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STUDIES



A Primary Eco-Structure: the Concept and its Testing¹

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Abstract. The paper aims at theoretical comprehension of the process of functioning of an environmental activist in globalising context. The interdisciplinary concept of a primary eco-structure is offered. Its main function is to convert a “global into local”, and by means of this to allow to an individual and/or micro-group to cope with the growing pressure of global world, accumulate, select and organise optimally his/her social capital and make maximally efficient its public activity. In short, an eco-structure represents a workshop (or a node of networks), resource store and “a cocoon of basic trust” (Giddens) of an eco-activist. His/her past, present and future exert a substantial impact on his/her relationships with the outer world and mode of activism. Two main models of eco-structure functioning, normal and mobilisational, are analysed and compared with the one usually employed in the western sociology. The paper ends with the discussion on the role of dialogue between eco-activists and sociologists for the achievement of mutual understanding in professional realms and political practice. The paper is based on the results of empirical testing of the above concept based on the materials of in-depth interviews with the leaders and activists of Russian environmental movement (EM) in the 2000s.

Keywords: environmental activism and its time dimensions, interdisciplinarity, mobilisation, plug and unplug, primary eco-structure, resources, Russia

Introduction

At present, when analysing an individual’s activism, we usually stress his/her activism in the past. This is necessary, but insufficient. One should focus on a whole individual “machinery” which enables him/her to be an activist. The interdisciplinary concept of a primary eco-structure as a set of inner and outer networks is offered. Its main function is to convert a “global into local”, and

1 The present article is the revised version of the paper presented at the ISA World Congress of Sociology, Gothenburg, Sweden, July 2010.

by means of this to allow to an activist to cope with the growing pressure of the globalised world, accumulate, select and organise optimally his/her social capital and make maximally efficient its public activity. In short, an eco-structure represents a workshop (as a node of networks), resource stock and “a cocoon of basic trust” (Giddens 1990) of an eco-activist. His/her past, present and future exert a substantial impact on his/her relationships with the outer world and mode of activism. This inner context is as much important as the outer one. The latter context may be of two kinds: normal (even friendly) or hostile (Gamson 1990; Yanitsky 1999, 2009, 2010). Therefore, the model of reproduction of a primary eco-structure may be of two types respectively: normal and mobilisational. In turn, each mobilisational situation has several stages, namely: preparation and discussion, decisive and after-effects and follow-up actions; at each of them the regime of eco-structure functioning may be varied. Finally, the empirical testing of the concept confirmed the thesis set forth by U. Beck (1992), A. Irwin and B. Wynne (1995), according to which the perceptions of a particular environmental conflict of scientists and activists are different.

The outline of the concept of “primary eco-structure”

In terms of methodology, the concept of a primary eco-structure developed in my earlier works (Yanitsky 1982, 1984) later has been tested and refined in the run of the secondary analysis of about 400 in-depth interviews with Russian eco-activists. By means of this analysis the substantial factors in their past, present and future that exert impact on their primary eco-structure building were revealed. Then, I carried out a pilot research by the method “interview after survey.” After that, based on the same material, I revealed some substantial differences in the functioning of an eco-structure of Russia’s environmental leader in normal and mobilisational situation. Finally, the major context differences in the West and Russia which condition the behaviour of a western and Russian activist have been compared.

The principal functions of the primary eco-structure include: mediating the interaction between global context and the actor, ensuring the optimal correlation between the plug and unplug (embedment – disembedment) to provide for the greatest efficiency of the socio-reproductive process (Abul’khanova-Slavskaya 1980, 79), accumulating various vital resources and their integration into a single “reproductive workshop” and intensifying the accumulation of a social capital. On the whole, the primary eco-structure may be depicted as a network-machine of self-regulation of the vital activities of activists. The role of primary eco-structures should not be confined to sociology: it calls for a more integrated interdisciplinary approach (Yanitsky 1982).

In terms of economy, the primary eco-structure may be interpreted as an element of organisation of the process of reproduction of the intellectual force, and of increasing its knowledge and know-how potential as an indispensable condition of production of new knowledge and know-how. The formation of an eco-structure is a method of accumulation of consumer's wealth, which is indispensable today not only for the nature protection, but also for spiritual reproduction of society by man and of man himself.

From the sociological viewpoint, the primary eco-structure is an organisational form of the vital activities through which an actor both adapts himself to a social and more wide environment and transforms them to meet his growing demands. If the way of life of an activist is an intrinsically unified system of stable and repeating types of vital activity, the eco-structure can be defined as a workshop of this activity. Within the framework of social psychology, this structure serves to lend stability and psychological comfort to activists in their social practice by means of mutual understanding and support, which give a sense of calm and protection. The other side of the coin is that the collective activity requires both intensive contacts between an individual and other people and a certain degree of his autonomy with respect to society. This intra-individual conflict is a stimulus for the development of various human needs.

From the cultural viewpoint, the structure in question is an individualised cultural world (world of meanings) created by an individual in conformity with his reproductive demands and group values. Becoming involved in various cultural spheres and diverse cultural milieus, an activist constantly forms a certain cultural space for his/her activity (i.e. micro-subculture on which mutual trust of activists is based). It should be noted that under the rapidly changing conditions of contemporary social life, an activist conceives this individualised cultural world increasingly often with an eye to the future of his children, family and social group, and of society as a whole (cultural mapping of the world future). I see this permanently recurrent process of creation and recreation of the eco-structure by an activist as the manifestation of the dialectic unity of his two basic values, the brevity and infinity of his existence.

The principal feature of these different functions of the eco-structure is their focus on the personality. The eco-structure is a system built on a multi-dimensional criterion. It conforms to the methodological premise that a system is not merely a structured combination of elements, but a dynamically organised evolving entity. It is worthwhile to recall that the term "ecological" stems from the Greek word "oikos" meaning home. The eco-structure is actually a home where the past, the present and the future of an activist are tightly and effectively interconnected by networks, shaping an integral but permanently changing whole.

Finally, as it has been mentioned (Yanitsky 1999), the context may be of two kinds: normal or hostile. Therefore, the model of reproduction of a primary

eco-structure may be of two types respectively: normal and mobilisational. The major characteristics of these, focused on the Russian eco-leader's activity, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Some Characteristics of Functioning of a Primary Eco-structure of Russian Eco-leader in Normal and Mobilisational Situation

	Normal situation	Mobilisational situation
Mode of functioning	Balance of plug and unplug	Unbalanced
Time rhythm	Without excessive efforts	Pressed (time limits)
Resource exchange	Balanced input – output	Mobilisation of all accessible resources
Source of resources	In the past and present	Immediately accessible only
Balance of reflection and action	Depends on the task, but usually balanced	All resources concentrated for an action
Type of networks	Periodically reciprocal and switching	Predominantly instructive and “vertical”
Use of internet	For accumulation of an individual's social capital	For exerting impact on decision-makers
Language of communication	Usually professional	Understandable for all

Past, present and future shaping the networks of an activist

Networks are not only immediate ties. The networks of eco-structure penetrate in the past, are based on the present and take into account the future. That is why I have investigated these contacts separately and in detail: which past definitely? As it has already been mentioned, a past cannot be reduced only to the past social activism, let us say, to participation in some protest actions. Past is a much more comprehensive notion, and doing something, an activist activated only some fragments of his memory stock. Past means not only direct contacts with elderly or landscapes of cultural value, but inner “dialogues” ranging from the family past (via letters and oral histories) to “dialogues” with the country's past (via scientific and memorial literature, archives and reminiscences of eye-witnesses). I included in this type of network an individual's reflection on his own past as well. In Russia, especially in remote provinces, the past presents a cultural milieu shaping an individual's core values and view of life. An individual's extended family, school-friends and place of living and work played a key role in it. Love of and attraction to this milieu or, on the contrary, negative stand towards it are also rather important. To some degree, the structure of the past served as a model of future environment.

What kind of networks compose an activist's present? I divided them in three categories: bilateral exchange, and two one-sided ones: "plug" and "unplug" into the web of networks. It is clear that bilateral exchange (of transactional or identity-building character) serves for accumulation of his/her social capital and maintenance of status in a professional or activist community. Plug usually means a promotion of the ideas or the results of the "inner work" of an eco-activist into the outer world (presentations, promotion of mass campaign results) and thus enlarging its social capital. The unplug is an unavoidable state in the functioning of the eco-structure. Unplug is a rather important mechanism in the process of accumulation and capitalisation of his/her social capital (knowledge, experience, know-how, friendly ties). There are two key means of its accumulation: practice, or more precisely, participation in socio-ecological conflicts and the EMs, and then reflection. Silence is its important precondition. The modern environmental activist becomes less "practitioner" and more thinker and analyst. Therefore, silence and solitude of activists as well as of their parties does not mean waste of time. Rather, it means the state of preparedness to unknown condition and sudden changes of context or of disposition of forces. Contrary to corporation parties usually considered by its members as a time for relaxation, parties of environmentalists and other actual activists present a very important space for the exchange of ideas, for testing accumulated resources and know-how and gaining new ones, and the correction of their own dispositions.

As to contacts with future, I divided these into "thinking about it" and "actual deeds" for the maintenance the eco-structure in foreseeable future. The former presents various forms of consideration about future ranging from thinking on his/her family, close friends, prospects of career to prospects of the country's evolution in a global context and transformation of an EM in it. In the final analysis, such thinking means the establishment of new ties and networks. "Actual deeds" represents various activities for the maintenance of an eco-structure (in Russia it often means an individual's oscillation between institutionalised and informal organisations) and practical realisation of his/her personal goals and the "individual life project" in general (see Table 2).

Table 2. Typology of Contacts of an Eco-activist with the Past, Present and Future

The past	The present	The future
1) discussion about the EM's past with the old generation of environmentalists 2) study of works and practice of the elderly 3) actual ties/links with former activists 4) "dialogue" with previous professionals 3) "dialogue" with the family past (via archives, letters, oral histories) 4) reflection on the society's past (via communication with like-minded people) 5) reflection on the society's past (via scientific and memorial literature, archives, oral histories) 6) reflection on the own past (via writing a diary, compilation of family archive, etc.)	I. Bilateral contacts 1) for targeted professional dialogue 2) multisided cultural exchange for self-maintenance as personality 3) with professional community for his/her status maintenance 4) with other participants of particular eco-conflicts 5) desirable but not realised contacts II. Unilateral contacts (plug) 1) looking for information and knowledge (on the internet, etc.) 2) promotion of own research results 3) looking for extra job 4) daily life-support communications III. Reflection (unplug) 1) thinking over/drafting ideas 2) estimation of the results of own works 3) activity concerning the future of a personality works 4) reflection on how to disseminate the achieved results	I. Mental contacts with future 1) thinking/writing about the future of the Russian society 2) thinking/writing about the Russian EM's future 3) thinking about own family's future II. Actual deeds for maintaining his/her future 1) reconsideration of an individual life project 2) discussion with like-minded people on EM's prospects 3) putting in order personal archives 3) writing the memoirs 4) writing/publishing text books 5) teaching and training 6) upbringing of young successors

Comparing the methods of study of the participation of individuals in socio-ecological conflicts developed by western and Russian sociologists

As a rule, any primary eco-structure of an environmental activist is included in a particular socio-ecological conflict (protest action, mass campaign) by a set of ties or networks. To clarify the differences of the above approaches to the problem of individual participation we have chosen the work of F. Passy, which has accumulated the views of the majority of western scholars on this problem (Passy 2003). Passy has used the three steps model of engagement of an individual in a conflict.² Let us compare the actual situation of the individual's public participation here and there in detail.

Firstly, the approach offered by Passy: "one individual – one organization (protest action)" may be called as an "in vitro." "Social networks do matter in the process of individual participation in social movements [...]. Interpersonal ties have also played a key role in more radical forms of protest, such as terrorism." (Passy 2003, 21.) As Diani puts it, "I defined social movements as networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups or associations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of shared collective identity" (Diani 1992, 13; see also, Diani and McAdam 2003). It seems a much more adequate approach.

"In vivo", that is, in Russian context an individual intended to become an environmental activist brings about much pressure from different sides and of various strength and character. Actually, the following should necessarily be taken into account: 1) existence of core group of activists, mainly professional and interdisciplinary-trained; 2) Russian environmental activists are socially and politically diversified – they form at least seven groups (Yanitsky 2005), so an individual should choose which group he intends to plug in; 3) a "periphery" consists of a lot of other movements and counter-movements, not all under the green banners; 4) NB various attitudes of government, business, academics and media towards the Greens' activity. Recurring to Passy, we would say that the process of public participation never has the "beginning" and the "end". That is possible in vitro, only. All calculations related to the cost and risk of participation begins far before the beginning and becomes permanent, since both a man and the circumstances are permanently changing.

Secondly, Passy's stand seems somewhat distilled and not environmentalist: various contexts are not taken into account. Diani vs Passy: "[We should investigate] how network concept [...] may be used to generate a more nuanced account of key elements of the relationship between SMs and the broader

2 On some details about the differences between the EMs in Russia and in the West see: Yanitsky (1991), Usacheva (2008) and Usacheva and Davydova (2009).

political process, such as role of elites (Broadbent), the configuration of alliance and conflict structure in political system[...].” D. McAdam “has also provided a possible bridge between research on social movements and broader controversies in social sciences” (Diani and McAdam 2003, 299). Therefore, we see our shared task in bridging the gap between research on SMs and broader controversies in social science. Therefore, it seems to me that my approach is more realistic: analysing “individual – movement relationships,” at least three types of contexts must be taken into account (local, regional and national-global) – keeping in mind that each of them has its natural specificity and particular social composition.

Thirdly, according to Passy, “participation is beyond a political regime.” It is suggested that the process of the individual’s involvement in public activity is free of political influence. “Social networks also enable individual participation in non-democratic regimes when there is a window of opportunity” (Passy 2003, 21). In Russia, the Greens are constantly under the pressure of the regime. Therefore, the degree and form of participation (action repertoire) depend on: 1) degree of general hostility of the context; 2) correlation between law and unofficial rules (*ponjatija*) established by corrupted groups and criminals; 3) division of electorate into system opposition, not-system opposition and extremists, in general into “we” and “they”; 4) “a window of opportunity” means nothing without concrete cost of this opportunity; and 5) nearly all democratic movements are considered as adversaries of the existing political regime.

The fourth principle could be labelled as “Democracy for All!” Even the state deals with extremists, the latter have access to public arena, and have a right to say. In Russia, access to public arena is reserved only to those who are loyal to the elite in power. Hence, networks are divided into legal (permitted) and illegal (prohibited) ones. The other side of the same coin is the “one way” (finalist) character of Passy’s model: it is supposed that the individual will be necessarily accepted by a SMO irrespectively of the outcome of the conflict. Russian practice of public participation showed that the feedback model is more adequate: an individual could be either partly or fully accepted, or totally neglected by a SMO or a group of activists.

Fifthly, the approach under consideration suffers from reductionism: any social action, including decision-making as well as the *context* within which it realised, can always be reduced to a system of networks. We think that social action, including decision-making, can be provoked by material and environmental factors and/or by sheer force (calamity, poisoning, etc.) as well. Then, there are contexts which cannot be reduced to social networks (for example, all kinds of fluid or liquid substances and their possible harm to man and nature). Excellent examples of the context approach were presented by Whyte (1977, 1984),³ Tenner (1996) and Murphy (1997, 2010).

3 I am greatly in debt to professor Anne Whyte, Canadian social psychologist, with whom we worked in the frames of the UNESCO’s “Man and the Biosphere Program” in the 1970–80s, and from whom I learned a lot in the field of interdisciplinary analysis in environmental sciences.

Sixth is the type of everyday life as a basic precondition of participation. In western democracies everyday life, especially that of the middle-class, is usually stable, well structured and organised. At the same time, this view seems to me a bit static, which does not take into account the phenomenon of “liquid modernity” (Bauman 2000). As Passy stated, socialisation functions of networks create “an initial disposition to participate” (2003, 24). In Russia, we permanently observe a “socialisation-in-action”. In the run of this process an individual by means of networks would develop its disposition, while a social movement could either extinguish, or transform its network web, or achieving its aims shift to another problem or conflict. The way of life of the majority of Russians is usually mobilising, tense, conflicting, and therefore uncertain. Therefore, in Russia the suddenly changing context is the main force urging an individual to take extra-efforts (protests, blockades, open clashes with the police and other enforcement structures).

