succinct presentation of the School's forms of communication, as they were developed from when Gusti took up his post at the University of Jassy in 1910 until the outbreak of the Second World War, which massively reduced the School's influence.

1. If we examine the relevant facts about the activity of Dimitrie Gusti and his monographic School, we can identify possible "roots" of communicational thought and praxis during the 1910s in the concern to modernize the university in Jassy and at the same time to present to western university circles the efforts to reform the university library and to found a sociological seminar. It is clear that Gusti was not content merely with the reform of a university structure, but strove for information about this to be disseminated in reviews published in Germany, where he had been a student⁵.

At the end of the First World War, Gusti regarded as essential the access of members to international scientific literature and the re-establishment and expansion of direct links with western scholars. To this end, he founded, on 16

⁵ See, for example, *Ein Seminar für Soziologie, Politik und Ethik an der Universität Iassy. Ein Beitrag zur Universitätspädagogik* in Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie und Sociologie, 1912/10

April 1918, *The Association for Social Science and Reform*⁶. He invited university professors from France, Germany and Britain to Bucharest to give lectures at the Romanian Social Institute (the result of transformation of the Association for Science and Social Reform, in 1921) and in his turn visited them on various scientific and political occasions. (Bucuța 1936). In a word, he created a veritable culture of communication between the social sciences in Romania and international scientific life. It is no wonder that in the period up until 1929 Célestin Bouglé, Eric Drumond, Guillaume Leonce Duprat, Edouard Lambert, Gaston Richard, Albert Thomas, Henry Gruchy (France), Werner Sombart, Ferdinand Tönnies, Leopold von Wiese (Germany), William Smith Culbertson, James T. Shotwell (U.S.A.) were elected honorary members of the Romanian Social Institute⁷. Having succeeded in making known the experience of the monographic campaigns carried out in the villages since 1925, in the 1930s he began to invite western students, doctoral candidates and young university professors to take part in such research.

The efforts toward integration into European scientific life also required the participation of Gusti and his pupils at western sociology congresses. After the First World War, however, it was difficult to rebuild the previous international institutional ties of sociology. The series of international congresses organized by the International Institute of Sociology was not resumed until 1927, after a hiatus of fifteen years. The resumption of these events constituted for Gusti an opportunity to make known the sociology he was cultivating in Romania. Given that his university assistant, Gheorghe Vlădescu-Răcoasa⁸, was also Romania's delegate to the World Organization of Labour, he assigned him the task of maintaining links with the International Institute of Sociology⁹. Thus, as early as 1929, Vlădescu-Răcoasa published an article entitled "La sociologie en Roumanie" in *Revue Internationale de Sociologie*¹⁰. Thenceforth, Romanian sociologists did not miss any international congress, with other researchers such as Xenia

⁶ See "Apelul făcut în aprilie 1918, cu prilejul întemeierii Asociației pentru Studiul și Reforma Socială" ("Appeal made in April 1918, on the Occasion of the Foundation of the Association for Social Study and Reform", *Arhiva pentru Știința și Reforma Socială*, year I, no. 1/ 1 April 1919, p. 291-293.

⁷ *Arhiva pentru Știința și Reforma Socială*, year 7, no. 4/ 1929

⁸ Vlădescu-Răcoasa, Gheorghe (1885-1989), sociologist, economist and politician. Assistant to Professor Dimitrie Gusti after 1920, participant in the first monographic research expeditions. Representative of Romania at the International Bureau of Labour in Geneva. After the war, Minister of Nationalities in the Groza government, Romanian ambassador to the USSR, professor. From 1922, he made extensive contributions to the press.

⁹ Due to this, a series of articles were published in the daily press, as well as in the *Archive for Social Science and Reform*, on the International Institute of Sociology and its conferences.

¹⁰ Gheorghe Vlădescu-Răcoasa, "La sociologie en Roumanie", *Revue Internationale de Sociologie*, nos. 1-2, 1929.

Costa-Foru¹¹, Henri H. Stahl, Gheorghe Vlădescu-Răcoasa et al. attending alongside Gusti.

Parallel to gathering the signatures of foreign scholars, Gusti took care to promote the School in the Romanian press. Because monographic research was ignored by the press, the professor also organized public events which were widely reported by the newspapers of the day. If we trace the evolution of press coverage, we can see that it grew in frequency from occasional mentions at the beginning of the 1920s to weekly appearances by 1932. By 1939, Gusti and his institutions were a daily presence in the pages of the press and on radio broadcasts. This growing visibility was also enjoyed by the foreign sociologists invited by Gusti to Bucharest.

2. Communication problems of a wholly different kind appeared when, in the 1920s, Gusti organized each summer a team made up of students and specialists to work on multidisciplinary monographs. After a few failures early in the campaign – failures in communication – the team’s leadership came to the conclusion that the first logical manifestation of any research is to provide clear elucidations, within an agreeable framework, of the reason for the visit to the village. Such meetings for clarification purposes became institutionalized relatively quickly, under the term *sittings*. The manner in which H. H. Stahl describes, in 1936, the team’s meeting with the village is by no means accidental: “We felt the need to ease our labours by informing the villagers about the aims we were pursuing. The handiest means to do so was to gather the villagers together and talk to them. In order to make this communication of ideas more pleasant, we would choose the occasion of a cultural sitting, given by us, the monographists. This sitting could not, however, be an improvised sitting, but rather it had to be a model sitting. So we strove to find the best methods of organizing the sittings. (...) The same system of blending the pleasant, the amusing, with short speeches to educate the villagers about health, work or elevating their hearts and minds. The same attempt to make the villagers actively participate in a sitting, by all kinds of methods, including giving out books as little prizes to those who could answer the quickest in quizzes, always proved to be the most effective” (Stahl 1936: 1164).

Besides sittings, the campaigns were sprinkled with small-scale events: competitions for the most beautiful traditional costume, the best-kept household, readings, etc. The inauguration of a cultural club or a sitting to enhance a co-

¹¹ Costa-Foru, Xenia (1902-1983), sociologist, collaborator of Dimitrie Gusti from the monographic campaign of 1927 onward, having specialized in social work in Germany and the USA. From 1929, co-founder, professor and director (from 1935) of the Higher School of Social Work until its abolition in 1950. Within the framework of the monographic section of the Romanian Social Institute, she headed the team conducting monographic research into the family. Her work *Monograph Investigation of the Family* is regarded as the most systematic work to have been dedicated to research into the family as part of the Bucharest Sociological School.

operative were events at which the photographer could not be absent. We may also include in this category the social medicine campaigns.

Beyond their function of winning the villagers' good will, these events constituted inexhaustible sources of images to be diffused in the School's publications and mass-circulation newspapers and magazines. After Gusti took over as head of the Prince Carol Royal Cultural Foundation in 1934, the sittings – together with other activities to develop a culture of health and hard work – became obligatory occasions in the activity of the student cultural teams. Within the framework of the Social Service for young people, the sittings also took on a propagandistic role, becoming the teams' most important activity.

3. The main tools for propagating a public image of the activity of the Monographic School among the country's elite were naturally *the print media*. The School's first magazine was *Archive for Science and Social Reform*, which was established in 1919 and was the organ of first the Association for Social Science and Reform and then, after 1921, the Romanian Social Institute. In the 1930s, with the growth in Gusti's international prestige, the review also became the organ of the International Institute of Sociology. Given that it was a review of a very high level, appearing intermittently, the *Archive* was known only in specialist circles. For this reason, when he became the head of the Royal Cultural Foundation, and when cultural action gained a predominant role in the School's range of concerns, Gusti agreed, at the proposal of his monographic students, to found *Romanian Sociology*, a popularizing magazine. *Courier of the Student Teams* (and its successor *Courier of the Social Service*, after 1939), *Culture Club* and *The Bee* legitimized the School mainly from the point of view of cultural action. It is little known that the monographic phenomenon, not only in the form of research but also cultural action, was present (whether polemically or approvingly) in the newspapers of the time, through articles published in *Adevărul (The Truth)*, *Credința (The Faith)*, *Curentul (The Current)*, *Cuvântul (The Word)*, *Dimineața (Morning)*, *Ultima oră (The Latest)*, *Universul (The Universe)* and magazines such as *Azi (Today)*, *Axa (Axis)*, *Boabe de Grâu (Grains of Wheat)*, *Dreapta (The Right)*, *Excelsior*, *Lumea Românească (The Romanian World)*, *Porunca Vremii (The Commandment of the Times)*, *România literară (Literary Romania)*, *România Satelor (Romania of the Villages)*, *Seara (Evening)*, *Sfarmă Piatră (Smash Stone)*, *Societatea de mâine (The Society of Tomorrow)*, *Stânga (The Left)* etc. The University Radio Broadcast – founded by Gusti in the period when he also held the function of president of the Radio Broadcasting Company – often hosted the monographists. It is therefore possible to argue that the School's image, as well as that of the highly varied concerns of Gusti and his collaborators, was noted by the public opinion of the time. Besides wielding an ideological influence on the young teams, the *Courier of the Student Teams*, founded in 1934 at the suggestion of H. H. Stahl and Octavian Neamțu, also played a practical role. Some unified means of

communication has become a requirement for guiding the dissemination of cultural teams' all over the country. The *Courier* became the first Romanian cultural-scientific newsletter (Văcărescu and Rostás, 2004)

4. Whereas the events organized in villages, their diffusion through photographs and publications of the School, had an ephemeral character, the permanent open-air exhibitions produced lasting effects. As early as their first research expeditions, the team members gathered materials for a museum of monographs, laid out first of all in the villages investigated, then in the Seminar Room of the University. At the inauguration of Drăguș (the village where the most successful monographic campaign was conducted) sociological museum on 25 November 1929, within the framework of the Sociology Seminar, Professor Gusti declared openly: "By today's manifestation, we first of all aim at making propaganda, drawing attention and awakening a general interest in monographic works" (after Neamțu, 1936:1021).

This kind of advertising took on an even broader scope when Gusti became director general of the Foundation. As is well known, he set as the goal of the Royal Student Teams the establishment of Cultural Clubs in the villages, which, besides guiding cultural actions, were also tasked with housing the village museum and the material collected by the monographic teams. Although this plan could only have an impact at the local level, the construction of the Museum of the Village in Bucharest meant the most impressive illustration of the exhibition techniques of the Monographic School. However improbable it might seem today, the open-air museum on Kiseleff Avenue in Bucharest was built (from the dismantling of peasant houses in dozens of villages to their reassembly in Bucharest) in just one month, under the supervision of sociologist H. H. Stahl and playwright, director and set designer Victor Ion Popa¹², one of Gusti's collaborators at the Foundation during that period. It is true that this museum of the village remained unfinished, because for Gusti and Stahl the institution was meant to become a large social planning workshop, not merely a grandiose exhibition of the past of Romania's villages (Stahl, 1981:316-333).

5. After the antecedents in organization of sociological exhibitions and museums large and small, it is no wonder that in the 1930s Gusti was entrusted with the post of commissar general for the Romanian pavilions at the major international exhibitions. In this way, a strategy of communication employed for the Monographist School would be put into practice in the national interest. Of course, in conceiving the two pavilions, members of the School made their contribution, but beyond this, by means of the exhibits and informative panels, visitors were able to enter into direct contact with the results of the School's

¹² Popa, Victor Ion (1895-1946), writer and playwright, university professor at the Conservatory of Dramatic Art in Bucharest, director, painter, set designer, inspirer of popular theatre.

research activities. After the smaller-scale exhibitions in which Romania had taken part in the inter-war period (in Belgrade, Barcelona and London), the most successful Romanian pavilions were created for the world exhibitions in Paris (1937) and New York (1939)¹³.

6. The most solid promotion of the Monographic School was to be the Fourteenth International Congress of Sociology, which was to take place in Bucharest. Beyond the event, planned for 1939, the actions of preparation were in themselves a complex process of communication, whose starting point was the festive moment at the Paris World Exhibition in 1937, when Bucharest was nominated congress organizer. There followed the official launch of invitations, which took place in Bucharest, in the presence of René Maunier, professor at the University of Paris and president of the International Institute of Sociology. The text of the invitation, just like the documents attached to it, reveals the considerable level of professionalism of which Gusti's team was capable when it came to organizing such a scientific congress. The congress's very broad theme, "Village and Town", opened the possibility for attendance on the part of a large number of sociologists and experts from connected fields. It is worth mentioning that the invitations – as an implicit means of communication – were sent not only to the one hundred full members and two hundred associate members of the International Institute of Sociology, but also to a further two thousand noted specialists in the domain.