Seventhly, we would say that Passy and her followers maintained a somewhat simplified and definitely not consistent model of the individual’s move to participation. We mean here three successful phases of this process: socialisation, structural connection function and decision to participate (Passy 2003, 30). Our view is the following: 1) to begin with, these three phases have no common denominator; 2) the process under consideration is not linear: the key factor is an event (conflict), the transformation of an individual into an environmental activist and vice versa is going on in the run of the conflict; 3) all three variables are dependent on resources at hand, on the success of the past actions of a particular SMO or initiative group; 4) an irregularly attending activist may be of crucial importance if he/she supplies SMO with money or relevant information; 5) the problem of free riders is not considered; and (6) last but not least, in Russia, but not only, decision to participate is mainly a collective decision.

Eighthly, considering participation in environmental movements we cannot miss the issue of *time*. One is *historical time*. Possibly, the division into old and new environmental movements are well enough for democratic societies. But in the transition period the context of these movements varied rapidly: (1) during the democratic upsurge (1990s) all appeared green; 2) in the 2000s the belonging of an individual to old or new movements was conditioned by age and well-being of protesters, particular way of life and place of living, by access to state and local media, by a common working or green past, access to the internet, and first of all by acceptance of insurgents (full legitimation and co-optation) and non-acceptance (pre-emption and repression) by the state or municipal administration (Gamson 1990, 154). The other is *an individual’s time* of recruiting to a movement. As Passy stated, the process of an individual participation has a beginning, a middle and an end (Passy 2003, 24-25). It means that there is no time pressure: individuals can choose between being subscribers, adherents and activists, that is, supposed that they always have *enough time* to move step by step.

Hence, Passy actually considers a normal flow of events: there is a particular problem and an individual has enough time to decide to participate or not in its resolving. It is a rather important conclusion. In Russia, everyday life and public participation in actions and the rhythm of these have nothing in common. The latter is the race with the devil. The degree of necessity of action of both parts should be taken into account. Each designer of a transnational pipeline has financial and time limits. Each participant of the clash has its schedule and time limits. Let us say, to stop this pipeline construction, local population must take a set of legal steps, which have definite time duration (acquaintance, expertise, public hearings). And it is on the paper only. Actually activists are always under time pressure.

In Russia, the situation can be labelled as oscillating and uncertain because the state of mobilisation is permanent, but varied in degree. During these exhausting long-term conflicts some people associate with the EM, others drop out, still others change their status and role in the environmental movement. Once again: the duration of participation is defined not by an activist's will but by the *context pressure* (financial, political, social) and capability of an activist to resist.

Ninthly, somehow the problem of networks as resources and resources transmitted by these networks was not mentioned. Passy stated that "social networks play a key role in individual participation in social movements" (Passy 2003, 41). In our view, networks are primarily a cumulative result of individual attempts of self-maintenance and self-identification. As a rule, individual decision to participate in a particular movement is defined by many things: his/her involvement in other social activities, the individual's past as a social capital including the experience of past and present contacts with allies and adversaries, influence exerted on an individual by the ideologues and agitators, and resources at hand.

Then, there are at least four aspects of the problem: temporal model of activity as a resource; past as a resource; cultural orientation of individual as a resource; and frames as a resource. Let us consider one by one. Under temporal model of activity we understand a rhythm and pace of "an individual – movement" interaction. The motto of Passy's discourse may be presented as "Step by Step Move toward Activism". That is, individuals always have enough time to pass through the abovementioned three successive steps. In Russia the situation is quite different "All and at Once!" – the motto of Russian activists who are always under time pressure. They are forced to combine a set of activities, including those not directly connected with given conflict or mass campaign.

Now, on the past as a resource. In western sociology of social movements past as a resource gave significance to past activism. If one was an activist in the past, it is more probable that he or she will be participant of SMO's activity in present. It is correct, but seems to us too narrow and one-sided yet. Our comprehension is more diverse and multi-sided. An individual's activism in a SMO or a SM depends on his/her family roots, immediate natural and social

milieu and activism at school and university, on one's life story and meeting with outstanding movement leaders, on the type of settlement and national character, etc. In Russia, these impacts in the times of democratic upsurge (1989–1991) and in the 2000s were quite different. It is right that the “cultural orientation of individual develops in a web of social interactions” (Passy 2003, 23). Nevertheless, this interdependence seems to us not sufficient. First, a cultural orientation is the product of the past. Second, it not only develops, but reorients, restructures and even changes. Third, culture shapes a web of social interactions. Finally, on frames: Passy stated that the “networks are universal tool” – if “individuals once integrated in networks, it enabled them to define and redefine their frames, facilitates their identity building” (Passy 2003, 24). Yes, networks do matter, but they are not universal tool. First, which frames does Passy mean: master frames, frames of action, etc.? (See Gerhards and Rucht 1992.) Second, an individual frame is actually the function of public opinion, type of the particular conflict, etc. as well. Third, since in Russia there is no public arena for frames competing, each organisation involved in a conflict tries to impose on the individual its interpretive frame. Fourth, under “liquid modernity” the web of network is fluid as other components of this modernity: new problems emerge and new frames should be constructed by EM-leaders. I would say that the master frame is more or less stable, whereas the frames of particular collective actions are different.

Finally, about the role of trust and especially of meanings in the involvement of an individual in a collective action. Of course, “trust [...] is a key concept in the explanation of why certain types of social ties are more important than others for individual” (Passy 2003, 41). But trust is a complex and not eternal phenomenon. To trust somebody does not necessarily mean that you and they will participate in a collective action hand in hand. Trust gives confidence, but does not guarantee success. In Russia, trust is shaped by the individual's past, his long-term interactions with a close circle of like-minded people, the individual's comprehension and estimation of political opportunity structure and resources at hand. Trust is a *social capital* which permanently changes in our uncertain and “liquid” social world.

As to meanings, Passy referring to White's (1992, 67) postulate that “a social network is a network of meanings” stated that networks are “islands of meanings” which “shape the individual preferences and perceptions that form the basis for the ultimate decision to participate” (Passy 2003, 23). It seems that Diani is more correct maintaining that “identity is built on the basis of interpretation of *narratives* which link together in a meaningful way events, actors, initiatives which could also make perfect sense (but a different one) if looked at independently, or embedded in other types of representations” (Diani 2003, 301). The concept of meanings “prompts on the reflection on the relationship between the social networks and the cognitive maps through which actors make sense of

and categorize their social environment and *locate* themselves within broader webs of ties and interactions” (Diani 2003, 5; my italics). Some clarifications are needed here, yet. There are two phases of the conflict: normal and mobilising. In a normal state an individual is able to think over the situation, to build a cognitive map of his/her living environment, and then to make a rational decision. In a mobilising state (more often in the state of emergency) an individual has no such possibility because of the stress, the break of the majority of his/her habitual ties and the total destruction of his cognitive map.

Anyhow, a meaning is a rather complex and mostly localised phenomenon. It is an *amalgamation*, in the activist’s consciousness, of his personal and group experience of the past, acquired knowledge and know-how, beliefs, estimation of situation in situ by his/her closest allies and shaping on this basis the stand when facing a conflict (to be a bystander, free rider, formal member or an active participant).

Sociological research as promoter of eco-structure development

Such a long “preface” was needed because this was not a usual survey. I realised that in the questionnaire I touch some intimate sides of an activist’s life. But it was necessary, if one wishes to embrace the whole machinery of eco-structure work. For this an environmental sociologist needs the detailed reflection of an activist offered him (by questionnaire) by a particular structure of decomposition of his/her life and activity. The matter is that being permanently active as public figures, experiencing time pressure, such activists have little time and not very comfortable milieu for personal reflection and self-estimation. The list of possible activities offered to them by the questionnaire gave them a chance to try on themselves the list and evaluate it critically. Thus, we, sociologists, received a feedback with explanations of what is right and wrong, what is impossible by using an ordinary questionnaire only. Of course, it was a time-consuming method but it gave me in-depth understanding of how an activist oriented in a conflicting social space and chose his position and action repertoire.

I have not been prepared that the answers to the questionnaire will be transformed into dialogue between sociologists and activists fruitful for both (we call this method interview after survey). The dialogue was sometimes very tense and tough because interviewer and respondent discuss every question point by point. In the final analysis, this turned out a rather fruitful and promising method because after a short period (1987–1991) of all-embracing trust in sociology as a lever which would enable the Soviet Union to rapidly transform into a

democratic state (in that time sociologists together with environmentalists were the intellectual driving force of reforms), a long period began, after the collapse of the Union, when the public weight of Russian humanitarian intelligentsia was diminishing and its impact on the society's deeds disappeared. At the same time environmentalists with the support of western funds and sister organisations turned out capable to maintain their networks and organisations. As sociologists, except for some small academic units and independent institutes, acquired a servile character, they also met a negative attitude from the part of the EM's activists who continued their struggle for nature protection by all means. For a decade (2000s), Russian environmentalists used to reject to participate in any public discussion with sociologists. Having in mind my long-term experience of participation in multidisciplinary projects, national and international during the 1980–90s, I became convinced that a restoration of trust and mutual understanding with environmentalists should be going on bottom-top, that is, by means of interpersonal contacts, first of all with those eco-activists who had known me already for 20–30 years. Of course, it was an ambitious task but I saw no other way out. That is why I launched this project investigating a primary eco-structure with hope that the study of its networks with their past, present and future would inevitably lead me to the understanding what sociological and political knowledge the environmentalists are still in lack of.

To be more accurate, they have already acquired this knowledge in pieces and fragments, but they still need both more systematic and more applied social knowledge. Paradoxically, environmentalists knew the social machinery of our society much better than some sociologists due to the environmentalists' insider position burdened with numerous conflicting contacts with power structures, business, natural scientists, academic community, lawyers, etc., but except for a very few of them, they had little contact with the local population because of their standpoint that they knew better, and with sociology because, as they were convinced, it was subjected to the state. Only quite recently have they realised that they need a dialogue and mutual understanding with local population, on the one hand, and with humanities, including sociology, on the other.

In the run of such a dialogue environmentalists and sociologists do achieve mutual understanding in professional realms; to translate our joint aims and programmes into political language, of no less importance is that we jointly develop the language understandable to lay people and therefore gain the possibility to exert impact on public discourse now mainly shaped by media showmen; we find topics and points where we can be useful to each other, in particular, we learn to develop social technologies for achieving nature protection goals in alienated and even hostile context; finally, we began to overcome the barrier of mistrust and mutual alienation. This, in turn, leads to self-criticism on the side of the eco-activists in order to make their activity more efficient from the point of view of nature protection

efforts and more comfortable and satisfactory for themselves. Environmentalists are actually active persons, but not all of them are militants, fighters. They periodically need change of activity and relaxation. We realised that this method meant a deep intervention into an individual's life with its dark sides. But if an activist trusted us, this clinical method, used by T. Parsons and E. Goffman, gave us deeper comprehension of how they built the strategy and tactics of their public activism.

Major research findings related to practice

The intellectual milieu formative for an eco-structure of the recent past was the Russian academic and local *intelligentsia* (scholars, school and university teachers, wildlife reserve workers, doctors, professionals, and artists), defending the interests of civic society and nature. The key components of social capital of its members were and still are knowledge, ability to communicate in diverse social and cultural environments, trust and sense of responsibility.

The essence of eco-leaders' altruism consists in prioritising the common good, that is, the interests of nature as a whole and the interests of numerous human communities that support, protect, and reproduce natural resources. Practicing such altruism means permanent efforts to disseminate what one has learnt or designed for the benefit of other groups of activists. The civil sense of this altruism is in *giving a way* to knowledge and know-how necessary for environment protection practiced by others.

The authority of such leaders and core groups is based on their intellectual potential, their incessant hard work, their unselfishness and commitment to wildlife protection ideals. In this respect, these activists are like doctors, guided by the "do no harm" principle. Only such a person takes care not of individual patients alone but of their habitat as well, and works to ensure people's life in the future rather than just their recovery today. It is social medicine, in particular health and hygiene that the activity of eco-activists resembles the most. Hence his knowledge is special. It is a milieu-based interdisciplinary and intersectoral knowledge-for-action. This knowledge can perhaps be also termed *situational*, meaning not provisional, nor imperceptibly changing, but that in every given situation an eco-activist has to be simultaneously plugged to many different networks (different in terms of the direction of the communication as well as of the skills of those involved in it) and be able to put together the information received in order to define the action repertoire. Eco-activists are people who not only know a lot but know how to do many different things practically. Their main skill is to live *simultaneously* in a number of different social and cultural milieus and to *translate* the knowledge of one group into the language of another. That is why we labelled the eco-structure, as "workshop" of practitioners.

Whereas the elite of a consumer society is, according to Zygmunt Bauman, characterised by instant social *action* based on the “hit and run” principle without taking any responsibility for the consequences (Bauman 2004, 18), *mutual assistance* is typical to those who protect the environment, since they need local populations’ trust and support. And where there is no population at all, they have to struggle with agents of consumer society advancing their mega-projects using green networks all over the world. The types of social communication they practice differ from each other, too. Whereas a PR-manager, a designer, a couturier, or a showman works with the masses imposing patterns of consumer behaviour and fashion onto the public’s mind, an eco-activist works with concerned people and regards it as his goal and his duty to convince them that environment protection means protecting their own lives and those of their children and grandchildren. It is, therefore, not for nothing that ecological education and enlightenment take the central place in the activity of Russian EM leaders. While the masses are trained to live on credit, eco-activists educate people and teach them how to economise resources and protect themselves and others.

Contrary to the ruling elite who always want to have their own, *private* nature, eco-activists are preoccupied by the problem of biosphere sustainability and saving centuries-old landscapes or local ecosystems; they think in historical and systemic categories, and they feel responsible. They cherish *reflection* and discussion of environmental problems with their peers as well as with local population. They are people whose souls are permanently working. For the consumer elite, a national motif is just a hit for another model, while for environmentalists it is a local relic, a reminder of the connection existing between them and the vanishing history and cultural diversity of an endemic people. In the final analysis, Russian eco-activists always belong to the opposition, and they mostly conduct rearguard fights. Nevertheless, they believe in the success of their hopeless cause.

Conclusion

The paper started out with some critical remarks on the concept of the relationship between “an individual – a social movement”, relation which seems to me too simple since it overlooks a complexity of the notion of an individual actor – that actually represents a rather intrinsic web of mental processes and real deeds. To grasp this complexity, the concept of primary eco-structure has been introduced.

The eco-structure is an interdisciplinary theoretical construct which has a practical meaning. It depicts the ties between the inner life of an eco-activist and his/her activity and shows how gathered, accumulated and practically used his/her social capital is. Its main function is to convert a global into local, and allows

an activist to cope with the growing pressure of the global world, accumulate, select and organise optimally their social capital and make maximally efficient their public activity.

The principal functions of the primary eco-structure are as follows: mediating the interaction between the global context and an activist, ensuring the optimal correlation between the plug and unplug for an activist to provide for the greatest effectiveness of the socio-reproductive process, accumulating various vital resources and their integration into a single “reproductive workshop” and by means of that to intensify the accumulation of a social capital. On the whole, the primary eco-structure works as a network-machine of self-regulation of the vital activities of practically-oriented actors. It enables them to maintain their sustainability in an uncertain and rapidly changing global world.

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The Place of Environment-Related Values in the Value-System. A Cross-Country Analysis¹

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Abstract. The purpose of this paper is the investigation of the strength of environmentalism and the place of environmental values within the value structure of different countries with a different economic history, geographical features and different environment-related problems. For the analysis the data from World Values Surveys were used. With the exception of China, people evaluate realistically the environmental problems of their country. Factor analysis revealed that the environment-related value is grouped with openness in China, with traditional values in India, Bulgaria, Turkey, Spain and Japan, and they are autonomous in Germany. In Germany there is a contradiction between the low level of environmentalism and the high level of pro-environmental acts.

Keywords: value system, environmental values, environment-friendly consumer behaviour

Introduction. Environmentalism and pro-environmental acts

“A growing body of evidence indicates that what people want out of life is changing. Throughout industrial society, people’s basic values and goals are gradually shifting from giving top priority to economic growth and consumption, to placing increasing emphasis on the quality of life” (Inglehart 1995, 61). A historically unprecedented degree of economic security has led to this value shift, which now shows signs in the industrialising nations as well. The changing of values is measured and proved by systematic, longitudinal survey research (European and World Values Surveys – hereinafter WVS – from the 1970s until today), but it is also visible to the naked eye: new consumption patterns are emerging, new products or products of better quality are appearing, the work

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orientation is being reshaped, the organising of work is also different from what it was in the past, and so is the work environment; new types of free-time activities and countless spiritual movements are emerging. An important element of the change in basic values is the rise of environmental consciousness and a higher priority for environmental protection. The cause of the growing importance of environmentalism is not only the general change in values, but also the fact that since the early 1960s a number of problems have been recognised (e.g. ozone depletion, deforestation, excess waste, acid rain, etc.), which all derived from the impact of modern societies on the natural environment.