Following the launch, there commenced the race to send out letters and to prepare the conference and its logistics. Details of these preparations are hard to

¹³ The organization of Romanian pavilions at various international exhibitions was a lesser-known concern of Gusti, in particular after he took over the directorship of the Prince Carol Royal Cultural Foundation. O. Bădina and O. Neamțu published commentaries on this activity in D. Gusti, *Opere*, vol. 3, Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, București, 1970, pp. 442-563. H. H. Stahl also writes on the subject in his memoirs, pp. 342-350. There are frequent references to the issue of exhibitions in the volume of letters published by A. Golopenția, *Ceasul misiunilor reale (The Hour of Real Missions)*, Editura Fundației Culturale Române, București, 1999. From the following excerpt of a letter dated 2 August 1936 and sent by Gusti to Golopenția, who was studying in Germany, the thorough manner in which the Professor approached the exhibition phenomenon once again emerges: "Your proposal to visit the *Deutschland* exhibition is wonderful. I wanted in any case to send someone to Berlin. Of course, the current regime is at the forefront of decorative manifestations worldwide. / Until such time as I send an architect or someone else, this is my proposal: *Write to me saying how much you need for your trip to Berlin*, and send me everything you can when you get there: catalogues, drawings, plans, photographs, the new method of conceiving scale models, dioramas, statistical diagrams etc. If you can, leave for Berlin immediately and I will send you as much money as you need. Please stay in Berlin for this museum study *as long as required*. You would be doing me a great service. For the Paris pavilion I need suggestions and the latest results of *presentation technique*. *Maybe you can find a book on the subject*. Send it to me immediately. And include it in the expenses." From the letters published in the volume cited we can see just how interested the whole School was in connecting the construction of an image for research with construction of an image for the nation.

reconstruct, inasmuch as the disestablishment of the Social Service and the Romanian Institute of Social Research scattered the congress archive, and what was left behind in the Foundation and the headquarters of the former Romanian Social Institute, after the installation of the communist regime in 1948, was destroyed, together with documents connected to Gusti's School. From the few available memoirs, letters, oral history recordings, and brief press articles, we can conclude that Gusti wanted to demonstrate, through original works and through the communications of the young monographists, the legitimacy of his sociology, as well as the originality and efficiency of the methodology of cultural work in the villages. It was for this reason that he placed emphasis on the mobilization of his young collaborators in preparing for the congress.

In his capacity as minister of state and president of the Social Service, Gusti had access to even greater funds and increased the number of his collaborators. Inasmuch as the congress was organized under the high patronage of King Carol II, all the preparations also implicitly served royal propaganda, both at home and abroad. This circumstance increased the funds allocated to the meeting, and the congress attracted a surprisingly large number of persons accepting invitations.

Besides preparations with regard to management of the communiqués sent out, the organizers also introduced innovations compared to previous congresses, namely they held international exhibitions of sociology books, bibliographies, and the proceedings of previous congresses. A second type of exhibition was mounted in four rooms and presented items of folk art, with the necessary scientific explanations and connected research methodology. It was also in these rooms that materials illustrating the monographic campaigns carried out since 1925 in various regions of Romania were displayed. One of the exhibitions was held not in Bucharest but in the town of Făgăraș and presented the results of research in Olt County. Nevertheless, the most important objective of the planned excursions was the aforementioned village of Dioști in southern Muntenia, where the participants at the congress would have seen the *model village* designed under the auspices of the Prince Carol Royal Cultural Foundation (Gusti, 1970: 102–106).

As it is well known, given the tense atmosphere in the period leading up to the Second World War, the congress was cancelled. But in the two years of preparation for it (for Gusti had obtained the right to organize it in 1937, at the World Exhibition in Paris), such a significant effort was made, including a large number of new publications, that we might argue that its success was half assured even before the postponement. The fact that prior to the event, 108 works were sent out – six times as many as those presented at the 1930 Berne congress – is eloquent testimony of sociologists' interest. Of course, the congress – with a schedule including visits to villages that had been the object of research, documentary field trips, presentation of monographic sociological works translated into the languages

of participants – would have launched the Bucharest Sociological School in the scientific world.

7. Finally, also under the heading of image production we should not forget the *paramilitary ritual* of the Social Service after 1939. Developing the external side of the activities of the Royal Student Teams – easily perceptible to the wider public – the Social Service introduced uniforms, mess rooms, flag raising, patriotic hymns, and marching, thereby integrating itself into the cultural and youth policy of the royal dictatorship installed in 1938. This new direction was received with disappointment by many young intellectuals, and even by Gusti's most faithful sociologists. The way in which Constantin Marinescu¹⁴, a former team leader and later a Foundation inspector, comments on this deviation is nevertheless interesting: “This is what they said: we cannot counteract the Iron Guard except by using their methods. Which is to say, their procedures. They hold summer camps, we'll hold them, too; they labour, we'll labour, too; they use a certain terminology, we'll use a certain terminology, too. You understand? All that atmosphere of solidarity, of comradeship (wasn't this what our soldiers called each other: comrade?) – the Iron Guard boycotted the term. We would say, ‘comrade commandant’. There were some who knew how to combat the Iron Guard by avoiding various turns of phrase. Neamțu¹⁵ and Mihăilă¹⁶ said, ‘not using their methods, because they're not theirs. They're methods they've profaned. (...) These are things I have been meditating on my whole life. I discussed it with Neamțu so many times, at my house and at his. I even goaded him. These were my puzzlements. Why do we say ‘comrade’, I used to ask, when those villains say it. ‘No,’ he told me so many times, ‘by using the term ourselves, we counteract them using their methods.’ They would dig a well and make out that the Captain [Corneliu Zelea Codreanu] did it. Like hell was it the Captain. They did it by forced labour, in fact, and as a political show. (...) We didn't do it for political reasons – to come back to Neamțu's idea – but to educate the peasants” (Rostás, 2009: 131-135).

¹⁴ Marinescu, Constantin (1914-2002), graduate in Theology and Literature, leader of the Royal Foundation team, inspector at the same Foundation.

¹⁵ Neamțu, Octavian (1910-1976), sociologist, close collaborator of Professor Gusti, his successor as head of the Royal Cultural Foundation. He took part in the monographic research expeditions at Drăguș and Cornova, and headed the student cultural action teams (1934–1939). Together with H. H. Stahl he took part in the establishment and running of the *Courier of the Student Teams* periodical. He also took part in organizing the publication of *Romanian Sociology* and the campaign of social research and action named *60 Villages Researched by Student Teams*.

¹⁶ Mihăilă, Iacob, doctoral studies in physical education and ergonomics in Hamburg, professor of the physiology of physical education at the National Academy of Physical Education (ANAF) in Bucharest, commandant within the framework of the Social Service in 1938-39.

Concluding remarks

After this sketchy enumeration of image production methods, a succinct explanation of the above-mentioned practices is warranted. In my opinion, any intellectual group that wants to make a place for itself in the network of organizations and institutions of the age must develop a public image strategy. In the case of an *emergent* group, one with the aim of practicing a *new* profession – sociology – legitimacy cannot be obtained, for many years, except through scientific works. To do this, what is required (at least in the initial phase) is an uncontested leader and actions that can garner positive attention, but from official representatives of the villages and “sponsors” external to the village. The leader, in the person of Gusti, was the most appropriate, for the reasons already laid out. And it was Gusti who had the merit of discovering those strategies, whereby he succeeded in drawing attention to the importance of the summer campaigns with students. Moreover, Gusti managed to convince public opinion of the beneficial role of the research campaigns, not only for students but above all for villagers, who in their turn were grateful to the monographists and above all the Professor.

Following on from the above, which brings to our mind the practice of public relations today, we might ask ourselves whether Gusti was conscious of this strategy, pursued with such perseverance. We might likewise pose the question of whether this strategy of legitimization had been planned or whether it was improvised. Obviously, it was something planned and much improved over the course of time. In the famous appeal of 1918 for the foundation of his Association, alongside the research centre and the documentation centre, the third centre is for propaganda. It is by no means accidental that in this appeal of a few pages Gusti dedicates a paragraph to the following concern: “Besides scientific activity, the Association will organize a propaganda service to bring about social reform – to be decided upon by the Association – and social education of the masses through conferences, courses, meetings, and publications that together will make up the ‘Library of Social Propaganda and Education’” (Gusti, 1934:22).

This programme was not only implemented but also raised to a professional level deserving not only of praise but also more thorough research. Without this “art of legitimization”, neither the School nor the other endeavours would have existed.

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Traditional Vs. Rational Farming. A Less Known Study by Gyula Szekfű in the Light of Weber's Sociology

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Abstract. Max Weber's famous work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* was published in 1904-1905, wherein the author has emphasized the analysis of the radical differences between the 'rational farming' controlled by the 'spirit of capitalism' and 'traditional farming'. Weber described in detail those typical features which have prevailed in the mentioned farming types and in the 'economic ethos' being attached to them. These typical features do not emerge as isolated in Weber's concept, but in a complex manner, by forming structural relation systems with each other. Gyula Szekfű is considered to have been one of the leading personalities of Hungarian historiography and cultural policy. Between the two World Wars, he published his essay *The Spiritual Constitution of the Hungarian Wine Producer*, nearly two decades after the dissemination of the *Protestant Ethic* (in 1922). I make an attempt in my study to interpret Szekfű's mentality and historical criticism in the matter of the Hungarian wine production of the Age of Reform, and of the middle of the 19th century, along with the concept of Weber, mentioned above. In my analysis I showed that Szekfű has explained the deficiencies of Weber's interpretation of 'rational farming' with 'spiritual factors' revealing the 'Hungarian nation'. It could be an exposition of Szekfű's notion that he considered the Hungarian 'spiritual constitution' more easily transformable than the social, political, economic, and structural elements which have taken shape in Hungary following the First World War. In my opinion these approaches cannot only be interpreted in a historical context, but they are able to facilitate the exploration – at an ideological level – of why residues of 'traditional farming' still exist in the region's countries with a post-communist past.

Keywords: traditional society, sociology of religion, Protestant ethic, economic sociology

Introduction

In the present article I do not intend to provide a detailed discussion of the *Protestant Ethic* of Weber. In connection to the present study it suffices to say that this work of 84 pages was published following the First World War, in 1922¹. On the basis of the actual historical theme of the *Wine Producer* (the modern history of domestic wine-producing) it is not surprising that our first digression is a key concept of the *Protestant Ethic*, the “spirit of capitalism”. The “spirit of capitalism” is actually a member of a pair of technical terms, whose inverse is “economic traditionalism” and vice-versa. Although Weber does not define “economic traditionalism” with his typical meticulousness, he paraphrases and explains the concept. First of all, he characterizes it with the economic attitude according to which a man with this trait does not want to maximize his income “due to his nature”, but “simply wants to live the way that he got used to, and wants to earn as much as needed for that” (Weber, 1982: 62) or to use a biblical expression, “what he confines himself to”. A further feature of the “traditionalist” manpower is that it wishes to provide the customary wage by maximal convenience and minimal achievement (Weber, 1982: 65). An additional consequence of this “traditional employee maxim” is that “(...) they are not able to give up the passed-down and acquired methods to more practical ways” and they are not even willing “to learn and focus their attention, or just simply use their mind” (Weber, 1982: 66). Weber characterizes not only employees but entrepreneurs as well. What they are in want of is the “capitalist spirit”, meaning that they follow traditional farming. Their lifestyle is traditional – comfortable, the measure of their profit is traditional – providing a decent living, their working time is traditional, amounting to 5-6 hours per day, their course of business is also traditional (e.g. usually there is no fierce competition, they lay out capital at interest.) Their relationship with producers is traditional (it basically means the hoarding system), they have a traditional circle of customers (who are encountered via correspondence and not personally), the conquest of the market happens traditionally (e.g. by the hoarding of the traditional quality products, they are able to reach retailers through an intermediary chain only). A further feature is that they want to “obtain” less than to “consume” (Weber, 1982: 71-72).

What *changed* by the *proliferation* of the “spirit of capitalism”? First of all, the “social ethic” of the *capitalist culture* appeared; the not-so-evident idea of “professional obligation”. “It means”, says Weber, “that the individual has to feel

¹ By that time Szekfű had already written two hotly debated works such as *The Banished Rákóczi* (*A száműzött Rákóczy*) as well as *The Three Generations* (*A három nemzedék*) but he had already published *The Biography of the Hungarian State* (*A magyar állam életrajza*) as well. The *Wine Producer* had not been included amongst the “canonized” texts, but that is to say it had actually fallen into oblivion.

obligation – and does so – for the purport of his “professional” activity, whatever it is (...) This sense of obligation characterizes both the employee and the capitalist” (Weber, 1982: 52). (Weber adds his well-known thought at this point, according to which the capitalist order of the period is already such an “enormous universe in which the individual is born into” and the market imposes these economic norms upon him. “The mentality of big multitudes of people” has to be imbued with this obligation, and only those “economic agents” have the chance for economic selection, who practice this manner of lifestyle and profession.) Nevertheless, not the same kind of sense of obligation motivates the unscrupulous longing for acquisition, money-grubbing and the pattern of “adventure-capitalism” which characterizes the spirit of capitalism. In order to go beyond it, the disappearance of the difference between the “intrinsic” and “extrinsic” morale was essential, meaning, writes Weber in the *Economic History (Wirtschaftsgeschichte)*, that on the one hand the merchant principle had to enter the economy, hereby invalidating the old norms of mutual mercifulness characterizing the members of traditional organizations, while on the other hand the cruel money-making, which does not know any kind of norms and was applied against the outsiders of the traditional organizations on an entirely permissible basis, had also disappeared. As the longing for acquisition entered the internal economy, the “shameless gain-pursuing” slackened. The result of this process, according to Weber, is “the regulated economy that provides a moderate field for the instinct of acquisition” (Weber, 1979: 283).

As far as the employees are concerned, we have already seen it in connection with economic traditionalism that they are lacking the essential motive for the workings of capitalism, namely that they would like to earn “money and more money” by increasing their production (Aron, 1983: 218).

Such workers are characterized by an increased sense of responsibility and they consider work to be “an absolute end in itself”, a profession (Weber, 1982: 65)². We can pick up somewhat more about the capitalist-minded entrepreneur, since Weber compares it to the traditional one. To highlight some features: the capitalist entrepreneur transforms the peasants of the hoarding system into workers by subjecting both the work process and the workers themselves to greater subordination and supervision. He brought trade under his supervision, meaning that he established direct contact with the retailers selling the goods and he recruited his costumers personally. His most important innovation in this respect was that “(...) he adjusted the quality of goods to the exclusive demand of

² Weber, in his foundations of economic sociology, also dealt with the traditional variety of “management” on a conceptual level, setting it against rational management. (As we know, “primary economic disposition” constitutes one of the important conceptual frames of Weber's category of “management” (Weber, 1987: 81). The “economic disposition” mentioned above, according to Weber, “can be traditional or instrumental rational” (Weber, 1987: 86).

customers, and he was good at producing to then-taste” (Weber, 1982: 72- 73). He introduced the principle of "small benefit, large turnover". He did not pursue his economic activity by bringing new money into it and he reinvested the profit into the business. His primary aim was to “obtain” and not to “consume”. And his lifestyle was short of convivial pastime, since his lifestyle was ascetic and reflected that “man is for the sake of business and not vice versa” (Weber, 1982: 75). As a consequence of this view, a fierce competition started and the “long-standing convivial attitude gave way to strict sobriety” (Weber, 1982: 73)³. Apart from the expression “spirit of capitalism”, the term “rational economic ethos” appears in the *Economic History*, although with a similar meaning (Weber, 1979: 281). Naturally, the rational economic ethos is also a key category, since according to Weber, it is indispensable for the establishment of capitalism. As the permanent traditional enterprise, the bookkeeping which is connected with the accounts of capital, rational method, rational law and state, the evolution of rational spirit and the rationalization of lifestyle were likewise essential (ibid). Weber introduced these factors required for the establishment of capitalism not as isolated or sole elements but in structural connection with each other. With the help of these functionally connected factors, the Western capitalism described by Weber can be dissociated in an ideal-typical manner from other economic structures (Kupa, 2002: 113-114).

Szekfű’s approach. A discussion

Coming at last to the *Wine Producer*, it is there that the next conceptual construction – based also on an inverse pair of terms – unfolds. Economic traditionalism can be compared with the category of “economic indifference”, while its counterpart is the expression that mostly reflects the spirit of capitalism – “expedient treatment”. Szekfű describes “economic indifference” in the following manner: the Hungarian wine producer does not want to profiteer by the product that he grows at the expense of his work, he is short of the sense of the tradesman that does not aim at private consumption, “... who simply does not want to gain money from his wine” (Szekfű, 2002: 48).

“Production itself (...) does not interest him”, continues Szekfű, “he is unwilling to work more and better either for gaining more profit or for satisfying

³ We note here that the category "rational capital account" that is called the most general prerequisite of modern capitalism by Weber, and prevails as a norm, can characterize also the currently discussed traditional economy (Weber, 1982: 68-69). In his foundation of economic sociology, he likewise defines the concept "capital account". Confined to the substantial elements of the definition, Weber thinks it no different from the accession of the acquisition opportunity and the supervision of the results (Weber, 1987: 107). That is to say it is such an economic activity that characterizes the traditional enterprise with the object of achieving profit. In this case there is incongruence between the form of capitalism, traditional enterprises, and the spirit of capitalism.

his own consumption by a crop of higher quality” (Szekfű, 2002: 65). But this image can be supplemented by such features characterizing our domestic wine producers as the rigorous affection for confirmed production habits and bringing their own calmness into the foreground (Szekfű, 2002: 96). This mentality is utterly the opposite of the “wirtschaftlich”, and it is far from all “commercial talent”. Behind all these traits – according to Szekfű – lurks “one of the fundamental features of Hungarian mentality”, the “lack of mobilization” which manifests not only in the fields of economy but in that of culture as well (Szekfű, 2002: 65-66).

The counterpart of “economic indifference” is “expedient treatment”. Szekfű adopted the term from a viticulturist of the Age of Reform, Ferenc Schams. The quotation of Schams mentions only the following in connection with the explanation of the concept in the *Wine Producer*: “(...) let us fend for the expedient treatment during fermentation and in the cellars, and we won't be in need for customers” (Szekfű, 2002: 47). Szekfű's interpretation, however, is remarkable. Expedient treatment would have been needed “in accordance with the requests and angles of the foreign market (...)” although it only exists in case of own consumption, which reflects much more rudimentary angles and claims (ibid). Then he continues: “(...) in the work of Schams there is a permanent endeavour to raise the standards, satisfy the Hungarian producer and make these rudimentary methods appropriate for the foreign needs. He offers detailed advice concerning all phases of production from planting to the transportation abroad (...)” (Szekfű 2002: 48) and he naturally criticizes the practice of selling watered wine in foreign markets. In an earlier work of Schams the carelessness in the field of – with a term used today – “technological discipline” is interpreted by Szekfű as the lack of rational treatment. On the basis of these references we believe that although “expedient treatment”, even if it is a more limited expression than, say, the “spirit of capitalism” or the “rational ethos of economy”, its semantic content fits the latter.

The following question arises: did Szekfű fit the categories of “economic indifference” and “expedient treatment” into the structural relation-system of such historical factors as Weber did? The answer is negative, although Szekfű was aware of the possibility of this approach, moreover he referred to such a perspective, but he did not choose this alternative. Because according to him the existence of “economic indifference”, and the lack of “expedient treatment” characterizes not only the Hungarian wine producer. “It can be found in all those groups of people, who are short of capitalistic talent, who are neither able nor willing to win (...) But it can be found ... generally speaking among people who live in a bound medieval-feudal society where the aim of economic production is only to satisfy the basic needs of the population” (Szekfű, 2002: 65). But he refuses the opportunity of this approach at once. Since in the first part of the thoroughly examined 19th century, according to him, “(...) the joint??? social and economic system was already cracking, and the intense reform movement, the longing for the

abandonment of the ancient and the obsolete stand in diametrical opposition to the sense of satisfaction with himself that characterizes the Hungarian producer of inferior wines at that time rather than in the earlier centuries” (Szekfű, 2002: 65).

I believe that two short remarks are in order here: 1. Is it possible that the confirmed social and economic system was not cracking in every respect at that time? 2. Referring to the *Protestant Ethic*: it is not sufficient for the existence of the “spirit of capitalism” to evolve in isolated individuals only, but it must be established as an attitude of groups of people (Szekfű, 2002: 53).

At this point Szekfű definitively glues his train of thoughts to the explaining forces of “spiritual constitution” and “spiritual factors”. But let us see how he arrives at the category of “spiritual constitution” and “spiritual factors”. Though the approach favoured by Weber, examining the historical factors essential for the existence of capitalism, is absent, it does not mean that merely spiritual factors play a role in his conception. He adopts the mathematical formula concerning the agricultural production from the 19th century German economist, Johann Heinrich von Thünen. According to Thünen’s formula, the crop equals the sum of the cultivation of land, its quality and humus, and the cultural factors. All these developments prompt Szekfű to regard the cultural factors of the Thünen-formula as – mathematically speaking – an unknown X, i.e. their “quantity and sense change according to people’s race, ages and individuals (...)” (Szekfű, 2002: 19). Since the formula is supposed to be transformed with an unknown X instead of the C of “cultural factors”, thus the X can be identified case by case only. Szekfű comes to the conclusion from this state of affairs that the question of the identification of agricultural production cannot be solved by the materialist natural-technical concepts of economy “(...) but it passes over to the field of intellectual history and the historical research on the effects of psychological factors (...)” (Szekfű, 2002: 20).

Although, as we have already mentioned, Szekfű decided to examine psychological factors, he also took the racial factors mentioned by Alfred Weber into account. Race therefore is “(...) primarily a historical configuration, says Szekfű, a configuration evolved and changeable in time (...)” (Szekfű, 2002: 21), but racial change can only occur during a lengthier impact.

At this point he still mumbles on such concepts “slipped” into his explanatory line of thoughts as “people” and “nation” but the “deduction” of the use of spiritual constitution has already been finalized.

When Szekfű finally begins historical investigation, he places it into the following conceptual frame. According to the Weberian version of the Thünen-formula, Szekfű separates the “external”, “objective” and the “internal”, “subjective” factors of domestic wine production. Among the “external” factors he mentions the natural and the socio-political, which is in fact the history of Hungarian wine export and of the connected environment’s “economic policy”,

with special attention to the customs policy of the Hapsburgs, starting from the 17th century (Szekfű, 2002: 33-43). The “*internal*” factor is the “*spiritual constitution*” of the Hungarian wine producer. Naturally, he examines the latter in more detail. In this part of his study he cites several sources – naturally István Széchenyi among others but Miklós Wesselényi and Bertalan Szemere are also present as the critics of the backwardness of Hungarian wine production. We do not have enough space for the detailed introduction of this topic but we should mention that *this part is the most valuable and most lasting of Szekfű’s work*. He selected his sources superbly, they reflect not the “capitalist spirit” of Franklin but just its opposite, that of “economic traditionalism”. Reading these lines of the *Wine Producer*, the statements of the *Protestant ethic*, reflecting the traditional economic mentality, seem to become alive in front of our eyes.

To tell the truth, there are hardly any economic standpoints in the *Protestant Ethic* that could not be illustrated by the particular instances of the *Wine Producer* and vice versa. (It should be noted that Szekfű wrote such a splendid work in this respect that the statements he referred to could be supported even today by examples of domestic wine production.)

As far as Szekfű’s *theoretical foundation* is concerned, it cannot be praised to an equally great extent. Not only had he not been able to prove the history-making significance of “spiritual constitution”, but some of his conceptually important statements may also be objected. I am not able to examine these objections in detail here; therefore we mention only a few of these. Above all, there is the rigid dichotomy of “internal” and “external” factors, which resulted in Szekfű’s separating the “spiritual factors” from the other, “objective” elements of the formula with a division like “the Great Wall of China”. Therefore Szekfű magnified the history-making role of “spiritual factors” to such an extent that the question arises whether he was guilty of following the cult of the “Great Cause”, just like reductionism, which he himself criticized⁴. But even the adaptability of the

⁴ In the beginning of his study, Szekfű analyzes theoretical questions, focusing on the epistemological: a problem examined by Max Weber as well (Weber, 1970: 39). His line of thought is characterized by a strong critical attitude, as Szekfű states the following critical observations concerning the historical approaches that are connected to ideological currents he characterized as rationalist, liberal, positivist and materialist. One of these refers to: a “quite unjustified form” of the already mentioned historical approaches, the almost cultic respect for the “Great Cause”. Basically Szekfű describes a vulgarized causal approach, whose essence is that “the analyzed force, be it called as it may, is nothing else than an awkwardly huge Cause, a giant causality, which its followers regard as capable of determining the direction of the endless mass of personal acts, regardless of other motives, which are usually used for explaining terrestrial actions (...)” (According to the socialist historical approach, the Great Cause is the Economy, while in case of liberalism it is the Reason, the Freedom and the Democracy, as well as the “general, secret and equal Civil Rule.” The belief in the omnipotence of the Great Cause gives way to another critical finding, i.e. that “the general historical approach” is destructive according to Szekfű, “(...) with the possession of the Great Cause it attacks all other causes, it annihilates all other causalities and regards them as ineffective and worthless (...)” (Szekfű, 2002: 15).