The purpose of this paper is the investigation of the strength of environmentalism and the place of environmental values within the value structure of different countries with a different economic history, geographical features and different environment-related problems.

For the analyses we used the data of World Values Survey (WVS) from 1995 and 2005, which allows us to undertake cross-country analysis. The World Values Survey is a global research project, which has been carried out since 1981 in almost 100 countries. It is based on representative national surveys. Country-specific data about GDP were obtained from the World Bank's world development indicators, our environment-related data is from <http://epi.yale.edu/>.

In the first part of the paper we define the concepts we use, show the methodology of measuring these phenomena and summarise the results of some empirical research related to them. Against this background the second section outlines our hypotheses, presents the variables we applied, and provides a short review of economic and environmental performance of the analysed countries, and describes the history of environmentalism in them. After the discussion of the data the final section draws together the issues and presents conclusions.

Definitions, measurement methods and earlier empirical results

Prior to 1992 the convention for explaining the emergence of environmentalism was wealth. It was argued – based upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs – that once a country (or an individual) has obtained a certain level of consumption and welfare, other values and goals become more important for them, such as quality of life, self-fulfilment, women's rights or the environment (Inglehart 1997). The emergence of the literature of new social movements and Inglehart's *postmaterialist value thesis* also reflect this idea (Brechin 1999). The Health of the Planet survey (conducted by the Gallup Institute and based on national probability sampling of citizens from both developed and developing countries) in 1992

clearly showed that citizens from poor as well as rich countries were extremely concerned about the environment. During the 1990s, a debate emerged over the utility of the postmaterialist values thesis in explaining global environmentalism and from this debate a new explanation emerged (Brechin 1999). There are two different sources of mass support for environmental protection: in the rich (or northern) countries it is a cultural factor, a value shift, and in the poor (or southern) countries it is pollution and other environment degradation (Inglehart 1995; Guha, Martinez and Alier 1997).

There is still no consensus on this question, e.g. Brechin stated that using an *objective problems plus subjective values* explanation fails to describe adequately the bases of southern and northern environmental concern, as global environmentalism is a complex social phenomenon consisting of multiple movements, driven by multiple agencies. Dieckmann and Franzen (1999) pointed to the so called *how serious/how important paradox*, according to which citizens of poorer countries are more concerned about environment when the seriousness of environmental problems is in question, but they are the ones who are the least willing to sacrifice income for the sake of good environmental quality.

In our opinion, both objective problems and subjective values contribute to environment concerns, but we cannot state that in rich countries it is the values while in poor countries the harms that are their source. Certain rich countries – or maybe all of them – suffered in the past from environmental disasters or at least experienced environmental pollution. And in some cultures – irrespective of the current economic situation – nature had higher values in the past as well.

How do researchers define and measure environmentalism, environmental concern? Environmental concern can be defined as the evaluation of or an attitude towards facts, one's own or others' behaviour with consequences for the environment (Fransson and Garling 1999). It can represent several things: a new way of thinking, called the *New Environmental Paradigm*, which is a belief in the limits to growth, a need to balance nature and economic growth (Dunlap and Van Liere 1978, Dunlap et al. 2000); according to the *anthropocentric altruism* theory people care about environment quality mainly because they believe that the degraded environment poses a threat to people's health (Fransson and Garling 1999); environmental concern can be the result of *self interest* (Baldassare and Katz 1992); environmentalism can be a function of some *deeper cause*, such as underlying religious beliefs or postmaterialist value orientation (Stern 1992).

There are quite a few measures of environment concern. Among these, more popular are *The Ecological Attitude Scale* and the *New Environmental Paradigm Scale*. *The Ecological Attitude Scale* consists of several sub-scales. *Verbal commitment* measures what a person states he is willing to do to protect the environment. *Actual commitment* measures what a person actually does to protect the environment. *Affect* is a measure of the degree of emotionality

related to such issues. *Knowledge* is a measure of factual knowledge (abstract and concrete) related to ecological issues (Maloney and Ward 1973). The *New Environment Paradigm (NEP) Scale* consists of 12 items for measuring a pro-ecological world view through the degree of agreement with statements like “Plants and animals exist primarily to be used by humans” or “Humans must live in harmony with nature in order to survive”, etc. (Dunlap and Van Liere 1978). Though Dunlap and Van Liere (1980) recommended that environmental concern should be measured in relation to more specific issues (recycling, energy conservation), their revised NEP scale consists of the similar general statements, though there are 15 of them (Van Liere et al. 2000).

According to numerous research studies, demographic variables have limited utility in explaining variation in environmental concern among people, which points to the widespread distribution of such concern in our society. Although environmentalism is somewhat stronger among the young, well educated and liberal segments of the society, it is not restricted to persons with such characteristics (Van Liere and Dunlap 1980).

Hypothesis, applied variables and the analysed countries

Hypothesis 1. Modification of the “objective problems-subjective evaluation” thesis

According to the “objective problems-subjective values thesis” there are two different sources of mass support for environmental protection: in the rich (or northern) countries it is a cultural factor, a value shift, and in the poor (or southern) countries it is pollution and other environmental degradation. The thesis poses the question whether people evaluate the seriousness of the environmental problems realistically or not. Brechin noted that citizens from poor countries are far more concerned about local environmental problems than citizens from wealthier countries. He found no statistically significant differences between the two groups concerning the more symbolic global environmental problems (Brechin 1999).

Our expectation is the same – people are aware of global problems wherever they are, while local problems are considered to be more serious in poor countries. But we have to admit that if these findings came true, that would mean that people evaluate their situation realistically, as in poorer countries there are more serious local environmental problems than in the richer ones. We expect furthermore that in poorer countries the proportion of those who cannot or do not answer the questions related to global problems is higher. We expect this because

poverty causes multiple deprivations: lack of money, bad health and housing conditions, low level of education and lack of information.

We assume furthermore that the objective problems-subjective values explanation works differently in different places. For example in a country with severe environmental problems, the importance of environmental protection can be overwritten by poverty and lack of knowledge in the minds of its citizens. In countries with good environmental conditions – especially if these conditions are the result of amelioration – environmentalism can be weak because people do not experience direct environmental threats, but it can also be strong if living in harmony with nature is a part of the dominant value structure of the country. We also assume that in wealthier countries the intention to make monetary sacrifices to protect the environment does not depend on threat perception, but it is affected by the value system: the intention is stronger in postmaterialist countries and in the eastern societies, where living in harmony with nature is part of the cultural tradition.

Regarding poor countries we assume, in line with the “how serious/how important paradox”, that in poorer countries environment-friendly general attitudes do not go together with a strong intention to protect the environment, as poverty and its consequence, the dominance of survival values, overwrite the worry about environment. In this way the inclination to make monetary sacrifices to prevent pollution and to carry out actual environment-friendly acts is rare in these places.

Hypothesis 2. Place of environmental values within the value-structure

The place of pro-environmental attitudes (concern about the environment) within the system of values is still an open question. Inglehart found that in clean countries it pertains to postmodern values, while in polluted places it goes together with materialist values (Inglehart 1995). Inglehart’s value test is a two-dimensional one (materialist–postmaterialist). According to Schwartz’s theory (1992, 1994), values are guiding principles, motivational forces for one’s life. Values represent three universal requirements of human existence: the needs of individuals as biological organisms; requisites of co-ordinated social interaction; and survival and welfare needs of groups. From these three universal requirements Schwartz identified ten value-types, which can be collated into larger sub-groups, such as openness to change: stimulation, self-direction and some hedonism; self-enhancement: achievement, power and some hedonism; conservation: security, tradition, conformity; self-transcendence: universalism and benevolence (Schwartz 1992, 1994).

In comparison with the Inglehart value test, the Schwartz value test gives more space for searching the place of environment-related values within the value structure and based on this test we can differentiate the countries better.

Our hypothesis is that we will find four types of countries, with four types of value structure: 1) in European countries with a democracy deficit in their past, with bigger poverty and pollution levels (Bulgaria, Spain and Turkey in our research) the environment-related value is diversified, it can go together with different other values (e.g. with security and stimulation); 2) in far-Eastern countries environmentalism is rooted in their cultural heritage, and that is why the environment-related value will go together with traditional values (India and Japan); 3) though China is also a far-Eastern country, here, due to the sharp and violent disruption with their ancient culture, environmentalism is now connected to achievement; 4) in Western and Northern Europe the environment-related value will form an autonomous factor together with the other altruistic value.

Variables

In order to measure the *general value-orientation* of the respondent, the WVS contains Inglehart's and Schwartz's value-tests. In Inglehart's value test the respondent has to choose in each group of four goals the two most important for them. There are three groups of goals: 1) high level of economic growth; making sure this country has strong defence force; *seeing that people have more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities; trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful*; 2) maintaining order in the nation; *giving people more say in important government decisions*; fighting rising prices; *protecting freedom of speech*; 3) stable economy; *progress toward a less impersonal and more humane society; progress toward a society in which ideas count more than money*; fight against crime. The postmaterialism index shows the number of the chosen postmaterialist goals (in italics; there are five postmaterialist among the twelve aims).

The WVS uses a modified form of Schwartz's value test and asks the respondents to indicate for each description whether that person is very much like them (in this case the variable equals 1), like them, somewhat like them, not like them, not at all like them (the variable equals 6). The descriptions given are: 1) It is important to this person to think up new ideas, to be creative; to do things their own way; 2) It is important to this person to be rich; to have a lot of money and expensive things; 3) Living in secure surroundings is important to this person; to avoid anything that might be dangerous; 4) It is important to this person to have a good time; to "spoil" themselves; 5) It is important to this person to help the people nearby; to care for their well-being; 6) Being very successful is important to this person; to have people recognise their achievements; 7) Adventure and taking risks are important to this person; to have an exciting life; 8) It is important to this person to always behave properly; to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong; 9) Looking after the environment is important to this person; to

care for nature; 10) Tradition is important to this person; to follow the customs handed down by their religion or family.

To measure *pro-environmental attitudes*, we used the variable ENVI_VS_ECON from the WVS survey. ENVI_VS_ECON equals 0 if the individual claims that the statement “economic growth and creating jobs should be the top priority even if the environment suffers to some extent” is closer to their point of view, and it equals 1 if “protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes slower economic growth” is closer to their point of view.

Threat perception was measured in the WVS questionnaire with the question about the severity of different global environmental problems (pollution of rivers and lakes, loss of biodiversity, global warming) and local environmental problems (such as poor water quality, poor air quality, sanitation and sewage). After recoding the answers, the value of the given variables equals 1 if according to the respondent the given problem is not at all serious, 2 if it is not very serious, 3 if it is somewhat serious, 4 if it is very serious. We created the variable THREAT_PERCEPTION_GLOBAL/LOCAL, which values varied between 3 (the respondent considers all of the global/local problems as not at all serious) and 12 (if the respondent considers all of the global/local problems as very serious).

Intention to make monetary sacrifices to prevent environment pollution was measured using different questions. The stated willingness to pay more taxes if the extra money was used to prevent environmental pollution and the stated willingness to sacrifice income were inquired into. Responses were scored from 1 to 4, with 1=strongly disagree and 4=strongly agree. In 1990 and 2005 there was a question with which we can measure the honesty of the respondents: “The government should reduce environment pollution but it should not cost me any money.” Those who agreed with this statement and also said that they would pay more taxes for environmental protection are “inconsistent” respondents. That is why we created a dummy variable INTENTION by which 1 referred to those respondents who would sacrifice income to protect the environment and who are not inconsistent, and 0 referred to the inconsistent respondents and those who would not sacrifice income for environment protection.

Regarding *environment-friendly behavior*, the WVS asked in 1995 the following question. Which, if any, of these things have you done in the last 12 months, out of concern for the environment? 1) You have chosen household products that you think are better for the environment; 2) You have decided for environmental reasons to reduce or recycle something rather than throw it away; 3) You have tried to reduce water consumption for environmental reasons. The values of the variable CONSUMER range between 0 and 3, where 0 means that the respondent has not done any of the environment-friendly consumer actions and 3 when they have done all of them.

The analysed countries

For our analyses we have chosen nine countries to examine. The point of our choice was that we tried to find very different countries from Europe and from Asia in terms of pollution, wealth (measured by GDP/capita), value system (measured by Schwartz's and Inglehart's value tests). Table 1 and 2 present the main characteristics of the chosen countries.

Table 1. Main characteristics of the chosen countries

	Postmaterialism index*	GDP/capita	EPI rank
Sweden	7.57	43654	4
Finland	0.39	44495	12
West Germany	0.1	40873	17
Spain	-0.68	31774	25
Japan	-5.56	39727	20
India	-6.49	1134	123
Turkey	-8.3	8248	77
China	-18.66	3744	121
Bulgaria	-20.07	6210	65

Source: Author's calculation from WVS (2005), EPI (Economic Performance Index) rank from <http://epi.yale.edu/>

*The percentage of those people within a country who have chosen 5 postmaterialist goals minus the percentage of those who have chosen none of them.

Sweden, in Northern Europe, is a rich, clean country with postmaterialist value orientation (Table 1, 2). Now Sweden is very close to being sustainable, though the country is not without environmental concerns (acidification, global warming and eutrophication are problems). Partly due to the awareness of the international dimension of pollution, Sweden has taken on the role of co-coordinator and driving-force in environmental work internationally (Roseveare 2001). Finland is neither a materialist, nor a postmaterialist country, with relatively good environment and economic performance (Table 1, 2). Pollution problems and also the fight against them appeared quite early in the country (at the beginning of the 20th century) (Laakkonen 1999). An extended use of economic instruments (including the world's first carbon tax), the use of the polluter-pays principle is a characteristic of the country's environmental policy (OECD Environmental Performance Reviews Finland 2009). West Germany, in Central Europe, is the strongest economy in the European Union. It has a mixed value structure and quite a good environment performance (Table 1, 2), though by the 1960s they had severe pollution problems, but they could resolve the majority of those (Kirkpatrick 2001). A burgeoning environmental movement and the world's first major Green party

meant that environment policy broadened and deepened in the 1990s. Germany has a strong and internationally active green industry (OECD Environmental Performance Reviews Germany 2001). Spain is poorer than the above-mentioned European countries, with a rather worse environmental performance. The country has been a democracy only since 1978; the society is neither a materialist nor a postmaterialist one (Table 1, 2). Since the 1980s, Spain has adopted a set of basic environmental laws and regulations in line with EU directives and strengthened its environment administration (OECD Environmental Performance Reviews Spain 1997). From among the Eastern European countries we have chosen Bulgaria, which shows similar patterns to its neighbours (Nistor 2010). Bulgarian citizens have a very materialistic value orientation (Table 1). The not too good environmental performance of the country (Table 1, 2) is rooted in its economic history before 1989. After the change of regime, a few important steps have been taken regarding environment protection, but far too few (OECD Environmental Performance Reviews Bulgaria 1996). Turkey, at the edge of Europe, is a materialist country characterised by weak civil society and similar environmental performance to Bulgaria (Table 1, 2). We can refer to these two countries as medium-polluted ones. In Turkey, besides a few projects, the environment has had relatively low priority for a long time. Now the EU harmonisation process has become a main driving force in a major national environmental reform (OECD Environmental Performance Reviews Turkey 2008).

What is common in our chosen Far Eastern countries? All of them have a materialist value orientation (in the case of China a very strong materialist orientation) and what is more important: the cultural climate of Asian countries in the past could be described totally differently from those of Europe. The attitude of people (parallel with the conceptions of their religions) was living with nature, while in Europe it was fighting against nature (Aoyagi et al. 2003). However, for the 20th century the situation has changed, especially in China, as we will see.

Japan in a certain way is more similar to the European countries than to the Asian ones. The income/capita is almost the same as in Germany, the value of postmaterialism index and the country's environment performance index is much higher here than in the other Asian countries. Since the beginning of industrialisation in the 19th century, Japan has faced serious pollution problems (toxic smoke hazards and river-water pollution) (Aoyagi et al. 2003). The anti-pollution movement started in the 1950s in rural areas by the victims of the pollution (Aoyagi et al. 2003). This country, like Germany, proved that environment policy and economic development can be mutually supportive and competitiveness benefited from environmental concerns (OECD Environmental Performance Reviews Japan 1994).