Thünen-formula remains problematic. The formula stabilizes a static situation, while Szekfű wishes to grab some of the, for instance, socio-political elements in a historical context. Because of this, he can only make some of the elements of his formula dynamic by using Alfred Vierkandt's theory on real culture-change⁵. Following this, Szekfű immediately starts to "actionize". Although, as we have seen, he could have chosen an approach seemingly offering more perspective from the point of view of the historiographer, when for example he used the rigid, feudal socio-economic system of the Middle Ages as an example. In this case Szekfű could have interpreted the question of domestic wine production entirely in a historical context. This approach really would not have been hurt by the category of "spiritual constitution", i.e. what Szekfű regarded as a mental factor difficult to mobilize and its "operationalized components" ("economic indifference", "lack of mobilization"), it could have been captured in a *more plausible way from the perspective of historical structure*, of course without unintentionally internalizing the affected materialist notion of history, since "spiritual constitution" can be captured from the point of view of history just as much as "the spirit of capitalism" or "economical traditionalism". Such an approach, e.g. one similar to Weber's, would have allowed him to grasp the different historical factors in a structural system of relations, and he could have avoided the rigid dichotomy of the "external" and "internal" sides.

Conclusions

To sum up the comparison of the referred line of thought of the *Protestant Ethic* and the *Wine Producer*, we can make the following statements:

While Weber examines the problems of economic traditionalism in the light of social-economic-cultural-political structural connections, Szekfű accentuates the possibility of examining the structural connections to the concept of the "Hungarian spiritual constitution". Therefore the category of "economic indifference", which would have allowed the examination of the pre-capitalist economic mentality on the basis of "economic traditionalism", and as such, could have functioned as a structural element of pre-capitalism, became a concept rather with an emphasis on national character in Szekfű's interpretation.

⁵ On the one hand Vierkandt distinguishes acculturation (external culture change i.e.: proliferation of spirit, tobacco etc.) and on the other hand "endogenous (real) culture change". Szekfű sums up the conditions of the latter as follows: "(1) the entire spiritual and moral constitution of the nation concerned needs to be prepared for the change (2) and in the case of the same people the required nature of change has to emerge consciously. (3) The initiative of certain individuals, because the mass itself is short of the tendency of change, this can be provided most expediently, according to experience, by great personalities. Finally (4): outward, external opportunity is also needed, such as the French Revolution and the reforms of Napoleon in case of the entire Europe (...)" (Szekfű 2002, 26).

As it follows from the 1st point, while the longing for acquisition operating within the conceptual circle of economic traditionalism appears as an economic motif used in the general sense, “economic indifference” as a spiritual factor is defined as a Hungarian mental feature.

While Weber introduced both pre-capitalism and capitalism with such structural factors, which are bound by a structural relationship, Szekfű employs the Thünen-formula in such a way that he raises an almost-impenetrable wall between “external” (objective) and “internal” (subjective) elements.

The previous findings result in another important difference. The integral, “structural” relationship of the structural factors also means that significant change can only happen if the elements of the structure are modified significantly, while the rigid separation of spiritual factors should also emphasize that the considerable alteration of spiritual factors may result in the change of the structure.

One question is relevant here: how could it happen to such a qualified historian as Szekfű that he published an unfinished, theoretically easily debatable work? Ignoring the analysis of occasional production-psychological features, we do not believe that Szekfű could have been driven by the aim of hitting the progress-centred historical approach hard, as he “succeeded” in finding a category, i.e. that of spiritual constitution, which resists “quick-footed change” (Szekfű, 2002: 96). Neither do we think that Szekfű would have voted for a national-characterological approach in a then not so receptive Hungarian mentality historical atmosphere. The most probable approach is that Szekfű, after Leopold Ranke, followed a *history-political discourse*⁶ in the *Wine Producer*, by the rigid demarcation of the “external” (objective) and “internal” (subjective) sides. This way, following several modifications of the Thünen-formula, the “*internal*” *spiritual side* could materialize as a completely independent factor, which *could be mobilized and changed*, despite all of its inertia, *easier than e.g. the socio-political element of the “external” side*, meaning of course the tendencies of the international market of the time.

⁶ Szekfű’s booklet entitled *History-political studies (Történetpolitikai tanulmányok)*, containing seven essays, was published in 1924. To explain the title of the “volume”, Szekfű wishes to introduce the history-political essay as a typical genre of German historiography. He mentions the name of Ranke in this respect, who, according to him, tried to teach us political thinking, the understanding of the connection of the present state and the historical past. According to Szekfű, the history-political essay “... is the realization of the historical connections of the current problems, the historical research adapted to the present situation” (ibid). Of course, according to this approach, the interest of the historian has to be aroused not only by the relations of the past but by those of the present as well. “The opposite of this would have ab ovo compromised him”, emphasizes Szekfű, “and would have caused doubts against the sensibility and realism of his judgements (ibid).

The history-political essay does great service for its author just in this respect: “... satisfying his, say, ... justified interest for current politics, keeping him for the examination of the past and preventing him from degrading his self destined for an inner life by descend to the political stage” (ibid). This way history-political essays work as valves used for “blowing off the steam” (ibid, see also, in detail in Kupa 2002: 99-102).

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Labour Migration from the Seklerland after the Regime Change. A Review of an Anthropological Research Programme

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Abstract. The present review seeks to provide an inventory on the research conducted within the framework of the Department of Social Sciences of the Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania in connection with the phenomenon of labour migration from the Seklerland region (Eastern Transylvania, Romania) during the period of 2005–2010. The concerned geographical area constitutes a peripheral, mostly rural region with only a few small towns. During the 20th century this region has continuously witnessed labour migration, which – due to the restrictions of the communist regime – meant at the time of socialism mostly an intra-country oriented phenomenon. After the 1989 regime change the industry collapsed not only in the considered region but throughout Romania and, consequently, the labour migration from the Seklerland began to be directed farther on, firstly towards Hungary and then towards other countries, so that the phenomenon of ‘working abroad’ became a salient social issue of the last twenty years. Our results based on the methods of cultural anthropology suggest that compared to the early 1990s when migration was perceived as a curious phenomenon, nowadays the phenomenon of labour migration is considered a more and more natural event of the life course and that those involved in the process are developing ways of behaviours which signal the patterns of transnationalism.

Keywords: labour migration, Seklerland, Romania, cultural anthropology, transnationalism

Introduction

In the present research review I am going to present the summary of the research programmes which had as a major aim to analyze the phenomenon of labour migration from the Seklerland region of Romania after the 1989 regime change. My focus is directed towards those aspects of the research which outline the major trends and patterns occurring in the course of the process of labour migration from the beginning of the 1990s until nowadays.

Our first research goes back to the period of 1994–1995 when, within the framework of the WAC – Centre for Regional and Anthropological Studies, we analyzed the labour migration directed towards Hungary. (In that period, the target country of the migrants was almost exclusively Hungary.) The aim of this research was to reveal the effects of labour migration on emitting environments, that is, on migrants' families and communities remaining at home. Results showed that the effects of labour migration consisted especially in the strengthening of the home world. Migrants' encounter with the strange world abroad – after the hard communist decades – resulted in ways of conduct which allowed them to draw a harsh demarcation between 'us' and 'them'. This demarcation affected the migrants' mentality and worldview and the issue of dichotomized worlds became one of the major aspects of the effects of migration right after the regime change (Bodó, 1996).

In the following period the researchers of the WAC have been continuously focusing on the phenomenon of migration and the migration-centred questions became part of several other research projects. It was in 2005 when we had the opportunity to focus specifically on labour migration and then we began a systematic registration of those important patterns which occurred in connection with the phenomenon. Between 2005 and 2010 we conducted three research programmes in connection with the discussed theme. These programs were realized by several members of the Department of Social Sciences of the Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania, and by Sociology students.

Our results suggested that in the course of today's labour migration from the Seklerland there occur such kinds of tendencies which are similar to those described in the literature in connection with the case of transnational migration. These tendencies are in contrast with the experiences observed at the beginning of the '90s. That is, while in the first years of the transition period migrants separated themselves from the receiving contexts and developed a clearly delimited perception about their home countries and their receiving countries, towards the end of the period migrants have developed a double rooted way of life in which the two worlds of emitting and receiving contexts became more and more fluidized. Consequently, inward oriented attitudes and behaviours have been changed by mechanisms of convergence and near drawing. We witnessed the patterns of duality, in the forms of effective or perceived

twofold living and in forms of connecting to two or more social-cultural spaces (Bodó, 2008). These findings which were revealed in connection with this particular region are similar to those trends which were described in the international literature (for instance: Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton-Blanc, 1995; Faist, 2009; Levitt, 2004; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007; Kivisto, 2001; Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002; Malkki, 2006; Niedermüller, 2006; Vertovec, 2002). The findings of these international works and their relevance for our research were presented in details in our project outcomes (e.g., Bodó, 2008: 24–30; Bodó, 2009: 32–36; Biró and Bodó, 2009: 12–14).

In the followings I am going to present, in turn, the main conclusions of these three research programmes. Each of the programmes followed the methodology of cultural anthropology, so that we used participatory observation, interviews with migrants (we collected more than 200 transcripts) and case studies, based on which there were several analyses published.

The first research: patterns of transnationalism in the case of labour migration from the Seklerland

The first research titled *Mobility and way of life: the effect of international labour migration on life conduct and identity patterns*¹ intended to study those emigrants who had been working in Hungary. We centred our research around this target group because of the fact that at the beginning of the 2000s, Hungary was the principal direction of emigration among the workers from Seklerland. The analyses of our observations, case studies and interviews let us summarize some of those patterns of the emigrational process which were different from the patterns observed in the early 1990s. The most important signs of change were inventoried in several research reports and articles. By using methods of cultural anthropology, we were able to analyze the considered phenomenon through its socio-cultural embeddedness. In the followings I am going to provide a short enumeration of those aspects which emerged in our research as patterns of transnationalism.

The repositioning of the own world – foreign world opposition

Compared to the period of the early 1990s when migrants operated with a harsh opposition between their own home universe and the foreign world of the receiving country, during the 2000s, migrants started to operate with less harsh oppositions in their representations of the two worlds. Thus, migrants started to use

¹ The original title of the project, in Hungarian, was the following: *Mobilitás és életforma. A külföldi munkavállalás hatása az életvezetésre, az identitásmodellekre a székelyföldi térségben*. The project was supported by research grant no. 1282/25.10.2005 awarded by the Institute for Scientific Research, Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania.

softer, smaller scale demarcations, for instance instead of ‘us’ and ‘them’ they fluidized (depending on contexts) their small home village and community with the urban worlds and ways of life of their receiving country.

Representations of gender

The changing and softening nature of demarcation began to appear also in relation with gender. In migrants’ narratives men and women do not represent two major, antagonistic categories any more, but genders are described and represented through nuances focusing on the different gender experiences in the context of the foreign worlds.

Attitudes depending on migrants’ family status

Migrants’ attitudes towards the foreign world depend much on their family status. Independent people, those living in relationship or in marriages declared different ways through which they are connected both to the receiving contexts and to their homes. This kind of differentiation constitutes a new pattern of migration compared to the more unified habitus of migrants observed in the early 1990s.

Dealing with spatial distance: travelling and communication

The ways in which migrants are dealing with spatial distance is, in turn, very different compared to the early period of the 1990s. Now, the physical space becomes narrower, in the sense that migrants possess new and easier forms of communication through which they are able to overcome spatial distance and to mild the opposition between the two worlds of their home and foreign countries.

Reasons and objectives

There occur important changes also regarding the reasons and objectives of the labour migration. Our observations show that compared to the beginning of the 1990s, this new wave of migration is motivated by everyday and pragmatic reasons. Labour migration does not represent a special event any more, but a familiar, ‘normal’, taken-for-granted situation both in the case of migrants’ environments and in the experiences and attitudes of migrants themselves.

Orientation on the labour market

Compared to the early ‘90s, today’s migrants are orienting themselves with more confidence throughout the foreign labour markets. This leads to the fact that being a labour migrant is not perceived any more as a lower social status by those who experience the phenomenon.

Employment. Is it black, grey or white?

Our findings show that today the majority of emigrant employees are possessing official work permits. At the beginning of the regime change the situation was the reverse and then the prevalence of black work, respectively its unsafe nature had contributed to the existing asymmetry between the home world and the foreign world. The changing situation, that is, the evolution towards white labour makes the status of migrant employee more affordable and acceptable.

Developed region – underdeveloped region

International experiences teach us that migration is usually oriented from underdeveloped regions towards developed regions. Our case reveals the same pattern but, in the meantime, migrants' experiences show – once again – the softening of the demarcations between the home and the receiving region. This latter aspect means that migrants do not experience the development/underdevelopment dichotomy as the principal character of the two major regions, but this duality is applied to lower life-segments, for instance to the case of employment areas.

Mental representations of the oppositions

The above mentioned aspects constitute an indicator for the way in which the two worlds are represented. Especially young migrants are those who represent the new environment in form of a puzzle, instead of a unified corpus. The foreign world and the new employment place are differentiated into various segments and each segment is represented and evaluated in a different manner towards which migrants develop particular mechanisms of adaptation.

Connections with the home world

The ways in which migrants and their experiences are represented at home, that is, in the migrants' native cultural contexts, have been changed also, compared to the first phase of migration. A decade earlier, labour migration was seen as a special, frequently stigmatized situation. Compared to this, today's labour migrants are taken-for-granted and accepted. The phenomenon became a generalized aspect of life, so that the evaluation of the migrants and their experiences do not require specific efforts and attitudes either from the part of migrants themselves, or from the part of those persons who remain at home.

Employees' narratives

During our research we have been familiarized with the personal history of several migrants and we had also the opportunity to compare these histories with those occurring a decade earlier. The major difference of these personal narratives is that migrants' experiences which occurred in the foreign world (and particularly

their bad experiences) do not constitute specific, salient parts of their grand life narratives, but these episodes are fluidized inside the migrants' life history. This situation denotes, once again, that labour migration does not constitute a special issue, but rather a natural part of the life course.

Second research: youth's labour migration

Our second research project was specifically focused on youth's labour migration and was titled *Employment: at home or abroad. The social background of the international labour migration of the youth from Seklerland*². The focus on youth was motivated by our previous findings which signalled that this socio-demographical category constitutes a more and more salient presence in the emigrational stream. Young people's accentuated presence refers both to the number of young migrants and to those previously mentioned processes which are signs in the direction of transnationalization of the process of migration, in the sense that such patterns are especially characteristic in the case of the young.

This project brought a very rich and varied research material about young migrants, since we succeeded to collect interviews and case studies about youths from different social and geographical environments, about youths with different socio-demographical backgrounds and employment experiences, etc. Through these data we had the opportunity to observe more closely the complex and multi-faceted nature of the youth's labour migration. The richness of the data constituted our most important challenge as well, since we had to look for specific patterns inside these materials with the aim to draw as precisely as possible those developing trends of migration which are typical for this group of people.

We were interested in the following aspects: the youth's specific experiences as a result of their age; motivational factors of migration (both in terms of reasons and aspirations); experiences as migrants (during living abroad and then at home, in forms of remittances); encountering the other world and results of this encounter; the return. A particular interest was directed towards establishing the potential roles played by migrants' emitting environments on their further experiences as foreign employees and on their experiences abroad.

Our findings suggested that the two most important factors which influence migrants' behaviour and mentality are their educational level and their status on the employment market. The major part of young labour migrants is composed of lower educated youth (usually vocational training). There are, of course, other

² The original title of the project, in Hungarian, was the following: *Munkavállalás: itthon vagy külföldön? Székelyföldi fiatalok külföldi vendégmunka-gyakorlatának társadalmi háttere*. The project was supported by the research grant no. 1033/15. 11. 2006 awarded by the Institute for Scientific Research, Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania.

important segments as well, for instance higher education students, who especially during summer holidays go abroad for working reasons. But in general, the number of higher or secondary educated migrants is lower compared to the first category. Our aim was to detect those particular aspects of attitudes and behaviours which can be traced back to migrants' educational backgrounds.

We were interested also in differences according to migrants' target countries. This was motivated on the one hand by the fact that young migrants are choosing increasingly diverse countries for their labour migration. Thus, while at the beginning of our research, Hungary constituted the most important target country, and it has continued to be the leader in this sense, youth are more and more directed towards countries like Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the USA, France, and even Egypt. On the other hand, we put forward the expectation that this choice is related not only to previous narratives of emigrational experience, but also to some personal characteristics, specifically to educational level.

As a summary, we can conclude that the behaviour and mentality of the youth labour migrants from Seklerland is very differentiated, depending on the socio-demographical background of the actors. However, there are also some patterns which are characteristic for older migrants as well. Thus, youth migrants do not see either their migration as a specific, not-seen-before issue, but as a normal event of the life course. Their migration decision is motivated by the aspiration of better earning, in the sense that they are not running away from the risk of being unemployed in the home country, but wish to earn better money abroad. There appear some other important, age related motivations as well. For instance, the learning opportunity (once abroad, youth migrants frequently reported that they were concerned about learning and developing new skills), adventure seeking, curiosity, etc. are important motivations of youth's labour migration.

Youth migrants declared that the economic and knowledge capital which they succeeded to earn abroad are valorized at home and constitute important contributors for their further development in the home country. These patterns are important signals concerning the emitting region, i.e. the Seklerland. The region experiences a continuous flux of labour migration and, in the meantime, continues to be the terrain where migrants' gains (whether in forms of experiences and remittances) are valorized. This group of migrants is very flexible both in the sense of opportunity exploitation and in terms of how migrants represent the receiving environment, i.e. the other world. The first aspect means that youth migrants, once returned home, continue to be open-minded in relation to new working possibilities and are ready to repeat their labour migrant experiences. In spite of this fact, labour migration continues to be a more or less frequently repeatable life event rather than a permanent choice.

Youth's encounter with foreign worlds and cultures signals – beyond the very many individual ways of representations – that norms, attitudes and behaviours

learned abroad are becoming parts of migrants' proper ways of looking at the world. Labour migration itself becomes a fluid terrain of encounter between us and them.

Third research: phenomena of transnationalisation

Our third research project was directed towards the better understanding of those more important trends which were outlined in the previous research programmes. We specified three areas wherein to follow those important changes in mentality and behaviour which can be considered aspects of transnationalisation in the process of migration. These areas were the following: the value system, the world of celebration and holidays, and the ways in which migrants maintain their contacts with their family members left at home. In connection with these three aspects we undertook in-depth qualitative research in order to reveal the ways in which migrants develop attitudes and behaviours which can be regarded as transnational, in the sense that attitudes and practices are bearing both the signs of the home and the foreign universe. The title of the project was: *Dividing space by relationships, rituals and values in the context of transnational migration*³.

In connection with the three outlined areas we made the following observations.

The world of *values* constitutes the area in which some signs of transnationalism can be best outlined. Migrants hold values which are dividing between the home and foreign world, but this dividing does not mean a harsh separation. Migrants are able to differentiate norms and ways of conduct which are specific for one world or another, but they do not reject explicitly the norms of the foreign world. What is typical is the interpretation of the new value systems and their integration into the personal value system. In this sense, we can mention some signs of value change as well. For instance, there are signs of shifting from materialist towards post-materialist value orientations. Once migrants experience wealth and are able to consume a sort of material goods, they are beginning to attach greater importance to higher order values.

Migrants are in permanent *contacts* with their home world and this constitutes one of the patterns of transnationalism in the process of migration. For a migrant, different forms of contacts enable a comfortable living in the receiving country and enable migrants to remain up-to-date with those life events which occur in the emitting universe, that is, in their country and particularly within their close community and family.

³ The original title of the project, in Hungarian, was the following: *A tér kapcsolatok, rituálék és értékek szerinti felosztásának vizsgálata a transznacionális migrációs folyamatokban*. The project was supported by the research grant no. 209/40/02, April 2009, awarded by the Institute for Scientific Research, Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania.

Migrants maintain their contacts with their home in various forms. Our research findings suggest that migrants enter in contact at least once a week, but generally every day with their home usually through the modern communicational devices and instruments, like Internet or mobile phones. The most important actors involved in these communications are, besides the migrants themselves, the members of the migrants' in-groups, that is, friends and family members. It is important to mention that according to our data, among the family members left at home, usually women are the most important contact persons, that is, they are responsible for keeping in touch with the migrants. Themes of the communication are usually centred around local news.

For the purpose of our analysis we established three types of holidays: official holidays, turning points of personal lives and holidays of smaller communities (friends, village, etc.). Migrants are returning home most frequently in the case of official holidays. At the same time, these types of holidays most negatively affect migrants' earnings, since in the case of return they miss an important part of their earnings.

Migrants are returning quite frequently to their families in the case of those holidays which mark the turning points of their personal lives, too. These events, however personal in their nature, take place usually within the small community (i.e. the extended family). Our findings suggest that these types of celebrations constitute, in the context of a more and more individualized world, opportunities for community-based linkages and networks centred around the migrant him/herself.

In the case of the third types of holidays we were able to observe how these newly emerged holidays have become opportunities for ritualistic and buzzing celebration of certain communities (e.g. circle of friends, rural communities, etc.). Migrants found that these are important opportunities for them and usually decide to travel back home for these fiestas which constitute, besides the event itself, opportunities for keeping one's local social networks alive.

Gifting, as a ritual activity has suffered changes over time and these changes are in accordance with the modification of the phenomena of migration. The normalization and everyday nature of the migration has brought with it the reduction of the gifts values and the diminution of the number of those who receive gifts from the migrants. All these changes affected the symbolic nature of gift.

As a conclusion of our third research project, it can be assessed that in the practice of transnational migration the connectedness with the home world and the maintenance of the home-based networks constitute important facets. Migrants however actuate these networks without entering in conflicts with the 'other' universe or with the actors of this universe. Consequently, migrants are able to deeply and openly live their home-based world, meanwhile this preoccupation is not ostentatious in the eyes of the 'others'. The numerous bridges between the two worlds allow migrants to connect and identify themselves to both worlds. Thus, they

are not forced to isolate themselves from any of these worlds, on the contrary, they are able to develop flexible relationships with both kinds of worlds. The changes in value systems, the specific aspects of communication and celebration, the new communicational devices offer numerous opportunities for splitting between the two worlds without conflicts and without harsh oppositions between them.

Concluding remarks

The findings of our research allow us to conclude that in the process of the international labour migration from Seklerland, there occur important aspects of transnationalisation and these aspects have become more and more accentuated and complex. From the perspective of our research, this means that the pattern which we found at the beginning of the 1990's and in which migrants operated with harsh oppositions between their home and foreign universes, lost its dominance and relevance. Instead of this pattern, there has appeared this new pattern of transnationalisation, according to which migrants are connected to both universes and the 'us' and 'them' do not constitute conflicting entities any more. It should be accentuated however that the phenomena of transnationalism occurs with different intensity depending on the types of actors, experiences and situations involved. Migrants' universes and corresponding practices are not so harshly delimited as two decades ago; however, elements of demarcation and opposition still continue to exist, but are obviously less acute as during the 1990s. Thus, it is legitimate to conclude that these two patterns are not completely exclusive, but are rather fading into each other.

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Hungarian Approaches on Social Stratification and Mobility as Reflected in the *Szociológiai Szemle* Journal. A Review

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Abstract. My study provides a preliminary review on the process of social transition in Hungary as reflected through changes in social stratification and social mobility, according to theoretical and empirical research published in *Szociológiai Szemle* (*Review of Sociology*), the journal of the Hungarian Sociological Association. I consider that the stratification studies show several very specific dimensions of social transition, presenting the evolution of these processes in transitional societies as well as its effects. The main aim of this study is to present the conceptualizations and results of the research and studies which contributed to a better understanding of the transitional processes in Central and Eastern Europe. In my opinion, Hungarian sociology was better prepared to reflect and analyze the social aspects of the transition than the social sciences of the other countries in this part of Europe. The main argument of this statement is that the starting theory of the market transition elaborated by Nee (1989) builds its conceptual framework on the findings and results of Hungarian social scientists like Polányi, Szelényi and Kornai.

Keywords: social transition, stratification theories, Hungarian sociology

Article selection criteria

The definition of transition is a very difficult task, also regarding the delimitation of its period, due to the multitude of accepted definitions existing in parallel. In my study, which concerns the case of Hungary, I consider that the transition started in February 1989, when the former ruling party MSZMP

(Hungarian Socialist Labor Party) accepted the multi-party system, and agreed to the organization of free elections. Regarding this criteria I will refer only to those studies which refer to the period after the above mentioned date, except for those prior events that are needed to be noted for a better understanding of the present.

In my approach¹ I will consider the stratification studies with the following themes: the description of a specific stratum of the society (mainly we can find descriptions of three main social strata: the elites, the middle class, and the low class, usually identified by the unemployed strata), or the analysis of the stratification process. By mobility studies, I understand those studies that are presenting the mechanisms of social mobility, as well as its characteristics and inner logic.

Even with these specifications or delimitations, there is a multitude of themes presented in *Szociológiai Szemle*, which include both theoretical and empirical, research based results, as well as comparative and local case studies. In my opinion, this diversity shows the complexity of the transition the most eloquently.

In the present review, I present the results of the articles according to two criteria. The first is the chronological order of the published articles, and after that, the main themes that present the aspects of stratification.

The changes in social stratification

Before the description of the new social structure, the Central and Eastern European (in most cases newly emerging) sociology tried to present the characteristics of stratification in the communist society, for a more adequate presentation and understanding of the post-social changes. In these conditions the first study which presented social stratification was published by Kolosi, Szelényi, Szelényi and Western (1991). The authors consider that former communist or state-socialist countries comprise the following characteristics: the strategically important capitals could be exclusively state property, assuring them a monopole position controlled by the leading party, the party's legitimacy was based on the Marxist-Leninist ideology, and the social structure was pyramidal, having the cadres at its top, and the workers at the bottom. According to their study, the most important precondition of social ascension was political loyalty. In the summer of 1990, the Central-European countries and particularly Hungary could have been considered post-communist, as far as the private property was considered of equal importance with the state property, and free elections were organized. This presentation of the society is important for the authors, because, in their point of view, in this new system a new mobility channel for social ascent has emerged: i.e.