India is a poor country with slightly materialist value-orientation and very bad environment performance (Table 1, 2), with a serious environment catastrophe in the past (Bhopal). By now, India has a wide array of environmental laws,

an extensive network of central and state pollution-control boards, a dynamic and demanding civil society, and one of the most environmentally-sensitive judiciaries in the world (Rajamani 2007).

In China, the communist regimes tried to destroy their own cultural roots, which has its effect on the value-system and on the religious activity of its citizens. China now is a polluted country with materialistic value orientation. The country can be said to be poor but, along with India, has rapid economic growth (Table 1, 2). Numerous pollution incidents had occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, but the government paid attention to these problems after three major incidents in 1972. Since then, many environmental protection initiatives have come from the state (Child et al. 2007).

To sum up, we can say that every analysed country has experience of environmental problems. What is different between them is the source of the response to the environment-related challenges: in a few countries (in Finland, Sweden, Japan, Germany) the initiatives were and are coming from the civil society, in China the direction of it is top-down, while in the younger EU member countries (and in the EU candidate country) the main driving forces are the expectations and regulations of the Community.

Table 2. Objective environmental conditions and subjective evaluation of them in the chosen countries

	% says within the country that			EPI row- score*(% proximity to target)			
	poor water quality	poor air quality	poor sewage and sanitation	water (effects on human)	air pollution (effects on human)	water (effects on ecosystem) in brackets: water quality index	air pollution (effects on ecosystem)
	is somewhat or very serious problem						
Sweden	8.6	11.2	22.1	100	97.37	96.3 (96.17)	59.22
Finland	26.8	22.4	29	100	97.37	91.7 (87.58)	55.29
West Germany	28.5	25.7	37.5	100	97.37	72.4 (78)	40
Spain	-	-	-	100	85.31	69.83 (83)	32.97
Japan	50.2	29.5	49.8	100	87	82.64 (87)	34.72
India	73.3	66.4	62.7	50.11	37.55	68.35 (78.9)	37.08
Turkey	85.5	80.7	82.9	90.68	76.13	62.83 (57.87)	46.21
China	40.3	38.4	29.5	70.1	40.07	65.95 (67.9)	37.19
Bulgaria	80.7	78.1	79.5	98.58	63.26	68.68 (81)	41.33

Source: Author's calculation from WVS (2005) and <http://epi.yale.edu/>

*The 2010 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) ranks 163 countries on 25 performance indicators tracked across ten policy categories covering both environmental public health and ecosystem

vitality. These indicators provide a gauge at a national government level of how close countries are to established environmental policy goals. In the table we show the results of the certain countries within the policy categories of: water (effects on human), value targets are: 100% of the population having access to sanitation and water; air pollution (effects on human), target values are: 0% of the population is exposed to indoor pollution and 20 ug/m³ outdoor air pollution; water (effects on ecosystem), indicators of which are the water quality, scarcity and stress index, target values are: 0% territory under water stress, 0% water overuse and a score of 100 for water quality; air pollution (effects on ecosystem), value targets are: 0.01 Gg/sq km populated land area for Nitrogen Oxides Emissions, 3000.0 AOT40 for Ecosystem Ozone, 0.01 Gg/sq km populated land area for Sulfur Dioxide Emissions, 0.01 Gg/sq km populated land area for Non-Methane Volatile Organic Compound Emissions. (<http://epi.yale.edu>)

Analysis and discussion of our data

Modification of the “objective problems- subjective evaluation” thesis

Among global problems, WVS asks the opinion of the respondents about global warming, state of rivers and lakes and biodiversity. In most of the countries – which we examined – more than 80 or 90% of the people consider them as serious or very serious problems and the percentage of those who could not or did not answer these questions is also very low, but not in China and India. In both countries, one-third of the respondents could not or did not answer.

Concerning local problems, WVS asks the respondents’ opinion about air pollution, water quality, sewage and sanitation. As we can see in Table 1, water problems related to humans can be found in China and India; furthermore Spain, Turkey and Bulgaria have problems related to the ecosystem. In 5 out of 8 countries the judgment of people over water quality is quite objective, but Chinese people see their situation much better than the real data would suggest, while the inhabitants of Japan and India consider it worse. In the case of India, we can explain this pessimistic evaluation by the fact that this country has a problem with water scarcity and as a consequence access to and overuse of water, and these factors together can raise consciousness of bad water quality.

Air pollution affecting the ecosystem occurs in every place (in Sweden to the least extent), while pollution harmful to humans is extreme in China, India and Bulgaria. Comparing the objective situation and the subjective judgment of people about air pollution we notice that Chinese respondents underestimate the seriousness of air pollution, while Turkish people seem more rigid than the inhabitants of other countries. In the case of Turkey, this can be explained by the fact that the smog in their big cities has been a serious problem for several decades.

The evaluation of sewage and sanitation is similar to the evaluation of water quality in most places, though in Sweden and Germany people consider it as somewhat more serious than the water quality, while in India and China it works the other way around.

In accordance with our hypothesis, we found that in poorer countries people are more concerned about local problems than in rich countries, but they are right, as they really do have local problems. Global environmental issues seem uniformly important for every country, though in the two poorest countries the proportion of those who could not answer the questions was quite high. What is an unexpected result of our analyses is that Chinese people seem to underestimate the local problems – relatively fewer people are concerned about them than in India, though the two countries have similar environmental pollution levels.

It is one question what people think about the state of the environment, how serious they believe the environmental problems are, but it is another if they are willing to do anything for the environment or not, if they consider environmental protection to be important even at the price of slower economic development. Table 3 shows how strong environmentalism is in our analysed countries. According to the item by which the relative importance of the environment protection was measured, India, Japan and Germany are the least, while Sweden and Finland are the most environmentalist countries. When we come to the question of willingness to make monetary sacrifices to prevent environment pollution, the picture is different. The respondents from Spain, Bulgaria and India are the least, and the citizens of Sweden and China are the most environmentalist in this sense.

Table 3. Environmentalism in the chosen countries

Countries	% of those people who agreed with the statement		
	Protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes slower economic growth (2005)	Protecting the environment should be given priority, even if it causes slower economic growth (1995)	Intention for making monetary sacrifices to reduce environment pollution (2005)
Sweden	62.9	59	50.1
Finland	64.7	40.9	32.1
West Germany	32	42.7	13.3
Spain	56.3	50.4	2.8
Japan	36.4	31.2	27.5
India	37.3	20.6	15.5
Turkey	52.7	52	22
China	49.5	51.3	39.2
Bulgaria	39.7	30.9	13.6

Source: Author's calculation from the database of World Values Surveys in 1995, 2005

The result of Japan, Germany, China and Spain is a puzzle. Japan, Germany and Spain, being rich countries – where the basic needs and security are guaranteed for the members of the society – could be more environmentalist, while China the other way around.

Examining the changes with passing of time, we can notice that environmentalism grew in Finland, Spain, Japan and India; it decreased in Germany; and it did not change or changed just a little in Sweden, Turkey and China (between 1995 and 2005). These results suggest that we cannot state that in places where the state of the environment has developed a lot, environment protection will lose its importance again. The case of Sweden and Finland is a counter example for it.

To solve the above-mentioned puzzles, we should examine the pro-environmental behaviour of the analysed societies (Table 4). The citizens of the wealthiest countries are the most active regarding environment-friendly consumer decisions – even German people, who seemed not so environmentalist based on the attitudinal questions. What could be the reason for this? Negative environmental consequences of the economic development of Germany appeared quite early: increasing air pollution, dying and damaged forests, outbreak of algae in the sea, deteriorating water quality and several accidents in the chemistry industry heightened public awareness after the 1960s (Kirkpatrick 2001). The opposition of industry lobbyists and labour unions hindered the inauguration of environmental initiatives, but the rising awareness of the population, the environmental movement with the world's first green party achieved a lot in regulation, giving subsidies, supporting of research and development, information, education and training, and the application of the best-available-technology principle (OECD Environmental Performance Reviews Germany 1993). As a result, the environmental indicators of the country were improved and a viable green industry was born. The German government spent and still spends a lot on these purposes, even in 1990, 1.65% of the GDP was spent on pollution abatement and control. This is the highest percentage among the analysed countries, e.g. Sweden spent 1.1% in 1993 and Spain 0.8% in 1990 on the same purposes (OECD Environmental Performance Reviews Spain 1994, Sweden 1993). These factors explain why German citizens do not want to pay more taxes for environmental purposes: they already pay a lot. The reason why they prefer economic development to environment protection could be that for them the two things are reconcilable.

Table 4. Environment-friendly behaviour in the chosen countries

Countries	Consumers' decisions (1995)		
	chose environment friendly products	recycled	reduced water consumption
Sweden	80.8	89.9	32.4
Finland	72.3	78.6	33.9
West Germany	88.1	82.3	67.6
Spain	52.7	59.3	74.1
Japan	51.9	66.2	43.1
India	17.7	15.4	28.8
Turkey	no data	no data	no data
China	38	41.3	53
Bulgaria	20.2	16.6	35.4

Source: Author's calculation from the database of World Values Surveys in 1995, 2005

The citizens of the poorest countries showed the less environment-friendly attitudes and acts – as we expected. Among them the exception is China, where the inclination to make monetary sacrifices is stronger and the environment-friendly consumer behaviour is more frequent than in the other newly-developed countries. What can lie behind this? While numerous pollution incidents had occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, the government did not pay attention to these problems until the three major incidents in 1972 (water pollution cases) because these had a greater impact on the health of the large population. First, law and policy making started in the country and the establishing of regulatory agencies. Afterwards, efforts were made to build a normative and cognitive system by running training courses, searching for technical solutions through R&D, launching a newspaper in 1984 (China Environmental News), an environmental yearbook from 1990 onward and a green technology award in 1993 (Yang 2006). The government not only welcomed environmental NGOs (in 2005 there were over 1000) but established organisations for green purposes, which are called GONGO-s (Turner and Chi 2006). These government-led measures have the impact that the Chinese society is relatively environmentalist compared with India or Bulgaria. However, there is still a lot to do for the country as the environmental conditions are very bad (as we could see in Table 1 and 2).

Place of environmental values within the value-structure

As Table 5 indicates, there is slight positive correlation between postmaterialist value orientation and the intention to make monetary sacrifices to prevent pollution – but only in the richer countries. Concerning threat perception, in the three Asian countries postmaterialist people tend to worry a little more about local

environmental threats than materialist people. Global environmental problems however show a different picture, as in the poorest countries postmaterialist respondents consider them less serious than the other respondents.

Table 5. Partial correlation between postmaterialism-index, local and global environmental threat perception and intention of making monetary sacrifices for environmental purposes in the chosen countries

Countries	Partial correlation between		
	pm & intention	pm & threat perception - local	pm & threat perception - global
Sweden	0.255**	-	-
Finland	0.17**	-	-
West Germany	0.116*	-	0.093*
Spain	0.074*	no data	-
Japan	0.106*	0.103*	-
India	-	0.123**	-0.063*
Turkey	-	-	-0.119**
China	-	0.177**	-
Bulgaria	-	-	-0.083*

Source: Author's calculation from the database of World Values Surveys in 2005

*correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

**correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

By using Schwartz's value items we applied factor analysis to categorise our analysed countries. In the nine countries we have got four types of value structures, for two countries we derived two factors and for the other ones we derived three factors with eigenvalues larger than 1 (Table 6).

Sweden, Finland and West Germany have similar value structures. Here Factor 1 can be labelled as egoistic, and also this factor contained the values of openness. Factor 2 can be labelled as traditional, and the environment related item with the other altruistic value formed a third, autonomous factor.

Turkey, India and Bulgaria showed a different value structure. Here we can find only two factors, the traditional and altruistic values form together one factor. The difference between these countries is the place of the openness values: the openness related items are grouped with the egoistic ones in Bulgaria, while with traditional-altruistic ones in India and it is diversified in Turkey.

The third group of countries (Japan and Spain) is similar to the second group in a way that the altruistic values go together with the traditional ones, but here openness is an autonomous factor, and so is egoistic value orientation.

China differs from all other countries as here the altruistic and openness items are grouped together, the other two factors are the egoistic and traditional ones.

The environment-related value is tightly connected with the other altruistic value (helping people) in every country, and in some places they together form part of an autonomous factor (in Northern and Western Europe), while elsewhere they are grouped with openness (in China) or with traditional values (Eastern and Southern Europe, Japan, India). These results partly confirmed our hypotheses.

China does differ from all the other countries, which shows the importance of the effects of drastic events, violent disruption with cultural traditions. Here the altruistic values are grouped with the openness ones.

The Western and Northern countries do form a special group where the altruistic values are autonomous. In all other countries the altruistic values form one factor with the traditional values. We expected this result only in the case of India and Japan. What is more interesting is that Spain and Japan show a similar value structure, while India, Bulgaria and Turkey together form a fourth type of countries. These results suggest that the wealth of the nation is a very important decisive factor in determining the value structure of the countries.

Table 6. Results of factor analysis of Schwartz's value items*

<i>India</i>	<i>loading</i>	<i>Turkey</i>	<i>loading</i>	<i>Bulgaria</i>	<i>loading</i>
Factor1= altruistic-traditional (openness)		Factor 1= altruistic-traditional		Factor 2= altruistic-traditional	
looking after environment	0.651	looking after environment	0.725	looking after environment	0.741
helping people	0.581	helping people	0.7	helping people	0.735
tradition	0.658	tradition	0.668	tradition	0.74
behave properly	0.732	behave properly	0.674	behave properly	0.734
success	0.666	success	0.617		
taking risks	0.518				
new ideas	0.448				
		secure surrounding	0.672	secure surrounding	0.523
Eigenvalue	2.688	Eigenvalue	2.79		2.619
Factor 2= egoistic		Factor 2= egoistic		Factor 1= egoistic (openness)	
having good time	0.807	having good time	0.726	having good time	0.783
rich	0.724	rich	0.682	rich	0.749
secure surrounding	0.602	taking risks	0.707	taking risks	0.714
				new ideas	0.635
				success	0.657
Eigenvalue	1.959	Eigenvalue	1.616	Eigenvalue	2.661
Total variance explained	46%	Total variance explained	49%	Total variance explained	53%

<i>Sweden</i>	<i>loading</i>	<i>Finland</i>	<i>loading</i>	<i>West Germany</i>	<i>loading</i>
Factor 1= egoistic (openness)		Factor 1= egoistic (openness)		Factor 1= egoistic (openness)	
rich	0.72	rich	0.625	rich	0.72
good time	0.627	good time	0.713	good time	0.627
success	0.69	success	0.705	success	0.69
taking risks	0.628	taking risks	0.757	taking risks	0.628
Eigenvalue	1.851	Eigenvalue	2.028	Eigenvalue	1.851
Factor 2= traditional		Factor 2= traditional		Factor 2= traditional	
secure surrounding	0.782	secure surrounding	0.772	secure surrounding	0.782
behave properly	0.694	behave properly	0.775	behave properly	0.694
tradition	0.568	tradition	0.514	tradition	0.568
Eigenvalue	1.691	Eigenvalue	1.739	Eigenvalue	1.691
Factor 3= altruistic		Factor 3= altruistic		Factor 3= altruistic	
helping people	0.659	helping people	0.772	helping people	0.659
looking after environment	0.748	looking after environment	0.727	looking after environment	0.748
Eigenvalue	1.321	Eigenvalue	1.562	Eigenvalue	1.321
Total variance explained	54%	Total variance explained	59%	Total variance explained	54%

<i>China</i>	<i>loading</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>loading</i>	<i>Spain</i>	<i>loading</i>
Factor 1= altruistic openness		Factor 1= altruistic-traditional		Factor 1= altruistic-traditional	
helping people	0.623	helping people	0.644	helping people	0.708
looking after environment	0.640	looking after environment	0.806	looking after environment	0.583
success	0.7	tradition	0.701	tradition	0.576
new ideas	0.751			behave properly	0.771
Eigenvalue	2.034	Eigenvalue	1.797	Eigenvalue	2.016
Factor 2= traditional		Factor 2= openness		Factor 2= openness	
secure surrounding	0.534	taking risks	0.797	taking risks	0.71
behave properly	0.779	new ideas	0.619	new ideas	0.715
tradition	0.673	success	0.69	good time	0.75
Eigenvalue	1.739	Eigenvalue	1.778	Eigenvalue	1.962
Factor 3= egoistic		Factor 3= egoistic		Factor 3= egoistic	
rich	0.827	rich	0.592	rich	0.789
having good time	0.791	having good time	0.768		
		secure surrounding	0.747	secure surrounding	0.71
Eigenvalue	1.562	Eigenvalue	1.606	Eigenvalue	1.292
Total variance explained	59%	Total variance explained	58%	Total variance explained	59%

Source: Author's calculation from the database of World Values Surveys in 2005

* We left out from the analyses the next items (as they sat on more than one factor): in Japan and Spain "successful", in China "taking risks", in Turkey, Sweden and Germany "new ideas".

Table 7. Place of environmental values within the value-structure in the analysed countries

	India, Turkey, Bulgaria	Spain, Japan	China	Sweden, Germany, Finland
factor A	egoistic	egoistic	egoistic	egoistic- openness
factor B	altruistic- traditional	altruistic- traditional	traditional	traditional
factor C	-	openness	openness- altruistic	altruistic

Source: Author's calculation from the database of World Values Surveys in 2005

So what matters in determining environmentalism and the extent of environmental activity? Culture and political culture matter, the wealth of the nation matters, the history of pollution and economic history also matter. And all these factors can be combined in different ways in different places, the result of which is that there are as many differences between similar countries as similarities regarding environmental issues (Table 7).

Conclusions

We found – in line with our expectations – that global environmental issues seem uniformly important for every country, though in the two poorest countries (India and China), the proportion of those who could not answer the questions, was quite high. In poorer countries people are more concerned about local problems than in the rich countries, but they are right, as they really have local problems. We found furthermore that in poorer countries the intention to make monetary sacrifices to prevent pollution and actual environment friendly acts are less frequent, despite a higher level of threat perception, which shows that poverty and its consequence, the dominance of survival values overwrite the worry about environment.

What is an unexpected result of our analyses is that Chinese people seem to underestimate the local environmental problems. China strongly differs from the other countries in many other aspects as well. This is the only place where the altruistic values (and so the importance of environmental protection) are grouped with the openness values, and here, despite their relative poverty, the frequency of pro-environmental consumer acts is not low.

The Western and Northern countries form together a special group where the altruistic values are autonomous, but they are not uniform. The Swedish

and Finnish situation concerning environmental protection and the state of environment is a result of an organic development. The main sectors work together for their common purposes; there is collective decision making and decentralised implementation, so these are mutually supporting processes.

The citizens of West Germany seem anti-environmentalist in their words, but at the same time they are the ones who do the most for the environment in their acts. They understood well the economic advantages of environmental protection and their example proves that strong feelings and values are not necessary for actions and results.

In all other countries the altruistic values form one factor with the traditional values. Within this group we can differentiate between two subgroups. Spain and Japan are similar to each other (with similar value structure and similar consumer behaviour patterns), while India, Bulgaria and Turkey together form a special type of countries with weak pro-environmental activity. These results suggest that the wealth of the nation is a very important decisive factor in determining the value structure of the countries.

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The Double Wedding: A Social Drama in Two Acts¹

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Abstract. This paper analyses the marital ritual performed by a rural community, that of doubling the wedding reception one week after the first event was consumed. The socio-genesis and evolution of the “double wedding” are accounted for in terms of rational choice theory, especially through the notion of “intra-traditional rationality”, i.e. the instrumental manipulation of tradition in personal interest while retaining at the same time the legitimising factor of tradition. After describing the event and its historical evolution, the study makes a functional analysis through which the social functions, but also the dysfunctions, of the double wedding are identified. The double wedding is explained as being an innovation inspired by tradition, the primary function of which is a pecuniary one, its prime objective being the maximisation of the financial profit obtained at the wedding. One social dysfunction consists in the fact that the double wedding socially promotes a radical individualistic spirit, endangering the realisation of the “we-ness” envisioned as the ideal goal in marriage. Another dysfunction lies in the fact that the double wedding stimulates rivalry between the two organising families. Moreover, the paper analyses how the double wedding perpetuates and consolidates the masculine domination through ranking “the groom’s wedding” in front and above “the bride’s wedding”, the latter being clearly subordinated to the former, in terms of both chronological priority and symbolic importance.

Keywords: anthropology of marriage; ethnographic research; qualitative research; marriage ceremony; sociological consciousness

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Prologue: reflections on the strangeness of the “normality” of the human social world

Human social reality has a deeply duplicitous nature: on the one hand, due to familiarity and repeated systematic exposure, the socialised individual perceives the social world that surrounds him as plainly self-evident, is in no need of extra explanation; as a matter of fact, by internalising his social world, it becomes taken for granted as an unquestionable natural reality. However, brought under the sociological investigative loupe, what was previously hidden under the cloak of normality betrays its question-begging features. Seen by a “socio[anthropo]logical eye” (Bauman and May 2001), the reality accepted as unproblematic by the layman who inhabits it becomes a difficult-to-decrypt enigma. Therefore, by mounting sociological lenses on top of the optics used by the normally unreflective social actor we get a profoundly altered visualisation of reality, in which the normal and the uncontroversial cease to be taken for granted and are being seriously called into question. In this regard, sociology performs the function of problematising what common sense is willing to take as self-evident. As such, sociological thinking suspects the unsuspected, brings into question the unquestionable, and simultaneously throws doubt on all that is taken as constitutive to common sense. Following this continuous and methodical harassment of common sense (*doxa*) by the problematising sociological spirit (*sociological episteme*), the normality previously accepted as self-obvious turns into an almost totally different enigmatic reality.

The socio(anthropo)logist, as a temporary inhabitant of the social reality that s/he transforms into his/her object of study, is subject to a *double and contradictory socialisation*: first and foremost as social actor in the world of everyday life, and then as social inquirer of the reality to which s/he belongs. The individual, first socialised as ordinary social actor, and later “sociologised” as professional inquirer of the society that hosts him, can solve the tension thus activated in two qualitatively different ways: a) through *cognitive-behavioural compartmentalisation*, i.e. by clearly separating inside his consciousness the sociological activity from the actions undertaken as social agent. Keeping them in hermetically sealed chambers prevents the triggering of cognitive dissonance due to the collision of the common sense conceptions with the sociological ones; b) by an *alteration of consciousness*, so that the sociological thought, once started, cannot be deactivated not even in the most intimate or ordinary moments that do not require a reflective and dubitative stance.

This “sociologisation of common sense” (i.e. the sociological socialisation performed through sociological training of thought) means that the former naïve inhabitant of social reality, previously endowed only with the standard dose of

conventional wisdom provided by common sense, suffers a radical cognitive change by becoming an insatiable inquisitor into the social realm, now equipped with a sociologically interrogative and dubitative outlook as a replacement for what E. Husserl called “the natural attitude” towards the world.

As P. Berger (1963) pointed out half a century ago in his seductive *Invitation to Sociology*, the sociological enterprise is both an attempt to objectively understand social reality and a form of consciousness. *Tout court*, sociology is both science and conscience. For those who take the option of cognitive-behavioural compartmentalisation, sociological thinking is but an accessory, and therefore dispensable, cognitive module that can easily be put to rest in ordinary (non-sociological) social situations. In contrast, for the class of individuals sociologically socialised (a category in which I include myself) suspending or temporarily interrupting the functioning of the “sociological module” is not possible, since in their case a genuine alteration of consciousness took place. This alteration of consciousness involves the acquisition of a special sensitivity (i.e. “the sociological consciousness”) that lies in the ability to objectivise the social phenomena in which you find yourself as an ordinary actor, together with the tendency to think the social world in terms of the sociological schemata internalised during the phase of disciplinary socialisation. Thus, assimilating a sociological consciousness opens new perspectives on social reality from angles foreign and refused to common sense, enabling theoretically abstract thinking couched in sociological categories, which involves identifying and conceptualising the macroscopic factors that condition human existence.

Stupefaction becomes the new natural attitude of the social researcher. S/he is now experiencing a sensation of perplexity given by the discovery that the social world and all the practices contained within it, despite all their familiarity and intimacy, are not what they seem to be at first glance. Following P. Berger again, I adhere to his epistemological precept that “the first wisdom of sociology is this – things are not what they seem” (1963, 23). The mystery of social reality can be penetrated only after a prolonged process of initiation, a process completed by assimilating the sociological consciousness that enables the formerly naïve citizen of the democratic republic of common sense to see through the crust that protects from viewing the inner working mechanism producing social reality.

The compartmentalisers (i.e. those individuals who, although they underwent the process of sociological socialisation, continue to live in two interpretative worlds, or in two different “provinces of meaning” (Schütz 1962): the commonsense world governed by practical consciousness and the world of the theoretical sense accessible via the sociological consciousness) automatically shut off their sociological thought as soon as they cognitively leave the theoretical universe. Shutting down their sociological module, the compartmentalisers are able to enter easily into the role of ordinary social actors. Instead, the integralists

(let us call by this term those sociologists who cannot compartmentalise their social experience into two different interpretative frameworks) do not short-circuit their sociological thinking not even in their most intimate and ordinary social situations. The individuals forming this species of sociologists manifest an irrepressible proclivity to process the entire sequence of events that they are experiencing in their social existence through the theoretical schemata with which they have disciplined their thought.

Unjustified verbosity flagrantly transgresses the academic norm of “expressive parsimony”, i.e. language economy in stating theoretical formulations. All this long introduction was meant to prepare the ground for what follows shortly: a socio-anthropological study on a bizarre marital practice (bizarre, of course, only for the uninitiated outsiders, but perfectly natural for its practitioners). Being personally involved in this social event, and finding myself caught in the middle of a strange collective ritual, I was able to subject this intriguing event to a socio-anthropological analysis, precisely due to that sociological consciousness permanently activated which I have described *in extenso* in the lines above.

Socio-anthropology of marriage and marriage rituals: general theoretical considerations

The institution of marriage, due to its structural universality across human cultures (with the possible exception of the much discussed Nayar case, discovered by K. Gough [1952]) combined with an utmost diversity of concrete empirical embodiments, never ceased to exert an almost magical fascination on anthropological imagination. Contributing to this high esteem bestowed upon marriage there has also been the acute awareness regarding the importance of the functions performed by the institution of marriage in bolstering the architectonics of social systems. Ensuring the critical junction in the transition from childhood to adulthood, marriage has been universally regarded as marking a state of crisis in human biography. In most cultures, passing through the initiation rite of marriage individuals access a new status within the prestige order of their community. As a reaction to the state of crisis arisen in the lives of individuals, marriage has been wrapped in intricate systems of social rituals and shrouded in multiple layers of meaning. The criticality of the marital event is thus treated with a “socio-cultural balsam” to relieve and support the individuals in their passage through this critical stage that stays in the way of their full human becoming.

Marriage, even more than the gift, is a “total social fact” (Mauss 1966 [1925]). Hardly could one find a phenomenon the effects of which reverberate throughout the whole socio-cultural system and affect so many structural patterns of society.

Marriage is thus a serious candidate for the title of total social fact, since it satisfies with flying colours the definitional requirements imposed by M. Mauss (1966, 76): “phenomena [that] are at once legal, economic, religious, aesthetic, morphological and so on.” The social institution of marriage definitely covers all these different aspects that are constitutive to a total social fact. The pervasive consequential effects of marriage are all the more visible in non-industrial societies, where the very biological reproduction of society must pass through the filter of the total institution of marriage. Since the biological reproduction of society (i.e. the replacement of the deceased members of the society with new ones) constitutes the decisive “functional prerequisite” of any social system (Aberle et al. 1950), marriage appears as a socio-cultural institutional arrangement evolved to organise this crucial process for the survival of society while maintaining social (and sexual) order.

Besides its ritual-symbolic burden, marriage is essentially a social transaction with broad economic consequences. Explicitly arranged or left at the mercy of the latent forces of homogamy, whose operation of on-par matchmaking is as efficient as it is unintended, marriages have historically played the prominent role of conserving property and wealth. The economic factor is intrinsic to marriage. This is why friendship (which, unlike marriage, is not a vehicle of property) was never the subject of judicial attention and legal codification. Given these brief considerations, this paper aims to provide a socio-anthropological analysis of the double wedding that would elucidate both the symbolic and the financial economy of this strange marital pattern.

Anthropology, by the very nature of its object of study, has gained the reputation of being a cultural curiosity collector. Despite the universality of the institution of marriage as an “anthropological constant” crossing all human cultures, its surface manifestations cover a spectrum of stunning diversity. The structural unity of marriage does not prevent its ritual incarnation into a myriad of forms, some of them of the more bizarre, at least for an anthropologically untrained eye. This is the case of the “ghost marriage”, whereof the available anthropological documentation reveals that it has been or continues to be practiced only in five societies throughout history: the Nuer and Atuot populations in southern Sudan, in ancient Greece, by the Chinese Singaporeans, and in post-war contemporary Japan (Schwartz 2010). Even though diversity also prevails in this rare form of marriage, the common denominator of “ghost marriage(s)” is that a symbolic or fictive wedding is organised in which a woman is married to the spirit of a deceased man. Ghost marriage reaches perhaps the highest degree of strangeness in the eyes of outsiders. Even though it certainly doesn’t achieve the same threshold of cultural eccentricity as the ghost marriage, the “double wedding” nevertheless contains an exotic element compared with the socially accepted wedding pattern in Romanian society. What needs to be stressed one more time

is the fact that all this strangeness is entirely natural to insiders. Marrying a ghost, as well as doubling a wedding, seems perfectly reasonable to people socialised in these cultural traditions. Indeed, as the old saying goes, “this is how (marital) things work” for these people and there is nothing strange about it. Or so they think. That being said, by examining the socio-genesis and functionality of the double wedding, this paper complements, with a modest contribution, the collection of cultural curiosities catalogued by the anthropological community.

Methodological disclosures

Before moving to the description of the marital ritual which forms the social phenomenon investigated in this article, I will assign the next segment of the text to some methodological considerations. More precisely, the next section will describe the method employed in this study, namely observant participation, understood as derivative of the more classical participant observation – the anthropological method by definition. Also in this section, the essential characteristics of informal interviewing will be highlighted, especially as a complementary method of observant participation.

Observant participation and informal interview: the weapons of an incognito researcher

Practiced by an incognito researcher infiltrated amidst the phenomenon under analysis, the methods of observant participation and informal interview become “unobtrusive methods” (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz and Sechrest 1966) that do not arouse the suspicion of co-participants. As a kind of invisible methodology, they do not trigger the undesired reactivity of the subjects by putting them *en garde* regarding the fact that they are being studied and thus modifying their behaviour in accordance with social desirability. Resorting to these “subterranean” methods that go undetected by the sensible sensors of the social actors, the astute social inquirer neutralises the risk of causing researcher bias.

But seen from an ethical perspective, these non-reactive methods can raise a number of moral questions. From an excess of ethical pudicity, a morally sensible critic could protest vehemently against the practice of deceiving the subjects and abusing the trust offered by these unsuspecting social partners. My ethical position regarding this possible critique is the following: I distinguish between absolute and relative ethics (Zimbardo 2007, 231–238). Absolute ethics assumes an invariable and intolerant moral code, which prohibits any action that has negative consequences for human beings. Judged in such an uncompromising moral framework, this study is reprehensible as highly immoral, since the

researcher concealed his scientific identity, and thus indirectly misled the social actors who took him to be one of their one. In contrast, relative ethics gives up the moral rigidity of the absolute ethics and follows a utilitarian ethical model. Instead of holding tightly to intransigent moral ideals, the utilitarian ethical doctrine suggests making a pragmatic calculation between the troubles caused and the epistemic wins. Of course, relativity is not complete: no scientific discovery can justify human suffering. Not to mention the crimes perpetrated in the name of science (for instance, the Nazi experiments on prisoners in extermination camps), which are totally and irrevocably reprehensible, inclusively from the position of relative ethics. My option is for a *relative ethics with an absolute threshold*, which allows for a minor coefficient of immorality in exchange for substantial social-scientific discoveries. However, the absolute threshold categorically proscribes scientific research, no matter how relevant and fruitful it will turn out to be if human suffering reaches a certain degree of dangerousness that would threaten the physical and psychological integrity of individuals. In the light of such ethical conceptions, this study, although based on implicitly deceiving individuals, did not cause them any injury (physical, psychological, or of any other nature). With one notable exception: the findings of the study could generate embarrassment by exposing an explicit economic rationality disguised under the cloak of tradition, a camouflage that entails the denial of an obvious pecuniary interest.