¹ I wish to thank for the comments received from the part of the reviewers on the previous version of my manuscript.

for the owners of private property. The bipolar social system formerly composed of workers and intellectuals was completed by a third component, i.e. the new bourgeoisie.

Further in their study the authors specify that in 1990–1991 the Central-European countries should not have been considered capitalist, but merely “socialist mixed economy”, where the state sector still maintains its dominance, while the market based sector, even if it grows fast, plays only a secondary, complementary role (Kolosi et al., 1991: 9).

These changes were both the basis, and the consequence of, the political and economical changes in Central-European societies. The fact that these changes represent a totally new experience is presented by Offe (1992), who argues that the Central-European transition is a new economic, political and social process, which is not similar to the changes experienced in some South European or South American countries. This observation is shared by Kolosi and Róna-Tas (1992), who explain the differences, stating that while in Latin-American and Southern European countries the transitions were only political ones – where the main feature was to reconstruct the political institutions, to create a new political elite and to redistribute the power – the ex-socialist countries had to change their economical system as well. Consequently, in these countries new economical institutions and new economical elites appeared, and the redistribution of the ownership and the economical welfare have been changed, too. Furthermore, in the author’s opinion, the re-stratification is the result of the relationship between the socialist leaders and their opposition during the 1970’s and 1980’s.

To describe the effects of the transition on the Hungarian society – also testing Nee’s (1989) theory² about the market transition in Central-European countries – Kolosi and Róna-Tas conclude the following: “the simultaneity of the economic and political transitions in Eastern-Europe follows a different logic. While the political transition creates new political elite and new political institutions, meanwhile the new institutions of the economic transition present a good opportunity for the old elite” (Kolosi and Róna-Tas, 1992: 24). From this situation results that the ex-socialist countries have to face a real contradiction: the logic of the political transition needs a wide range of change in the elites, but the market-based automatism favours the old elite. The authors conclude also that the only protection against these tensions could be a strong middle class, as far as this

² Victor Nee elaborated the theory of market transition in three theses: “1. The market power thesis”, according to which as the transfer of goods will be increasingly placed on the market so will be the transfer of power, and as a consequence the direct producers will gain power against redistributors; “2. The market incentive thesis: Markets provide powerful incentives for immediate producers whereas redistributive economies depress incentives”; “3. The market opportunity thesis: In state socialism the transition from redistribution to markets result in new opportunity structures centered on the marketplace” (Nee, 1989: 666-667)

class could guarantee that there is a possibility for economic prosperity even for those who were not part of the old elite.

Referring to the possibility of social ascension for non-elites in the post-communist regime, Lengyel and Tóth wrote in 1993, by analyzing the willingness for entrepreneurship, that the most important social gap is not between the workers and intellectuals, but between the skilled and unskilled workers (Lengyel and Tóth, 1993).

In his study, as one of the beginning points, Mateju quotes Nee, declaring: "If the transition from redistribution to the market mechanism involves changes in the mode of allocating and distributing resources, the transition will probably change the stratification order" (Nee, 1989: 663 – cited by Mateju, 1993: 19). In a further analysis of Nee's result, Mateju concludes that one of the central questions of the post-communist transition is "a transition which brings with it a change in the stratification system of society, namely not only in the social and economical inequity, but in the characteristics of the newly emerging dimensions of inequity" (Mateju 1993: 22).

To answer this question, Mateju formulates two theses, applying the capitals theory on the post-communist societies. Firstly, during the political and economical changes the economical and human capital will appraise, while the political capital will severely devaluate. Secondly, the process of post-communist transition will go hand in hand with the mutual conversion of the different type of capitals (Mateju, 1993). Mateju's findings are the following: a) contradictory to Nee's theory, the post-communist transition leads to the increase of social inequity; b) the finding of Kolosi and Róna-Tas is proved also in the Czech society, according to which the main causes of the increasing inequality lay in the fact that the strategies applied by the former cadres, who accumulated important human and economic capitals, are very effective; c) as a consequence of this result, the formal career is not the best strategy for gaining economic capital, while becoming an entrepreneur is a better solution for individual economical growth; d) the cultural capital has no effect on the intra-generational mobility; e) the economical capital, precisely the startup capital, does not play an important role in entering the class of entrepreneurs – the social capital plays a much important role; f) a strong vocational commitment rather predicts a parallel enterprise, than the strategy of a formal career. Finally, Mateju concludes that the theory of capitals should create the framework for sociological analysis applied on transitional societies.

Analyzing a special segment of workforce, namely the engineers, Székely and Solymosi (1944) consider that the former good and/or well-paid positions in the public sector, especially in upper education, show a real declination. This finding suggests that the presence of cultural capital solely is not enough to preserve social status. Connected to this research, Gázsó (1995) in his introduction considered that the private property will play a structural role in the newly emerging societies, but

at the same time the owner class is still in its emerging phase. As a general observation, the author suggests that the social and economic processes connected with the transition could lead to the general rising of the knowledge and “this process could be identified not only in the power-based or ownership-based relations, but in the whole system of the division of labor” (Gazsó, 1995: 3)

The analysis of the unemployment, besides other perspectives, shows the new ways of the mobility and the closing ones in the transitional period which also reflect the transformation of the social structure. The findings in the publications since 1995 show the following characteristics.

Simonyi (1995) concludes that it could be considered the paradox of the transitional period that the permanently unemployed, due to accommodation constraints, will avoid the market based economy. The main causes of the described situation are: a) this strata will depend considerably on the state controlled redistribution and b) these persons will provide/procure goods outside of the market, based on reciprocity and on other transactions in kind without the use of money. Analyzing those entrepreneurs which were formerly unemployed, Frey (1995) finds that only one to two percents of the unemployed persons who were on dole choose to be self-employed. Furthermore, the main socio-economic characteristics of this group are the following: younger and with a higher education and formal vocational education. These two approaches prove also that the only way for someone to step to a superior social stratum is a higher level of knowledge, identified in the majority of cases with the cultural capital.

Csiste and Kovács (1995), comparing the rural societies in Central and Eastern-Europe conclude that besides the ‘path-dependence’ (Stark, 1992) there are also several inter-country similarities. One of these is the evolution of the inequities in income. Their findings show that in those countries where the influence of the rural-urban differences has a less important effect on the income-inequities, the unemployment and other kinds of employment-based or newly emerged inequities are present to a higher degree.

At the beginning of their study, Angelusz and Tardos (1995) conclude that one of the two main themes regarding the stratification effects of the transition in the Hungarian literature of specialty by 1995 is the emergence and the consolidation of the middle class. The other one is the increasing social and economic polarization, which leads to the backsliding of a major social stratum, and the end of embourgeoisment. The aim of their research was to identify the connection between the inherence of social strata and social-political identification. The results show that the knowledge of strata-affiliation is still in formation.

I consider the result of Kovács and Váradi (1995) an important finding on the newly forming social strata, whose analysis of the characteristics of the transition in Nagykovács finds that the positions of newly emerged managers of the former co-

operations are strong enough – due to the professional and market based connections – to remain durable performers in the local agrarian economics.

An analysis of the social mobility based on ascription (father's occupation) and achievement (formal qualification) in the case of the male population in Hungary (Luijckx, Róbert, de Graaf and Ganzeboom, 1995) found that both hypotheses were correct: the two factors described above lose their effect on social mobility. But an interesting result is that the effect of the two dimensions is not a linear one, which means that in the late 1980's and early 1990's the theory of industrial society seems to lose its capability of explanation, as far as in this period the social origin shows – even slightly – a growing role, while the achievement shows a decreasing role in the process of status-achievement.

Referring to the increasing rate of social inequity, Andorka analyzes the degree of pauperization. He is quoting the results of Gyenei (1995), according to which the proportion of the extremely poor has practically not changed between 1992 and 1994. The proportion of the poor shows some decrease, but the wealth of the rich has grown significantly. From this result, Andorka concludes that one-tenth of the Hungarian society is capable to accumulate wealth, so this stratum is the real winner of the transition (Andorka, 1996).

The need for an analytical review of the many newly emerging theories is satisfied by Szelényi and Kostello (1996) who present the evolution of market transition according to Nee (1989) and also test its relevancy in transitory societies. The first aspect of this theory refers to the social inequity, i.e. the narrowing of the income gap due to the emergence of the market based commerce as an alternative income possibility besides redistribution. The authors argue that if we analyze the evolution of the gap in incomes, and also generally, between different social strata, the graph will have a U-shape, which means that after the first period of the transition there is a relative convergence of the different social strata, mainly because the lower stratum was able to complete its income from second economy – which here means the market based economy during socialist rule – in which the prices were slowly but firmly defined by the market. The second period was marked by the appearance and evolution of the labour-market, which disadvantaged the lower stratum.

The second aspect discussed by Szelényi and Kostello (1996) is the evolution of the former cadres, as this aspect reflects on the evolution of the social mobility. The research of the presented period (1990–1994) concluded that the main winners of the market transition were these cadres. In the conclusions, the authors nuance their affirmation, as the bureaucratic cadres will be the losers of this transitional process, and only the technocrat members of the former nomenclature will be winners.

The evolution of the transition in the rural economies is presented by Andor, Kunczi and Swain (1996). In their comparison of four (previously three) countries

they found that between 1980 and 1994, the main group who could preserve its status or its occupation were the specialists – with university degrees – outside the agriculture and they were followed either by the specialists – also with university degrees – within agriculture, or by the skilled workers in agriculture. The unskilled workforce was in the most unstable situation. This situation confirms the earlier presented findings, that the value of the cultural capital made concrete in formal scholarly degrees plays a stratification role in the transitional societies. An interesting conclusion of the authors, in the perspective of the Romanian situation³, is that in the analyzed countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovak Republic) the percent of those people who live from agriculture decreased in the presented period.

Another important aspect of the economical transition was the establishing of the market-based banking system. After analyzing the pre- and post-socialist period, Várhegyi (1996) deduces the following conclusions: even the assignment of the bank leaders in Hungary presents a lot of single case scenarios and in many occurrences there are some common aspects. The first is that in the late 1980's a group of specialists in their late thirties/early forties had the essential knowledge to become the future leaders of the banks, so that the technocrat-managerial elite theory seems to be viable from this perspective. The other finding is that the value of the political capital in fulfilling the key positions of the (semi)state owned banks has not diminished, as the power of naming or revoking the leaders in these positions lays with the government.

The use of different types of capital to preserve or to advance in social hierarchy is further elaborated by Vedres (1997). In his study, based on data collected in 1993, he argues that the two mobilizing dimensions in the post-communist societies, i.e. the role of special knowledge and the role of the market (economic capital) should be analyzed together. Due to this perception, he considers that the persons who do not have any useful capital will remain in the same position as before the beginning of the transition. About the theories describing the elites, the author considers that those who predicted the survival of

³ In Romania the agriculture played a different role as it is presented in this study. The two main differences are: 1. in former socialist states at the beginning of the transition (in year 1990) the highest percent of the agriculture to value added to the country's GDP was in Romania (23.74%) and continued to play an important role until 2009, when the greatest value was still in Romania (7.16)%, according to the World Bank country profiles. (data source: World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS>, visited on December 1st, 2010); 2. the primer sector plays an important role in comparison with the presented states, as this sector was meant to absorb a big part of the workforce released from the secondary sector (mainly from industry). Due to this fact, in the period after 1990 the percent of the workforce engaged in primer sector shows a rising tendency until 2000, when it reached the top (41.37%). Even in 2009 the primer sector played an important role in Romania's economy, engaging more than a quarter (28.66%) of the total number of employees (data source: National Institute of Statistics: <https://statistici.insse.ro/shop>, visited on December 3, 2010)

the communist elite were “nearsighted”, because in a longer period the exchange of the elite is evident. However, following the former elites, the main finding of the author is that during the transitional period not only the value of the economical capital is over-emphasized, but also mainly the knowledge to manipulate it. So, the conclusion is, that there is a real difference and hierarchy of the achieved scholarly degree, and the degrees in economy value more than the others (for example the engineering degrees that he analyzed).

Szalai (1997) gives a comprehensive view of the transition in Hungary by analyzing the new elite, their possession of capital and the institutional moral frame in which this capital works. Even the focus of Szalai’s analysis is the elite; I will only present those aspects that I consider relevant for the presentation of social mobility, and stratification effects. The study emphasizes that the new ideological framework of the transition after 1993 in Hungary became monetarism, which – like Marxism – offers simple and fast positive results for everyone, even if in the first (short) period there are some “collateral victims”. In this process, the dominant fraction of the economical elite becomes more powerful in comparison with political and cultural elites, whom they try to put to their service. The role of the economic capital is not, and cannot be considered the major explanatory factor in the description of the elites in its real weight, because the new economical elites are not willing to show their real wealth, so they highly diversify their investments. According to this result and completed with the findings of Vedres (1997), I concluded that the economical capital and the knowledge (cultural capital) to manipulate it offer the guarantee to become or remain a part of the elites, and the legitimacy of these capitals is secured by the idea of monetarism.