Without insisting on a detailed description of the method of observation, suffice it to say that its form varies as a function of the degree of systematisation with which it is practiced: from *spontaneous observation* to which, more or less consciously, all social actors endowed with a functional sensorial apparatus resort in their daily lives; passing through *impressionistic observation*, practiced intentionally but in an unsystematic manner in order to superficially understand a life situation; and finally, *scientific observation*, systematically used in order to describe and/or explain social/natural phenomena (Iluț 1997). Without discrediting the value of the spontaneous and impressionistic forms of observation, especially in the realm of everyday life, the epistemic superiority of scientific observation must be strongly emphasised, the pre-eminence of which over its common sense counterparts resides precisely in its systematic character.

Depending on the dosage between observation and participation, four different species can be obtained: a) *complete participation*, which sacrifices observation for the total immersion into the social practice; in this case, the observational act is greatly minimised, being possible only as retrospective observation, i.e. trying to analytically reconstruct the lived experience in order to understand it in socio-anthropological terms; b) *observant participation*, in which the emphasis is on participation, while observation is conditioned by and subordinate to the role of active participant; c) *participant observation*, in which the accent falls on the observational component, where the participation makes possible and

facilitates observation; d) *complete observation*, that occurs from the outside of the phenomenon and does not require from the part of researchers to enter into the roles of the observed actors in order to fully grasp from an emic position their intricate web of beliefs, meanings, and practices (Iluț 1997, 80). Although participant observation appears to be the optimal combination, it fails to neutralise what we might call the “strangeness effect”, i.e. the awareness by both the community studied and the researcher himself of the fact that the latter is an intruder, an outsider who participates in the social life with an instrumental purpose in mind. Even if this awareness is bracketed during the social practices, it does not cease to hover menacingly above the researcher’s dubious status, constantly reminding the participating artificiality of the provisorily accepted stranger. Instead, observant participation, performed undercover, as a nonreactive method eliminates the barrier between native and researcher. The major challenge of observant participation for the researcher is to find a way to infiltrate into the community that he wants to study without raising any suspicion. Once infiltrated, he must behave in such a way that his scientific identity is not betrayed by manifesting an exaggerated curiosity, while his gnoseological intentions must be carefully occluded from public suspicion.

This socio-anthropological study is founded upon observant participation, since, as a participant, I was part of the phenomenon under study (i.e. the marital ritual), acting the social role of sponsor for the couple (more exactly, I and my spouse were sponsors for the bride, since the groom had his own pair of sponsors).

Armed with the method of observant participation, which gave me a privileged perspective on the phenomenon under scrutiny from an inside angle but which also subordinated my observations to the officially assigned role that I had to perform within the collective ritual, I resorted to informal interviews disguised as natural conversations on the wedding subject. The interview guidelines that I followed were as informal as the interviews themselves. More exactly, I tried to intervene and direct the spontaneous conversations between participants as well as the seemingly spontaneous ones (but actually triggered by me) in research purposes towards addressing the research questions that motivated my socio-anthropological inquiry: What is going on here? How is the event socially organised? In what respect does the ritual differ from the typical marital process? Why does it differ from the typical one? What are the reasons that favoured the institutionalisation of this socio-cultural practice? What are the individual and social consequences generated by this social ritual? What social functions (and possible dysfunctions) are fulfilled by this event both at the individual and societal level?

The double wedding: a social play in two acts

The social event that aroused my socio(anthropo)logical imagination is a marriage ritual performed in a rural community, namely in Sânmiclăuș (Bethlenszentmiklós), a village geographically localised in the vicinity of Blaj, Alba County, Romania. The ethnic composition of the community is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Ethnic composition of Sânmiclăuș, Alba County, in the year 2002

Total	Hungarians	Romanians	Romani	Germans
1451	920	350	177	4

Source: Varga (2008)

Statistical data show a demographic domination of the Hungarian population, but it should be mentioned that at least regarding the Romanian and Hungarian communities there are no impermeable ethnic barriers. Both of them are relatively open ethnic communities, this fact explaining the shared commonality of the marital practice studied in this paper, which is performed similarly in both ethnic groups. In terms of religious confession there is an even more pronounced heterogeneity, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Confessional structure of Sânmiclăuș, Alba County, in the year 2002

Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Roman Catholic	Reformed	Lutheran	Unitarian	Other confession
500	29	8	513	2	379	20

Source: Varga (2008)

Neither religion nor ethnicity explains the particularity of the double wedding since this ritual is practiced by both ethnic communities irrespective of religious affiliation. The phenomenon's peculiarity resides, as we shall see, in the secular sphere of the wedding ceremony and not in the realm of religious ritual.

In the following lines I intend to produce a succinct "thin description" (in opposition to what C. Geertz [1973] called "thick description", performed by anthropologists who are over-concerned with minute details, but who regularly miss the big picture) that would paint an impressionistic picture rendered in thick strokes rather than a painfully detailed painting. My methodological zero-order belief (Bem 1970) that stands behind this choice is that not capturing the finest details of a social practice is of particular interest but abstracting the essential features of the phenomenon that will facilitate its understanding. This research does not aim at description, but targets at being understanding and also offers explanation (i.e. the Weberian *Verstehen*). For this reason, what I consider

to be insignificant details (those that find no place in the explanation) will be set aside so as not to load the account with irrelevant information.

The marital ritual as practice in Sânmiclăuș does not differ in any respect from the typical Romanian marriage ritual, with one crucial exception: it is being repeated. More specifically, instead of having a single festive ceremony organised to celebrate the newly officiated marriage, there are two such receptions, with the second being performed one week after the first one, in the same location, mostly with the same guests as before, with the same music, and so on. It would be tempting to say that the wedding festive ceremony is repeated in a situation of *ceteris paribus*, the only variable being time, everything else being kept constant.

The double wedding at Sânmiclăuș is a pattern of marital ceremony unique to Romania. In terms of its geographical localisation, the double wedding is practiced within a radius of several miles around its epicentre represented by the village of Sânmiclăuș. Being a fairly recent socio-cultural development, the evolution of which has both been constrained and fostered by local tradition (as it will be shown subsequently), this phenomenon has not been the subject of previous research. In effect, this paper is the first to address it.

Marriage, a possible socio-cultural universal, is the social institution through which the wedding couple symbolically signs a double contract: a) an intra-conjugal contract between the spouses, and b) a social contract between spouses and society, a contract that certifies their union and sanctions the sexual intercourse between the two. Typically, in modern Western societies, the ceremonial sequence follows a three-step linear algorithm: i) the civil ceremony, by which the state authority officially recognises the legitimacy of the relation and confers legal status upon it; ii) the religious ceremony, by which the civil contract between the parties is being completed before divinity; iii) the social event of celebrating the newly married couple, a multifunctional social practice whose decisive function is financial in nature. The event that is being repeated in the wedding at Sânmiclăuș is the third sequence, i.e. the collective celebration of the bridal couple (namely, the wedding reception organised after the civil and religious ceremonies are over).

The whimsicality that incites an explanation is that the wedding is being doubled even if both bride and groom are from the same village. In technical anthropological terms, even when the rules of endogamy are respected, the wedding party is still repeated in the same location one week later. In general, as a tolerated deviation from the prevailing social norm regarding the organisation of the marital ritual (i.e. one civil ceremony, one religious wedding, one party), it is acceptable for a wedding to be held twice, in different locations, when the partners are from distant geographical regions, since organising a single event would raise numerous logistical problems. This is not the case of the marriage at Sânmiclăuș. Despite the fact that both bride and groom are fellow villagers, the “double” is basically identical to the original in most respects.

Another anomaly (of course, from the sociocentric perspective of a viewer formed in a different culture) is indicated by the language used to characterise the two similar events: the first is called “the groom’s wedding”, while the second is considered to be “the bride’s wedding”. The names of these events suggest who the organisers are: the groom’s wedding is orchestrated by his family, while the bride’s wedding falls within the responsibility of her own family. The temporal ordering of these two events betrays an implicit patriarchalism and an inherent androcentrism that chronologically ranks their deployment, since the groom’s wedding has temporal precedence over the bride’s wedding, the latter being the “double” performance. Moreover, the local tradition prescribes that the conditioning ceremonies (i.e. the civil and the religious ceremonies, which are prerequisites for the party thereafter) to be held on the day of the groom’s wedding. The bride’s wedding, which can be understood as the-deprived-of-the-official-pomp-replica-event, is implicitly downgraded as a second order wedding feast, inferior to the groom’s wedding. Far from being an idiosyncratic feature of the wedding at Sânmiclăuș, male domination is a universal characteristic of both past and contemporary society, revealing a masculine ideology embedded within the logic of marriage, even though the official rhetoric, in modern and especially in postmodern times, insists upon gender equality. It is relevant to mention that the woman is the one who is expected to take the man’s name (but even if there are legal alternatives to the traditional practice of adopting the husband’s surname, the reverse would be seen as dishonour for the male; as such, it is a purely hypothetical option that is practically inconceivable). Moreover, the husband’s name appears first on the marriage certificate, and he is also the first of the two being addressed within the civil ceremony. Not to mention, the religious ceremony can rightly be interpreted from a feminist standpoint (but also from a secular equalitarianist perspective) as a programmatically designed ritual of female degradation.

Chronologically, the sequence of events in terms of which the groom’s wedding is organised obeys the following pattern: a) the extended families gather at the residences of the groom and bride respectively; b) the groom’s cortege made up of his extended family moves *à pied* to the bride’s house (crossing the village fulfils the social function of publicly displaying the event and by that attracting the collective attention of the community); c) once arrived, the bride is being presented to the bridegroom, after which the two retinues merge following the farewell ritual performed by the wedding Master of ceremonies (*vornicul* or *starostele nunții* in Romanian); d) the joint wedding convoy now goes to the town hall; e) after the civil wedding ceremony is completed, the procession moves towards the bride’s church for officiating the religious ceremony; f) once all the official tasks are completed, the cortege goes to the cultural house for the wedding reception; here and now is the moment and place of socially celebrating the newly contracted marriage.

Compared to this schedule of events, the bride's wedding, organised with one-week delay, obstinately repeats the original script, with two exceptions: the state and the church (considering that their mission is already completed) no longer participate in the re-enactment of the original event. Hence, in the absence of the partnership with these two institutions, the event unfolds in this sequence: a) the extended families gather at the residences of the groom and bride respectively; b) the groom's cortege made up of his extended family moves *à pied* to the bride's house (crossing the village fulfils the social function of publicly re-displaying the event and by that re-attracting the collective attention of the community); c) once arrived, the bride is being presented to the bridegroom, after which the two retinues merge following the farewell ritual performed by the wedding Master of ceremonies; d) the cortege goes straight to the cultural house for the wedding reception; here and now (again) are the moment and place of socially celebrating the (by now not so) newly contracted marriage.

The participants in the two wedding receptions are roughly the same. However, in addition to the common pool of guests attending both parties, there is a minority of "naïve" participants, made up of relatives or friends of only one of the grooms, who do not belong to the community, and who attend to only one wedding reception assuming that they are participating to *the* wedding. In fact, these "cultural outsiders" participate to only one of the two weddings, but because of the sociocognitive schema they have internalised (transposable in the sentence: one marriage requires a single wedding reception), they do not even suspect that they are attending to half of the show. The difference between outsiders and insiders relies in the fact that the former think the wedding in the singular, while the latter think it in the plural, as a social play in two acts.

Some details that round out the picture are indeed necessary: manifest during the entire unfolding of the event, an intergenerational fault line could be observed, a division clearly visible in the pattern formed by how participants occupied space. Both in church, during the celebration of religious ceremony, and in the spatial distribution of the guests at the wedding reception held at the cultural house, sharp gender segregation could also be found. This sexual segregation was less accentuated regarding the young people, who were spatially distributed in an amalgamated formula. Summing up, it can be stated that there exists a *double crossed segregation*, combining age and gender criteria: the elders were totally segregated – men on one side of the table, women, invariably, on the other side. Adults were semi-segregated, and even if they did not adopt the dividing purism of their parents, a clear segregationist pattern could still be easily recognised. On the other hand, the youths did not follow the model of their predecessors, mixing in between without paying respect to any sexual criteria of spatial distribution. The first conclusion that emerges is that there is no intergenerational sociocognitive reproduction since the segregationist model

provided by the elders is only partially taken up by the active adults, while the youth completely ignores it. At least so it seems at first glance; an alternative explanation may consist in the fact that ageing entails an ever more pronounced segregation, as these roles along with their separating prescriptions are available only for the elderly. If this is correct, it is expected from the adults that with the passage of time they will enter into the role of the elders and by this assume the prescription of strict sexual separation in public places.

Consistently, with what I stated in the first part of the essay on stupefaction as the natural attitude of the social inquirer endowed with a permanently activated sociological consciousness, I expressed my cognitive perplexity regarding the phenomenon of sexual segregation, wondering about the cause that produces this sociocultural practice. The explanation that I am advancing acknowledges the influence of the church on structuring the sociocognitive schema used by people for socially positioning themselves within a public space. The standard traditional spatial distribution in the church during the religious service is based on the pattern of sexual segregation: men on one side of the church nave, women on the other side, without any gender crisscrossing (the doctrinal reasons for this strict separation are related to the lower ontological status accorded to women in theological thought, whose spatial distance from men is necessary in order to prevent the symbolic pollution of men). Through repeated exposure, individuals have internalised this pattern of positioning as the only “right” one, this model being replicated also in other non-religious social situations. In other words, the segregationist pattern of ecclesiastical positioning that was internalised during repeated exposure to religious service is being replicated in all similar public situations.

Doubling the wedding: a traditionalistic innovation

By participating in three such events (or more correctly, by participating in one wedding and a half, since I attended to a complete double wedding and also to another groom’s wedding), in two of them benefiting from the privileged position of being the sponsor for the bride, I was anxious to understand the genesis of the phenomenon, the social functions it performs, and also the possible dysfunctions that it generates within the community.

The common sense epistemic strategy that I used in the first part of my research consisted in questioning local people in order to elucidate the reason why the marriage ritual is being repeated. This (naïve) strategy is based on the “simple and persistent belief that knowledge about people is available simply by asking. We ask people about themselves, and they tell us” (Kellehear 1993, 1). If this were the case, social and human sciences should have been long ago overtaken the natural sciences in terms of scientificity, since the latter do not have the advantage

of directly interpellating their subjects through language. However, if stars and molecules don't speak, they certainly do not lie either. Not the same can be said about people (Iluț 2011 – personal communication). From an epistemological point of view, credulously accepting the “explanations” delivered by the subjects equates to disqualifying sociology, since it implies raising popular wisdom on the epistemic rank of sociological knowledge. Equalising sociological knowledge with common sense makes the former not only redundant, but also unnecessary. This is why social research cannot afford to rely entirely on the declarations collected from ordinary social agents (as some exulted qualitativists propose).

The official response provided by the locals questioned the doubleness of the marriage ritual referring to the lack of a space large enough to accommodate all guests. Due to this “objective” reason, the pragmatic solution was to split the wedding into two separate events: one for the groom's guests, the other for the bride's guests. But alas, invoking the space deficit as a material necessity for splitting the wedding is, of course, a puerile reason, since the guests are largely the same. In addition, small weddings, which do not require large space, also follow the same pattern of double wedding, although they are not conditioned by the smallness of the cultural house, which can accommodate up to 400 guests. Clearly, the explanation is quite another.

“The social world is accumulated history” (Bourdieu 1986). The present reality is the product of the past (“What's past is prologue”, as Shakespeare famously put it). To understand the current practice of the double marriage, a historical foray aiming to trace both the genesis and the evolutionary path followed by the phenomenon under analysis is necessary. Elders recount that in their time the marriage tradition also stipulated the holding of two events, but unlike today, these events were simultaneously held in two different places. The two events involved an explicit hierarchy: the main event was held in a public space, in which the bridal couple was being celebrated by the community. The secondary event was being held at the bride's house, in her absence. Attending to the latter were the relatives and the close family of the bride, who remained there and continued the party after the groom and his cortege took the bride from her residence, prolonging this event into a parallel mini-feast continuing *in absentia* of the bride. Over time, the previous temporal simultaneity and geographic differentiation (the specific features of the original tradition) were reversed, giving nowadays temporal succession and geographical identity. That is to say, at present time, the two events succeed each other at an interval of one week, being organised in the same space (the cultural house of the village). Over the years, a relative equalisation of the two events in terms of their social importance was realised: if in the past the reception held by the bride's family had a clearly peripheral place in the wedding's social economy, currently it claims equality (although, as I have argued, the “bride's wedding” continues to be dominated and eclipsed by the “groom's wedding”).

The emergence of the double wedding can be explained by the norm of reciprocity that is being intransigently practiced by the local community. Wedding celebration, in addition to the role of publicly affirming the newly contracted marriage between the two protagonists, fulfils the economic function of collecting the debts placed by the couple's parents by participating at prior weddings. A financial analysis reveals that wedding, as a social practice, is caught in a continuous cycle of gifts and counter-gifts, being a community event that masks the financial function of the wedding, that of a *pre-capitalist credit institution*. Wedding is thus a credit institution disguised under the festive pomp of celebrating the union of the couple. Another latent function performed by the wedding is an integrative one.

Another latent function performed by the wedding consists in promoting moral and social integration, keeping the community together through reproducing the indebtedness between families. Every financial gift offered, far from being a purely symbolic gift, consists in making a future debt that normatively implies receiving an equal counter-gift when the moment asks for it. The norm of reciprocity, which is a cultural universal, is practiced intransigently within this community because the families invited to the wedding reception are indebted to both the bride's and groom's families (in the case of an endogamous marriage). Thus, for redeeming the two debts, two separate events are being organised. If this is so, then the common sense question arises: Why aren't the two debts merged into a single one which would be offered at a single wedding reception? The answer to this question, suggested to me by a marginal native, is "because guests are not willing to pay the double price for a single meal!" This surprisingly frank answer requires some elaboration. In the case of an exogamous marriage, the guests redeem their debts only towards the family that is organising the wedding, which rewards them by offering a meal in return. In the case of endogamous marriages, offering the financial gift by merging the two debts into a single one would mean receiving in exchange a single meal. From this social behaviour it can be concluded the rationality of the social actors, who tend to interpret any action in terms of transactions involving costs and benefits. But the same example also reveals the limited (or quite defective) rationality of social actors that do not include all data into analysis, ending their ratiion by performing an illusory self-advantageous calculation. Illusory, because the "price" paid for the meal is much higher than its proper value since it includes the historical debts that have to be redeemed. Disregarding this fact, the guests who refuse to pay twice for a single meal fool themselves, forcing at the same time the families of the grooms to hold two separate events in order to maximise their income. Ultimately, however, the higher profit goes to the grooms, and the consistent losses are on the guests. The only consolation may consist in the certainty that the norm of reciprocity, in its full intransigence, will also work for them when the time comes, a time in which they will fully take advantage of "how (marriage) things work".

The double wedding is an inventive means of maximising profit on the ground that two wedding receptions are more profitable than one alone. By analogy with the functioning of the banking system, this practice can be interpreted as a method of obtaining a larger credit, even if it automatically also involves contracting a more substantial debt. Once institutionalised through repetition, the practitioners of the double wedding forget its original genesis and it becomes ossified into tradition.

The double wedding is thus a “traditionalistic innovation” in the sense that it is an innovation within tradition, through which social actors, accepting the formal prescriptions of tradition, manipulate the tradition in their own interest. M. Weber (1978, 24–26) postulated the typology of social action as being composed of: a) instrumentally rational social action (*zweckrational*), which implies choosing the most appropriate means to achieve certain goals, i.e. means–goal optimization; b) value-rational social action (*wertrational*), which refers to rational actions conditioned by an ethical, aesthetic, religious, etc. code, regardless of its pragmatic usefulness or chances of success; c) affective social action, i.e. action determined by the emotional state of the social agent; d) traditional social action, which is determined by “ingrained habituation” (Weber 1978, 25). Without any intention of revising the classic Weberian taxonomy of the ideal types of social action, I dare to suggest a fifth type derived from combining instrumentality and traditionality: e) intra-traditional rational action.

By the concept of intra-traditional rationality I am referring to the type of rationally instrumental social action conditioned by the traditional framework within which it is carried out, but which does not strictly mean the *ad litteram* compliance with tradition. Tradition becomes both a constraint and a resource for the rationally interested social actor. His/her rationality manifests within and through this traditional frame of reference. The duality of tradition consists in the coercion that it exerts, on the one hand, and in facilitating the action taken within it, on the other hand. Far from paying blind obedience to tradition’s normative prescriptions, intra-traditional rationality operates by manipulating tradition in its own advantage without renouncing to invoke tradition as the ultimate authority legitimising social action. Precisely because of that, intra-traditional rationality is not a purely instrumental rationality that ignores the postulates of tradition, but a rationality that accepts tradition, yet uses it and even subverts it in order to reach its instrumental interest.

The introduction of the concept of intra-traditional rationality (which could be equally called instrumental-traditional rationality) is pragmatically and theoretically justified by the need of developing a concept capable of accounting for the phenomenon of the double wedding. Its introduction is not motivated solely by the desire of conceptual invention, which would signal the manifestation of what could be called Parsons’ syndrome, named in honour of the

great sociological theorist Talcott Parsons, a syndrome revealed in the tendency to theorise without any empirical footing.²

One of the most hazardous assumptions in social sciences is the rationality postulate (Abbott 2004), which consists in accepting the premise that the social actor is rational in his/her behaviour, an assumption underpinning the entire rational choice paradigm. Despite the successful results that have been generated by accepting this postulate (which introduced the possibility of mathematically formalising social behaviour), the harsh criticism it has attracted revealed its artificiality. The wave of criticism oriented against the rationality principle forced its defenders to abandon the idea of pure rationality, retaining instead the much diluted notion of limited rationality. In order to explain the phenomenon of double wedding, I will adopt in my analysis the principle of rationality, but not in its improbable form of a purely instrumental rationality, but of traditionally embedded rationality, i.e. rationality conditioned by the tradition within which it operates (“intra-traditional rationality”).

One of the starkest defenders of the conception of individual as *homo oeconomicus* whose behaviour is governed by (a limited) rationality even in his religious affairs is R. Stark (1999). According to this view, individuals are religion consumers, whose choices in matters of sacredness are taken after comparing the perceived benefits with perceived costs. At the foundation of rational choice theory lies the postulate that people seek to maximise their profits while minimising losses – in the transactions one initiates with divinity as well. The corollary of this axiomatic proposition is that individuals will be motivated to exercise their rationality in order to “cheat” by disregarding the terms of the exchange in order to maximise their utility. For instance, in some religions, the terms of the exchange between believers and divinity stipulate the obligation from the part of the believers to sacrifice various animals in the name of the god(s). Anthropological studies revealed that the Nuer people, for example, developed an ingenious stratagem that consists in replacing the sacrificial ox requested by the formal ritual with a simple cucumber, symbolically transfigured into the mighty animal-offering given to divinity. R. Firth (cf. Stark 1999, 278) rightly observes that replacing the ox with a much cheaper substitute is the most economical way to meet your ritualistic obligations. We can speak of a real “sacrificial economy”, in which individuals comply with the formal rules, but nevertheless are finding unorthodox solutions to pay their debts: the animal offering, much too precious to be sacrificed, is being replaced by a cheaper surrogate. This innovative practice that nevertheless respects the ritual, by which individuals accept the formal terms of the transaction but resort to ingenious subterfuges in order to minimise their financial losses, remarkably exemplifies what I have previously called

2 In the acknowledgement section of *The Social System*, T. Parsons (1951) confesses his theorising proclivity by characterising himself as an “incurable theorist”.

“intra-traditional rationality”. The social agent essentially tries to act rationally in the framework allowed by the tradition into which s/he is embedded, even if the assumptions on which the tradition is grounded aren’t exactly rational or transparent to him/her.

If the trick used by the Nuer is a method of loss minimisation in their transactions with divine powers, the Sânmiclăuș people resort to double wedding as a means of profit maximisation.

The social (dys)functions performed by the double wedding

In general, marriage fulfils the integrative function of acting as social glue by which the community is held together, since the iterative practice of gift and counter-gift ensures the reproduction of the relations of obligation between families. Moreover, I have also argued that marriage acts as a pre-capitalist credit institution being the functional equivalent of the modern bank: the amount credited at your own wedding is to be returned in instalments to the descendants of your guests, who in their turn will have obligations towards their guests’ offsprings, and so on, thereby guaranteeing a socio-financial link between the living and the dead.

Specifically, the double wedding, as practiced in the Sânmiclăuș community, performs a series of additional social functions. First, the double character of the wedding plays the role of *status setting* within the community. The doubleness of the wedding allows direct social comparison, almost in experimental conditions, between the two events, since they are organised in the same conditions. Thus, it becomes possible to comparatively evaluate the pomp of each of the two events (considering the common pool of guests attending to both wedding receptions). Moreover, the amount of the financial gift is separately accounted (for each wedding reception in part) so that the two sums accumulated can be directly compared afterwards. It can be said that the wedding organisers work with a double-entry bookkeeping system, in the sense that the accounting of each wedding is kept apart from the other. By converting the amount of pecuniary gifts received in social prestige, the wedding functions as a *mechanism of inter-family ranking*, since the amount of monetary gifts determines the honourability attributed by community to each organising family.

Adopting the language of Mertonian functionalism (Merton 1968), it can be said that the manifest function of the double wedding, although denied and hushed under the festive splendour, is a purely pecuniary one. The latent social function is that of status regulation, which is accomplished by ranking families

in terms of their social respectability indicated by the amount of the financial gifts received at the wedding reception(s).

But these intra-traditional innovations also generate unanticipated consequences (to use another of Merton's (1936) collection of classic terms), inducing social dysfunctions within the community that cannot be ignored. The main generator of social tension is the radical individualism lurking inside the Sânmiclăuș community, probably due to Protestantism, which dominates the religious sphere in the local community. The radicalism of the individualism can be detected by analysing the names given to the events: the wedding is not understood as a common event, but as two separate events, i.e. "the groom's wedding", and "the bride's wedding". Because of this conception, the classical idea of union is in danger of perversion, since it is almost impossible to shift from individualistic thinking to a collective sentiment of "we-ness" (or to develop the sense of oneness). Moreover, radical individualism is also indicated by the custom that the bride and the groom have to have their own separate pair of sponsors. This custom perpetuates the egocentric thinking and hinders the establishment of a shared cognitive orientation. A second factor that may cause social dysfunctions is given by the double structure of the wedding, which is responsible for creating rivalry between the organising families who found themselves in a situation of direct comparison in front of the wide audience represented by the local community. Thus, the bipartite structure of the wedding is responsible for the mounting inter-family conflict. The function of status regulation enhances the conflict, making the families caught in this social game become aware that their reputation is at stake, and by this, motivating them to try to beat the rival family in the game of social distinction.

Conclusions: "the debunking motif" of socio-anthropology

The circle started at the beginning of this article can now be closed by readdressing the intellectual function of the socio(anthro)logy of infiltrating beyond the reaching point of the common sense's gnoseologic capacities. Society presents itself to the untrained eye as a façade (Berger 1963, 30), and in order to identify its inner workings it is necessary to inspect the backstage mechanisms supporting it. Incorporated into the socio(anthro)logical procedure of researching reality is a *debunking motif* (ibid.), which does not reside in the psychological make-up of the researcher, but in the scientific methodology itself. Deeply immersed into social reality (in this regard being on situational par with the ordinary knower), the socio-anthropologist can epistemologically transgress his or her social imprisonment by resorting to a special conceptual grid of understanding social reality. The epistemic superiority of this interpretative framework over the one used by naïve

agents is given by the special form of social consciousness developed as a result of his or her prolonged ritual of socio-anthropological initiation. This study is the product of exercising an inquisitive attitude characterised by its refusal to take for granted the strange dimension of human social reality.

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Before Immigration from the Former USSR to Israel

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Abstract. This work, which is part of a research project that has been presented as a doctoral thesis, relates to a chapter in the lives of four young women in their twenties following their migration to Israel during their childhood or teenage years as part of the large wave of immigration from the USSR during the 1990s. It reflects the points of view of these four women immigrants about their immigration and deals with the period that preceded it in their countries of origin, with their experiences as children or teenagers. The study, which focuses on the motivation for immigrating to Israel, relates to the feelings, thoughts, insights and perceptions of reality that emerged from the in-depth interviews that were conducted with these women using the format of the “self-narrative” interview (Gergen and Gergen 1988).

Keywords: immigration, women immigrants, self-narrative

Introduction

Immigration, even when the people who are experiencing it are part of a mass movement, is always personal. The decision to migrate, its motives, the way it takes place, the encounter with the destined country, settling in, the way one adjusts and the stages one goes through together with the psychological processes – are all personal.

This study deals with the lives of four young women in their twenties following their migration during their childhood or teenage years. Their migration took place as part of the tremendous wave of people who started to leave the states of the former Soviet Union in 1990, after the fall of the Communist regime. Among them were around one million Jews or people related to Jewish families, who arrived in Israel under the country's Law of the Return, which enables every Jew to become a citizen as soon as he reaches Israel.

Research dealing with the immigration to Israel of Jews from different Diasporas since the establishment of the state until today has shown that the main reason

for their immigration to Israel, as attested to by the immigrants themselves, has been their desire to live as Jews in a Jewish state. Among the Israeli public there has been an assumption made, that has become established, according to which most of the immigrants who took part in the large wave of immigration to Israel from the former USSR are just “immigrants” and not Zionist immigrants. In other words, their immigration to Israel arose out of universal motives involving the desire to economically and professionally improve their lives and the lives of their children and that a large number of them had, in fact, weighed the possibility of migrating to another country in order to realise their aspirations.

According to one of the studies (Semyonov 2007) that examined the motives for the coming to Israel of Jews from the Soviet Union in the 1990s and onwards it was found that close to 80% of the immigrants that responded noted that Israel was the only destination for their migration. In another study (Rosenbaum-Tamari 2004) it was found that the immigrants from the USSR left their countries of origin much rather because of the specific motive of “*aliyah*” (migration for reasons of living in a Jewish country), which was connected with their situation as Jews, than because of universal reasons of migration that were not connected with their being Jews; and that they also chose to come to Israel for these reasons. These conclusions acted as the starting point for this work which focuses its observations on the background, the atmosphere of migration to Israel, on the attitudes towards it, including its motivations, as these are reflected through the eyes of those who experienced it first hand as children and adolescents. This is done by examining their life stories, which were related when they were in their twenties and already citizens of the state that absorbed them – Israel.

Methodology

The study is based upon the constructivist approach according to which the “reality” that the young women relate to, the emotional, personal and social “world they live in” is created in a form of construction which is contextual to the framework of relationships from which it is constructed (Bruner 1985).

The analyses of the stories of the women immigrants in this work arose out of the assumption that even past narratives or narrations, such as those regarding the old self are constructed at the time that the story is told, meaning in the present. In other words, the past that is described is perceived and reconstructed within a current context (Freeman 1993; Polkinghorn 1991). This is assumed without challenging the claim that the place of the culture of an immigrant’s original country is an important component within his self (Taylor 1989).

The structuring of reality and the self in the narrative

The form of narrative interview is one of the research tools used in the constructivist research approach and it is particularly apparent in the tradition of phenomenological research, which this work draws upon. This approach sees the individual and his world as being comprehended together: the individual is perceived as having no existence separated from the world and the world is perceived as having no existence separated from the human being (Maykut and Morehouse 1994).

The concept in this work assumes that narratives in general, and immigrants' narratives including, are not collections of data but rather connections made between the experiences which were created by the women in order to form an ideal meaning for their future lives (Widdershoven 1993). Making connections between the experiences undergone in the framework of narratives characterises their holistic nature where the components of information reciprocally influence one another (Maykut and Morehouse 1994).

The contextual approach

The data analysis in the study refers to a written text that was produced from research interviews that were recorded (Kvale 1996). It is based on the phenomenological theory that the way to create understanding for ourselves and for others is through interpretation (Warnke 2009). The data in the study are analysed through a contextual approach to narrative analysis in an attempt "to get (as) close to the data" (Filstead 1970) as possible and to gain insights from individuals who experienced the events while being a part of them. The analysis of the findings will not break down any given narrative into selected segments of life according to themes or categories, which would use categorical analyses (Riessman 2008; Maxwell 1996) but would follow a process of clarification that strictly maintains the holistic nature of the story, with the awareness of the fact that every stage of the analysis would, by its very nature, be a procedure of separation.

Spector-Marzel (2010) takes this issue to an extreme and asserts that: "Categorization does not conform in any way with the principles of narrative theory and in fact it is a strategy of 'de-narrativization' [...]" (ibid., 73). Her words express the importance of maintaining the complete story during the process of analysis in order not to lose track of its plot which has a beginning, middle and an end (Polkinghorn 1988).

Narrations

In the complete interview the individual who tells his/her life story includes various types of expressions that are evaluated and defined by Rosenthal (1993) as argumentation, narration, and description.