Regarding the evolution of the middle class, Szalai (1997) considers that the segregation which occurred among the former elites is relevant also to this class. Therefore, those members of the middle class who were connected somehow with the economical elites could preserve or even raise their social and economical positions. Another important finding of the author is that the transition is approaching its end, because the ways of mobility seem to be consolidating. This observation is confirmed by Kovách (1997), who considers – based on multiple research – that the new economical elite is starting to become a social class, the bourgeoisie. Another important finding of Kovách is that the political elite plays a far weaker role in the control of the economical elites than it was suggested by the former analyses, even in matters such as privatization.

The finding of Szalai about the situation of the middle class is also confirmed by Kovách, who described this class as an inconsistent and fragmented one. The massive appearance of the enterprises does not bring by itself the embourgeoisment, moreover the social status of the middle class is provided by the cultural capital, which has been accumulating in this social stratum in the last thirty years.

Returning to the social background of the economical elites, Róna-Tas and Böröcz (1997) found, by analyzing four different countries in transition (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland), that despite the surface disparities, there are many similarities. This situation is the result of the differentiated effect of the different type of capitals. While the economic capital can be moved and transferred very easily, the other types of capitals are far more “gluey”, like the cultural capital (operationalized as high scholarly degree and experience) and social capital, which cannot be alienated from its owner.

Reflecting on the circulation of the economical elites, Lengyel (1998) concludes that the personal composition of this group has radically changed, but the social characteristics, the career samples and the loyalty criteria have not changed significantly. Lengyel affirms also that besides the appearance of the entrepreneur and unemployed strata, there were four major changes which affected the stratification of the Hungarian society in the 1990's. These changes are: 1) in the economy, the private sector became dominant; 2) the tertiary sector became the dominant economical sector, outpacing the industry and the agriculture; 3) the inactive population became dominant and 4) a new dualistic system was emerging in economy, where the differences lie between the small and big enterprises.

There were two studies published in 1998 that gave a theoretical resumé and notional clarification. Vedres (1998) follows the evolution of the market transition theory. In his opinion, the sociology of the market transitional economy tries to explain the connection between the institutional changes and the change of social structure, and the individuals' social mobility. The conclusion made by the author is that besides the two theoretical approaches – the path-dependency and the teleological approach – there could be possible to create a meta-theory of transition.

Angelusz and Tardos (1998) attempt to clarify the sociological notions of the middle classification and embourgeoisement. Beside the conceptual and operational considerations, they also reflect on the fragmented state of the middle level of the (Hungarian) society due to polarization. Furthermore, the described situation leads to the conclusion that the correct form to describe this social stratum is to use the plural form of this noun, middle strata. Regarding their arguments, the notion of middle class and embourgeoisement are different, because of their sociological and historical connotations and operationalization⁴.

Defining the social classes by income, Habich and Spéder (1999) conclude, after comparing three countries (former East- and West Germany and Hungary in the 1992–1996 period), that the biggest changes occurred in former East-Germany.

⁴ The authors' conclusion is that in the Kádár-period, when there was an increasing economical prosperity in Hungarian society, there was an accentuated mid-classification with slight embourgeoisement, while after the beginning of the transition, in the higher strata of the Hungarian society (which is narrower than the middle class) starts an embourgeoisement, and meanwhile the mid-class shows a decrease.

In Hungary, the middle class in terms of its income shows a convergence toward the median value, which means that the majority of this class has suffered negative evolution in the terms of real wages. Another important consideration of the two authors is connected to the end of the transitional period. The authors argue, similarly to Szalai (1997) that when it is not possible to observe increase or decrease in mobility, or the mobility was similar that in former West-Germany, then the transition could be considered as being finished. The data show that in Hungary, in 1996, the mobility level is much higher than in former East- and West-Germany, so the authors conclude that the transition has not been finished at that moment. Besides this result, the data show that the lowest level of mobility is in Hungarian lower class, which means that they could be definitely outpaced. This relative stability occurs also at the stratum with the highest income, so the two ends of the income-based strata are stabilizing, while the middle class gives the highest volume of the mobility.

The effect of the social stratification on the lifestyle is analyzed by Róbert (2000), in the period between 1982 and 1998 in Hungary. The author finds that in the socialist period the status-inconsistency was a common effect of the social policy that was applied in that period, as it controlled the connection between the qualifications and wages. Analyzing the changes in lifestyle in the transitional period (the data is from 1992 and 1998), the results show a strong correlation between the lifestyle and the demographical-, status- and class-specific indexes. As for the evolution of the lifestyle in the entire analyzed period, the author assumes that between 1982 and 1992 there was a growing tendency of crystallization of the connections between the cultural and material lifestyle, but this correlation has diminished from 1992 to 1998. Regarding the explanatory variables, only the qualification and the age have a significant effect on the lifestyle.

The structural changes and inequities in state-socialism and in the newly emerged capitalism is analyzed by Zsuzsa Ferge (2002). The author's main question is how the social inequities could grow so fast and spectacular in Hungary compared with the previous social system. Regarding the new capitalist structure in Hungary, Ferge considers that the main structuring factor in society is not the market, but the legal (constitutional) framework, which made possible the emergence of the market economy, especially through the right to private property and the freedom of contractual arrangements which regulate the property and workforce market relations. The conclusions were that due to the structural changes, the material inequities rise very fast. Generally, the risk has grown and the existential safeties have decreased.

After 2003 the number of articles that appeared in *Szociológiai Szemle* in connection to analyzed aspects of the transition has decreased, except for the reviews of the books published on these themes. This evolution suggests that the majority of the sociologists consider that the transition process is over and the new

social structure and strata show the ‘usual level’ of mobility that can be detected in consolidated democracies.

As a general conclusion it can be assumed that the presented works prove that the transition as a process had a real deep impact on social stratification. The theory of capitals proved to be an adequate framework in describing the ongoing changes in the transitional societies. After the change in regime, the main role was played by the cultural capital, meaning, in the case of the elites, a degree in economy and managerial experience. In the case of the middle class, the cultural capital was operationalized as a high level or a vocational degree. The role of the economical capital on social mobility seemed to follow the increase of the private property share within the economy.

The lowest social strata did not gain any kind of capital during the transition, and have also lost the social framework maintained previously by the state. Consequently, this stratum has been preserved in its former status.

It can also be concluded that an inherent feature of the transition is an increased social mobility, which lasts until the crystallization of the newly evolved mobility channels.

As for the middle class, considering the aforementioned theories there are two things that can be observed: the middle class in Hungary is very fragmented and this stratum provides the highest level of social mobility. As a consequence, individuals belonging to this stratum comport the most risk of losing their social position.

The list of articles from the Review of Sociology presented in this study in chronological order

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- Kovács, Katalin and Váradi Monika Mária (1995). Szereplők és kapcsolatrendszerek egy alföldi mezőváros agrárgazdaságában (Actors and network systems in the agricultural economy of a town from Hungary's Plain region). *Szociológiai Szemle*, 4: 131-147.
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Book Review

***David A. Kideckel: România postsocialistă.
Munca, trupul și cultura clasei muncitoare***
Iași: Polirom Publishing House, 2010

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The book titled *România postsocialistă. Munca, trupul și cultura clasei muncitoare* was published by the Iași-based Polirom publishing house in 2010 and it is the Romanian version of Kideckel's original book called *Getting By in Postsocialist Romania: Labor, the Body, and Working-Class Culture* (Indiana University Press, 2008). The Romanian edition does not come as a surprise. Since the fieldwork and the empirical data collection were done in Romania, publishing the findings in Romania can be regarded as a 'must'. On the other hand, a book which describes and gives insights about processes that were experienced by so many Romanian people, can be considered an opening towards laymen, towards a wider public, besides professional readers.

The Romanian version (translated by Șerban Văetiș) at first glance and according to the table of contents is an exact match of the original book, however there are some differences as well. The Romanian version does not use the metaphoric title (i.e. *Getting by*) of the original. The illustration on the paper jacket is also different. While the English cover has a photo of miners who take a rest by sitting and passing the time (a picture which appears on p. 86 of the Romanian book), the Romanian version has an illustration of industrial work – which recalls memories of the media-gallery of the period before 1990. These subtle differences might suggest a little bit different perspective. For the *outsiders* of this world there appears

post socialism (in accordance with the title), while the more *insiders* (workers, readers, scholars from Romania) are still “facing” a memory of socialism.

Based on a detailed ethnographic anthropology, Kideckel seeks to understand and to present two special subgroups of the typical Romanian socialist working class. He tries to show what the new era has brought for these social groups and how they can get through the post socialist reality. The two groups Kideckel chooses to describe in details are the *ex-miners* from the Jiu Valley and the *ex-industrial* workers from the chemical industry of the town of Făgăraș. Before 1990, these two groups of workers were part of a relatively privileged labour class. As far as they were employed in the heavy industry, in the socialist period they represented the socialist ideology of work: they embodied the class who had built socialism. For these workers transition means (the beginning of) a new world, a world which is totally different from the world they had experienced before the change of the regime. Although the whole society is struggling with the same situation and everybody tries to adapt to the new life circumstances, the author is convinced (and the reader will be convinced as well) that the survival of this ex-privileged working class will be much harder than expected .

The almost 300 page long book is structured in eight chapters. In the first chapter we meet Constantin and Ioan together with their faces, voices and narratives. By getting to know them, we get acquainted – among others – with feelings like fear and alienation. Furthermore we even get to discover the effects of transformation. By using the “canary-metaphor” (p. 26), “workers” are presented as objects and subjects of a political-social-economical transformation period. They are being associated with canaries, who are the first to experience the change. They do this not only by entering the coal mine but in suffering the social restructuring as well. For this social group the whole situation is perceived as a paradox: although they are organically connected to the old system (we have the impression that they still live in that old system), they are forced to adapt to the new one. This fact generates a positional conflict as far as old habits, skills and knowledge seem to become useless in the new era. According to Kideckel, this conflict which manifests itself on both personal and collective levels is generated by the historically and structurally advantageous position in which working classes have been put during communism. This position however has been restructured into the “private personalism”¹ of the post-socialist era (p. 26), while its advantages have become disadvantages. The work of this group was important *then*, it was well paid, ideologically it served the benefit of the whole society. *Now* the members of this group do not have work, cannot find jobs, their professional skills

¹ During the decades of communism everything had a strong collectivistic character, the notion of private was almost unknown. In post-socialism the omnipotent state disappeared, but the people socialized in the old system cannot deal (easily) with the *private* (possession, house, decision, problems), which are left all to personal skills and abilities.

are not in demand any more and, consequently, income problems are constantly present. By describing in details the transition process, the author presents the ways in which this ex-privileged group has been pushed to the periphery of the society.

In the second chapter the author gives us an insight into the history of the Jiu Valley, the life of the people and the character of work that has been done here (and in Făgăraș). We can also read a few interesting thoughts about the history of industrialization. Referring to the region under discussion, Kideckel speaks about the cultural changes which were induced by socialism and presents the “heavy heritage” (p. 56) left behind by those times: heroism and the cult of work. Apparently, in the workers’ narratives the socialist period is euphemized, even if the everyday life of the working class had been very ambiguous² in the past as well (p. 64). While the author talks about socialism, he frames also the era of post-socialism (p. 63). Presumably this continuous parallel drawing, the dependency from the glorified past will be an everlasting (clogging) characteristic of these people’s mentality.

Privatization, unemployment, black market, the backsliding of the quality of life are some of the *keywords* that can activate every worker’s personal discourse about the (*hard, problematic, confusing, insecure*) present and about the (*easier, clearer, more understandable, securer*) past. By listing the main aspects of the economical-political changes, the author presents the discourse of estrangement. By doing this he helps the reader to give individual answers to the question of how this working class has been changed and has experienced the differences between then and now. Knowing this process of transformation is crucial in understanding what has really happened with the working class. Formally this section is dedicated (according to the subtitle) to this discourse of change, but the idea of estrangement characterizes the “anthropological coverage”, pervading the argumentation and the message of this work. We might say that estrangement is one of the main key words of the book.

In the third chapter a new kind of work and work culture is being presented along with a series of problems that are enabled by it. The title (*Postsocialist Labor Pains*) already suggests a daunting impression by using the words *pain, fear* and *distance* as attributes of the post-socialist labour. Before 1990 work and workplace represented – behind a stable income – a clear source of identity, an obvious link between workers and community, between the individual and the society. These connections made people feel safe. And even if the workplace constituted for the

² Although in the narratives the past is always nice and beautiful, the reality was darker. One good example for the imperfection of the past regime (even for this privileged group), is the miner strike from ’77. This was a very important and big demonstration, so that Nicolae Ceaușecu had to go to the Jiu Valley himself to calm the situation. This proves that the miners were not satisfied with their working and living conditions at all. And we can read about nutrition, health, family violence problems even in the past.

state an instrument of control, the post-socialist worker narratives tend to see only the trouble-free side of the old system. The unpredictable changes (transformation of work and production, massive dismissal with severance pay), the sentiment of permanent uncertainty (growing unemployment, black labour, underpaid jobs) reshaped and demoralized the culture of work. Work has lost the surplus meaning of “feeding the family and mind” (p. 112): the *work* started to mean only a *job*. These changes can be identified even in the working class unit and workers’ activism, along with the decline of the workers’ unions, but on household level as well.

The Romanian political arena cannot be left out from this session, since these workers have expected a solution from the state (which catered them before, creating the need of habit). In lack of effective state intervention, they started to apply different strategies in order to escape from this situation: demonstrations, strikes or even “*mineriads*”.³ Similarly to the situation where working class is getting fragmented, the institution of family and community – presented in the 5th chapter – follow the same path. Those contacts which were crucial before have become infrequent or disappeared after the regime change. In the new era, families are diverging from the community, but even inside the family the distances are deepening (The subtitle is very indicative in this sense: *Men, women and children. Together and apart in post-socialism*) and tensions become quotidian⁴, so that stone houses become houses made of straw⁵. The conflicts between men and women inside the households are in strong relation with the new gender roles evoked by the new social structure. The next chapter provides even deeper insights into the phenomenon of alienation. By assessing that people start to feel “*strangers in their own skin*” (p. 167–193), the author concludes that the gender identity (for men and women as well) “is affected, undermined and reformulated in content and meaning by the specific socio-economic forces that they are facing in the Romanian society in change” (p. 192).

Health constitutes the topic of the book’s last investigative-descriptive chapter. Kideckel presents the problematic question of health representation and health condition of the working class. We again meet keywords like *stress*, *work-conflicts*, *health system*, *inadequate nutrition* and *drinking problems*. Kideckel suggests that the decline in workers’ health condition is strongly related to different

³ The term *mineriad* is used to name any of the successive violent interventions of miners from Jiu Valley in Bucharest. They aimed at wresting policy changes or simply material advantages from the current political power. There were *mineriads* in 1990 (the most violent in June 1990) and one year later, and the last one in January 1999.

⁴ We find a lot of statistical data regarding the increasing number of divorces, the low number of marriages (p. 156). The households are struggling even with the minimal eating issues (ex. pp. 153-155), but there are also alcohol and depression problems in case of both men and women.

⁵ The main title of the chapter formulates this question: Houses of Stone or Straw. Here the *house of stone* means not only the stability, the certainty, the unwavering home, but it is also used as a metaphor for happiness, since this is a wedding greeting in Romania.

stress-factors of their lives. Based on the author's findings, the unstable labour market has the most harmful effect on body and health perception (p. 200).

The last chapter undertakes the challenge to formulate a possible package of answers – to the question “What is to be done?” This challenge is enormous and although the author mentions a few programmes that have been implemented in this region in order to produce some positive changes on the labour market, in social structure, in everyday life, but in workers' mentality as well, he does not formulate a clear vision concerning the future. The conclusion is very disconcerting but objective: an important change must take place, since this distorted and inhibited status encountered in Jiu Valley (and in Făgăraş) is “an ominous sign” for the ex-working class and society (p. 222).

It is unusual in Romania that a book with important topics for scholars in social sciences to be addressed to a broad public as well. Since the entire book is filled with illustrative personal confessions, oral histories, retrospections to the past, everyday problems, well known “survival” strategies, the message of the book could sound familiar but provocative and interesting at the same time to both professionals and everyday readers. Surprisingly, these quotidian, but specific problems can be understood not only by insiders (people from that region, from Romania) but also by “outsiders” (foreigners). The author – who is an American anthropologist – represents an outsider in this world, but in the entire socialist regime as well. However, he succeeds not only to understand these social processes, but also to explain them in articulated terms to a wide audience. It can be very exciting – even for someone who is familiar with this literature – to read about the miner strike of '77, about miners' narratives regarding the mineriads, about workers' and ex-workers' beliefs about the duty of the state, their health, or their importance as individuals and as a community.

I assume that the book could be a complete guide to the life of this social class at the edge of regimes even without including Făgăraş-based workers as a second terrain for field work and analyses. Since the world of miners is so particular – it was so in the past and it is also after the regime change – the comparison and parallel drawing with another group of ex-industrial workers is far-fetched at some points. And the balance is hardly fulfilled: in the book the accent is always being placed on miners. So maybe presenting only the working class from the Jiu Valley would be enough and complete as well.

Kideckel's work is as complete as it can be. He manages to draw an entire image of these groups which were known as the representative groups of the working class in socialism. The unfavourable circumstances of miners' and industrial workers' everyday life in post socialism is always presented by making reference to symbolic and social capital. Social capital constitutes a recourse which this social class used to have during communism, but had lost during the period of transition. Kideckel's most creditable realization may be that he observed

and noticed – among a series of everyday happenings – the “terra incognita” of the working class. The author considers that the process of transition for the working class of the Jiu Valley and Făgăraș will not be as fast as the government, the media discourse, etc. would prefer. This process of change does not follow a uniform path; it is different for each social group, or even for each citizen. As such, the author concludes that the ex-industrial working class – which had a series of advantages in socialism – might be one of the most affected strata of the transition, since the new system pulls the security of the past out from under their feet.



The Department of Social Sciences of the Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania. A Brief Presentation

In the case of Romania there are three important aspects which influenced the strengthening of the education within the domain of social sciences during the last two decades. The first aspect is the endeavour of institutional rehabilitation, as far as before the 1989 regime change social science education, particularly in the field of sociology, was extremely restricted. The second issue refers to the complex process of social change which began right after the regime change and whose approach needed systematic analyses and interpretations on the part of social sciences. Chronologically, the third important aspect is related to the European Integration. Romania's EU integration in 2007 brought on the agenda the theme of social development and, consequently, the need to generate developmental policies. In this framework the need for training in applied social sciences became obvious.

The Department of Social Sciences of the Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania is placed in Miercurea-Ciuc (Csíkszereda) and was established a decade ago based on the aforementioned three reasons. Although at the time of founding, i.e. in 2001, Romania's EU integration did not constitute a salient issue, the processes of social developmental policies whose aim was to gradually prepare the forthcoming EU accession had already been delineated. Based on social needs and on developmental policy challenges to be expected, the Department of Social Sciences decided to build up two BA specializations: Sociology – with important rural development content, and Communication – Public Relations (PR).

Besides the three country-level issues mentioned in the first paragraph, the establishment of our Department was influenced by a fourth, regional aspect as well. The Miercurea-Ciuc (Csíkszereda)-based faculties of the Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania and, consequently, the Department of Social Sciences, are situated in the centre of a quasi-peripheral region of the country. This

region, i.e. the Seklerland is a mostly rural region with only a few small towns and several more or less culturally integrated micro-regions inside which the need for social change and developmental policy gets further accents compared to the country. For instance, in spite of the fact that there are several developmental attempts in the region, it can be said that compared to the country-level average the region is still a laggard. That is, the scale and speed of social change are moderate, social problems are accentuated, the number of small settlements suffering from social and developmental marginalization is important, developmental success stories are limited and usually small scale, the number of economically unsustainable, family-based agricultural attempts is considerable, the capitalization of endogenous capacities is undeveloped, etc.

Given these regional specificities, we intended, ever since the time of foundation, to create a Department which is concerned not only with education and research but also with connection- and co-operation-building with other institutions of the regions. Thus, this third role of any educational institution, which is more and more important in today's academic discourse, was an important imperative of our Department from the time of its establishment. This social role became ever stronger during the elapsed decade and nowadays it constitutes one of the most important patterns of the Department. Without the aim to be exhaustive, I mention here only a few examples for our 'third role' attempts: joint meetings in forms of workshops, panels and conferences with several regional institutions involved in policy building; empirical social research with the aim of grounding regional developmental policies; assistance for knowledge transfer projects; service providing for regional social agents (e.g. issuing developmental strategies and policies for local communities and micro-regions; social and developmental consultation), longer term inter-institutional co-operation strategies with regional social agents, etc.

In terms of formal higher education, our Department runs two BA level specializations (Sociology – with accents on rural development, and Communication-PR). The educational activity is provided by a personnel of 20 professionals (three university professors, two associated professors (readers), six lecturers, five assistant professors and a referent; three young researchers participate in our research based activities) who systematically participate in national and international level scientific events.

Our research is multi-faceted but concerns two major areas: our regional development and policy-oriented research is focused on the conditions of social development, while communication-centred research is connected to the theme of information society, mostly in terms of analyzing the forms of active participation (e.g. forms and modes of participation in online communities). The work of the

several active research groups is aggregated within the framework of the department's Research Centre (the articles of Bodó; Kiss and Fejes in this issue are both based on research projects carried out within the framework of our Department).

The Department has cooperation agreements with similar departments of other universities from abroad. Within the framework of the Department of Social Sciences the Autumn School of the European Society for Rural Sociology was organized in 2004. Since 2008 we are partners of the Knowledge and Policy (KNOW&POL) integrated project funded by the European Commission under Priority Seven of the Sixth RTD Framework Programme (see the short outline of the project below and the article by Kiss and Fejes in this issue). In this year, together with the Hungarian PR Society, our Department is going to co-organize for the third time the PR Summer School.

Beyond doubt, our Department is still very young and we are continuously searching for research collaboration as well as for institutional partnerships.

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KNOWandPOL - Knowledge and policy. Outline of a research project

Since 2006 the Department of Social Sciences of the Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania is involved in the integrated project KNOWandPOL funded by the European Commission under Priority Seven (Citizens and Governance) of the Sixth RTD Framework Programme.

The project aims to analyze the role of knowledge in the construction and regulation of health and education policies in Europe, looking for the convergences and specificities among nations and sectors. The five years' project is multinational and multilevel in that it looks at knowledge and governance problems across eight different countries as well as in local, national and international domains.

The research is organized around three complementary orientations which apply to both sectors and across countries and levels. The first orientation seeks to map the knowledge potentially available to decision-makers in different countries and contexts and trace the relationships between those who hold or produce such knowledge and those who take policy decisions. The second analyzes decision-making processes as such through public actions, paying special attention to the way understanding is deployed and learning takes place at different stages. The orientation three focuses on regulatory instruments which entail the production and dissemination of a particular kind of knowledge, studying their fabrication, diffusion and use by decision-makers for whom they are intended.

Project partners

- Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL), University of Liège (ULg) – Belgium
- Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), Etablissement Public de la Santé Mentale – Lille Metropole (EPSM) – France
- Ludwig-Maximilians – Universität München (LMU) – Germany
- Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem (ELTE), Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Szociológiai Kutatóintézet (ISB) – Hungary
- Høgskolen i Østfold (HIO), Universitetet i Bergen (UIB), Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) – Norway
- Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação da Universidade de Lisboa (FPCE-UL) – Portugal
- Sapientia – Erdélyi Magyar Tudományegyetem (SAPIENTIA) – Romania
- The University of Edinburgh (UEDIN) – Scotland

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Zoltán Rostás, professor, PhD

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István Kósa, associated professor, PhD

Ildikó Fejes, PhD student

Adél Kiss, PhD student

Collaborators: Zoltán A. Biró, Zoltán Z. Biró, Kinga Székely,
Hajnalka Ozsváth-Berényi

The research reports are available on the project's website: www.knowandpol.eu

Publications by the Romanian team members:

Kiss, A., Fejes, I. and Biró A. Z. (2009). Some aspects and edifications of the PISA Assessments in Romania. *Sisifo - Educational Sciences Journal*, 10: 65-72.

Fejes, I. and Kiss, A. (2009). Az Acțiunea Comunitară program egy összehasonlító kutatás tükrében. In J. Bodó and A., Kiss (eds.) *Kultúra – Kommunikáció – Innováció*. Csíkszereda: Státus Kiadó.

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Information for authors

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The focus of the journal is primarily oriented towards East-Central Europe and its regions. Empirical findings, policy analysis and critical essays aiming at describing the processes of social development, cultural reconfiguration and associated discourses taking place in this part of Europe are particularly welcome.

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The length of the papers should not exceed 7,000 words (respectively 3,000 in the case of commentaries and reviews) and manuscripts should be accompanied by a 200-250 words abstract, with 3-4 key words and with authors' affiliation. Tables and graphs, if any, should be prepared in black and white, should be titled, numbered and integrated in the main text. References should follow the author-date system of the Chicago Manual of Style (<http://library.osu.edu/help/research-strategies/cite-references/chicago-author-date>). The list of references should appear at the end of the manuscripts.

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