This work focuses upon the narrations of those short stories that appear within the sequence of the narrative and will only present findings from those that deal with the period that preceded the immigration of the young women – in other words, their lives in the Soviet Union as little girls and young women under the Communist regime. Leiblich, Tuval-Mashiach and Zilber (2010) recommend paying special attention to narrations which, according to them, have a special importance and are worthy of close analysis. These stories also present a multi-faceted analytical challenge because each one in its own right is a narrative unit with its own existence together with which it forms an inseparable part of the entire interview. I assume that different dimensions of the self may be constructed in one story which is told during a narrative interview (Reissman 2001).

This study makes use of these narrations as an initial point of observation of the personal selves of the women immigrants and their social environments in order to study and to comprehend the background of migration.

Content and form

By reading the text of the narrative or the narration, and primarily by analysing it, we can relate to the reality that is described by its content, the manner in which it is told and the way in which it is organised. In other words, it is possible to produce information about a phenomenon by analysing the content of the text and also from its form and structure. While qualitative research in social sciences, primarily in psychology, focuses on the analysis of the content of the text, subjects in the field of the media, treatment therapy and literature tend to use the form in which these texts are presented extensively.

As this work employs contextual analysis the narrations that are presented are analysed with tools that concentrate on both the content and the form in which they appear in the text in an integrated manner, in the phenomenological and hermeneutic spirit of Ricoeur (Allen and Jensen 1990). Ricoeur claimed that the first condition for understanding a text is analysing its objective structure when it is disengaged from its author and the world outside it. The next stage is to integrate it with the contextual commentary that connects it to the reality from which it comes and to which it relates. This work will concentrate on the reading of the text “inside”, as one who is interested in questions about the person who is relating the narrative as this person appears in the written material and, at the same time, it will also combine the reading of the text with the different contexts upon which it is based – including personal, social, historical, and cultural. This means that this work will not make any separation or distinction between the readings and there will not be any order imposed upon them – unless they become intertwined with each other as they arise from the details.

This approach goes together with “the accepted assumption in behavioral sciences today that there are no structures of texts that are disconnected from their surroundings and cultures” (Sabar and Dargish 2002, 87).

Two models of analysis

The data analysis in this work relies upon two models that will be simultaneously used: the formative model of Gergen and Gergen (1988) and the linguistic positioning model of Kupferberg, Green and Gilat (2002). Gergen and Gergen created a narrative typology that follows the plot structure expressed by the forms of progression and withdrawal within it and the combination of both of these in different ways. It is possible to find these within a single narrative. The perception of the development of a narrative is accompanied by structural features such as those that would define the story as romantic, which would be when the hero overcomes the challenges he encounters, or comic, in which the hero also tackles various obstacles, not by using his abilities, but with the help of external forces or through luck. A story can be characterised as both romantic and comic when both of these kinds of forces appear within it at different points. There is also the tragic narrative which begins in the past and depicts this as very positive but ends with the involvement of negative internal or external forces. In addition, it should be noted that even though this is primarily a structural model, the approach is flexible and it encourages the analysis of the content and of the narrative in its entirety or partially.

The explanatory model for analysing details that was developed by Kupferberg, Green and Gilat (2002) is a model that focuses upon the structural approach to analysing the narrative interview. Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber (2010) explain the power of the structural approach: “While the subjects of the interview have a considerable measure of control and supervision of the content that they present, by using forms – deeper foundations arise and are less controlled” (p. 25). Kupferberg, Green and Gilat based their method upon the traditional definition of a personal narrative made by Labov (1972) and on Bamberg’s (1997) approach which is an extension of the previous.

Labov created an analytical method that, according to Kupferberg and Feingold (2005), enables “the identification of the individual personal narrative within a sequence of spoken or written dialogue” (p. 334) by locating six structures: extract, orientation, a sequence of events creating a problem or unexpected situation, complication, resolution, evaluation and coda. The component of evaluation is most significant in this approach and its location within the story is not fixed. Its uniqueness is that it is expressed primarily through linguistic means that assist the narrators presenting their position with regard to the events in the story. However, while Labov’s method of analysis relates only to the outlook of

the narrators upon the events that they have experienced in the past, Bamberg (ibid) expands upon the element of evaluation as it expresses the interactive connection between both the narrators and those communicating with them at the time of telling the narrative and the place of the researcher.

Bamberg employs the idea of “positioning,” formulated by Davies and Harre (1990), and through it offers a method for analysing narrative conversation with the emphasis being placed upon the dialogue in which there are interactions between those involved within it that affect the construction of the narration and its evaluation.

Positioning relates to the manner in which “the narrator places himself in relation to those involved in the dialogue and also to how he places himself, in the past and the present ... and enables the analysis of the interpersonal self and personal inner aspect of the narrator.” (Ibid., 333.)

The method of analysis that Kupferberg, Green and Gilat developed locates the linguistic means of positioning through figurative language, such as metaphors, imagery, expressions, and analogies, and through other linguistic positioning such as labial syntax and expression. These methods, and primarily the figurative approach, identify the usage of an idea taken from the more familiar semantic field of “life experience” for the purpose of explaining an idea, thus, in the opinion of the researchers, displaying components of the narrator’s identity and consciousness. In the following section the analysis of narrations that were constructed at the time of the interview and which relate to events that were significant to the narrators will be presented (Denzin 1999).

These narrations will be analysed in accordance with the models that I have mentioned in a hermeneutic process of many repeated readings.

Analysis of the texts

All the young women tell their narratives about their childhood and the beginnings of their teenage years in the former Soviet Union in connection with their being Jewish. However, according to the content of the narrative, this does not fulfil a central role in their daily lives. Two of the narrators were not even aware of its presence in their lives until they became teenagers. Nonetheless, in the story that is constructed in the present, in the new country – Israel, which is the country of the Jews, the issue of Judaism became central to the story that is narrated about their past in their countries of origin.

In this way, when they are positioning themselves in front of me, the researcher who has told them to speak about their lives, they are also aware that the research focuses on immigration, and specifically immigration from the Soviet Union to Israel from the 1990s onwards. At the point in time when they tell their stories

they are already aware that immigration to Israel is understood as a Jewish migration, so the concept of Judaism and its place in their lives becomes central to the narration of their past.

Narration from the interview with Olga:

For as long as I can remember, I knew that I was a Jewish girl. My mother used to tell me quietly not to tell anyone that I was a Jew. I understood that this was for my own good, but I remember that I was afraid. And I grew up with this. At that time, the Soviet regime in Ukraine tried to erase every religious symbol, and especially that of the Jews. When I was very little, at kindergarten, or at elementary school, whenever anything bad happened, I thought that it was because I was Jewish. Let's say that this was if they got angry with me at kindergarten, if I got a bad mark, or even if I fell over and I got hurt. In my class, there were no other Jews, or maybe there were and they were also told not to say anything. I remember that I once asked my mother innocently, "Why are we Jews?" She looked at me strangely: "What kind of question is that? Why do you have ginger hair? Why am I tall? It's what we are, and that's it, period." When I was told of the decision to move to Israel, "because the Jews live there", I was already a young adolescent. I had what to say, but I kept quiet. This was already close to the date of departure. I understood and I was happy.

The final goal towards which Olga's story is leading has a positive character. Most of the story describes a sequence of negative events but they lead to a situation that describes liberation. The story is characterised by a romantic-comic structure (Gergen and Gergen 1988) in which the solution to the problem is expressed by a force that is external to her – her parents.

When the decision about immigration was taken by her family, she may have already been at a level on which she could have been involved ("I was already a young adolescent. I had what to say, but I kept quiet") but she was not. She explicitly verbalises the fact of her "silence", creating the expectation within her interlocutor/reader of an explanation for this, but she prefers not to explain. The coda of the narrative indirectly refers to her choice: "I understood and I was happy." This comes from the aspect of, "I identified with my parents' decision, and it satisfied my desires. Therefore my involvement was not necessary."

Spector-Marzel (2010) claims that in the mapping of the text requiring content analysis one should also identify what is not reported within it, namely, that the kind of language and medium used is also worthy of commentary. She distinguishes between things that have been left out when the narrator thinks that they are not relevant to the story, and things that have been suppressed because they are contrary to the main message in the story according to the narrator's opinion. I believe that denying the explanation by the narrator woman

is simultaneously an “omission” and also “silencing” – to use Spector-Marzel’s typology. The explanation that is missing is apparently supposed to deal with the narrator’s past familial relationships which contain subjects that, in her opinion, are not relevant to the subject of the narration, and, similarly, are a contradiction of the image of a concerned and caring family that she depicts. By denying this explanation Olga positions herself vis-à-vis her parents in a way that differs from what exists in a democratic society where the subject of immigration would be raised within the family at an earlier stage and the teenage daughter would be able to be involved in the discussion.

In Olga’s story, notice was given close to departure and this must surely have left her with no desire to react because everything had already been decided. In this narrative, no such reaction appears nor any description of anger or protest that she would not have had time to organise physically or emotionally, and to leave in her own time – not then, and not today, when she is telling her narrative.

The opposite is the case: she reports that she gave full backing to her parents expressing understanding and joy. We could understand this against the background of the totalitarian society in which she grew up and where the system of government exerted control even over the private lives of its citizens. Secrecy, concealing information and measured speech were the norms of the civilian lives of the local citizenry and this had even infiltrated within the nuclear family (“My mother used to tell me quietly not to tell anyone that I was a Jew.” “I had what to say, but I kept quiet”). When she asked her childish question (“Why are we Jews?”) Olga was supposedly reprimanded (“What kind of question is that?”) and she received a reply that did not answer her question but gave confirmation to the detail that appears in the question (“It’s what we are, and that’s it”). The upshot of this is that it is a question that is better not to deal with. The verbal conduct of Olga’s parents apparently characterises the collective voice of most Jews from the Soviet Union, who lived in an atmosphere of fear and insecurity that they also passed on to their children (“I understood that this was for my own good”). She explains her identification with her mother regarding the concealment of her Jewishness and eventually her feeling as a little girl: the result of this was fear: “I remember that I was afraid.” This was the consequence of concealing her identity.

Examining the text as a form in terms of the narrator’s use of words, with regard to the verbs transcribed in the first person in past tense, it can be seen that most of them are intransitive verbs, meaning that they express an action that is performed by the speaker and is not transferred to another person: “I was afraid, I grew up, I was, I thought, I fell, I got hurt, I kept quiet.” At the same time, other verbs describe her only as one who is the recipient of an action without any reaction on her part: “The regime tried ... whenever anything bad happened ... they got angry with me, they said... when I was told.” In this story, there are no descriptions of communication with anyone else or of an action or active reaction

from her. The only situation where there is any communication in the narrative is when she asks her mother why they are Jewish. Her mother's reaction did not encourage a dialogue. Through these verbs we learn that the narrator positions herself with regard to her environment in a passive and helpless manner.

The whole story focuses on Jewish identity. Through it the narrator builds a "story line" (Spector-Marzel 2010) that provides a general picture of the ramifications of Olga's Jewishness and her life as she perceives it, based upon the map of the text according to the features of its content and form. This is expressed by using the components of Labov's structure: for instance the opening extract – "For as long as I can remember, I knew that I was Jewish" – emphasises right from the beginning that this takes centre stage in the story. The device of repetition that appears in the linguistic variation of singular/plural, masculine/feminine – "Jewish girl" – three times, "Jew, Jews" – also positions the centrality of this issue and Olga's positioning in her previous world versus the anti-Semitic environment, with the serious significance that was expressed there as it does in her present world opposite to me, the researcher and her former lecturer.

Then she verbalises a historical-political orientation: "At that time, the Soviet regime in Ukraine tried to erase every religious symbol, and especially of the Jews." In her use of the "extract" and the "orientation" she combines three consecutive sentences of "evaluation". The first one uses a metaphor that includes an explanation of her mother's words ("I understood that this was for my own good") while the second connects with the feeling that this gradual, motherly "trickle" of education towards fear fashioned her life and this feeling accompanied her all the time she lived in the Soviet Union. ("[...] but I remember that I was afraid.") The third expresses the effects of what very definitely became part of the components of her identity then ("And I grew up with this"), and possibly of her identity today. This is reflected in the laconic syntactic structure of these three consecutive sentences: "I understood that this was for my own good, but I remember that I was afraid, and I grew up with this." In the original Hebrew, each one of these is three words long. They are verbalised today, but they are expressed in a brief, compartmentalised form in a manner that would have then been very normative in her home and in the homes of many other Jews in the Soviet Union against the backdrop of the threatening atmosphere.

Narration from the interview with Christina:

I found out that I was Jewish in a sudden and rather traumatic way. We lived in a small village in the Caucasus in which there were Chechens, Asians, Turks, Cossacks and Russians. I grew up with this and I never really showed any interest in what this meant. At school there weren't any problems with it. We were friends with whom we liked and didn't worry about where they came

from. There were fights mostly among the boys and I think the Turks and the Chechens were the most violent.

One day, in 7th grade, there was an argument between some of the girls in the class. At that time I was in competition with one of the other girls for the title of “queen of the class”. You know, the girl that looks good, learns well. A few boys got involved and I heard some strange things being said – names like “Stalin” and “Jews” came up. All of a sudden one of them said “It’s too bad Stalin didn’t kill off all of the Jews.” Some of them looked at me. Then one of the girls yelled over at me with a contemptuous tone: “Jew!” That was the first time I heard the name Stalin, and about Jews I had heard very little, but I didn’t connect it to anything.

Christina opens her narrative with an extract that connects the story metaphorically with the main dimension of the story which is her awareness of her Jewishness. This is accompanied by an immediate evaluation of the content (a “traumatic” event, a “sudden” situation) that creates the expectation of a subsequent revelation at the core of the story. It raises the question of what was traumatic for her – the fact of her “becoming” a Jew or the sudden and surprising revelation of this; or perhaps it was because this event was a turning point in her life. These extreme expressions of evaluation serve as a rhetorical device to introduce dramatic tension already at the beginning of the narrative. Afterwards, the narrator verbalises an orientation that provides some background to the story but does not explain the events from which the complications arise. If anything, the opposite is the case. The long list of different ethnic groups and their children living peacefully together provides an optimistic feeling of a multicultural framework in which the great diversity of its components would not indicate that anyone within it is “different”. This orientation contradicts the information we received in the opening extract and so it raises the dramatic tension within the narration.

We have before us the structure of a satirical story where the timing of the outbreak of the problem indicates that the cultural-social peaceful picture within the “orientation” reveals the narrator’s self-delusion regarding relationships in her environment in general and those that relate to her in particular. In the following stages, where the solution and conclusion appears, a certain sobriety develops.

The stage of the complication in this story is brief but it is presented as a sequence of quick events that took place, some of which occurred inside her head. She was bombarded with ideas that she was unfamiliar with and she admits that they were hurtful and were accompanied by very harsh statements. (“It’s too bad Stalin didn’t kill off all of the Jews.”) She realises that all of these are directed at her and refer to her but she does not know or understand why. The narrator positions herself opposite her classmates through the repeated use of personal pronouns (“me”, “them”), repeating the quotes (the words of different children in the class), and the terms that were problematic for her (“Jew”, “Stalin”). This device of positioning helps her to express her bewilderment and powerlessness.

The other children are active – and she is passive. They speak – but there is no allusion to her response: no voice or feelings on her side were mentioned in the narration. The definition of the situation she mentions in the opening extract as sudden trauma may resolve the enigma of its nature for it seems that the trauma was the difficulty she had in comprehending concepts that she had no idea about and therefore didn't know how to deal with. In this way, her shock and speechlessness can be explained as her "solution" to the problem since she had no other tools to deal with it. Thus the paralysis in her reaction achieves its meaning through the structural elements in the story.

The coda does not appear in this narration. The narrator chooses not to end this story after the event in the classroom. She "puts aside" the solution and end of this story by waiting since this provides her with an easier circumstance in which to implement it. In fact another solution and coda appear in the second part of this story. The manner of its continuation reveals to us the dimensions of the narrator's identity (as seen at the end of the analysis of the second part).

Christina continues her story with a description of events that occurred after the traumatic incident but the scene then moves on from the classroom to the home. Here is the rest of the narration:

I came home as always in tears and my father made an attempt to downplay the whole incident and said: "Don't take any notice of it." And regarding the remarks about Jews he said: "Yes, it's true. And there is nothing that can be done about it; I am a Jew and you are too."

My mother's reaction was more decisive, as always. She said to me, "Simply ignore it. When they say something to you, act as if you don't see them. Move on." There was also one older man, a good man who was there, maybe the leader of the village, who taught me how to hit in first grade as I was often hit because I was small. Now, in seventh grade, he came back and said, "React strongly, with words, and, if you can, also physically." By then I was already big and strong – you can see today, right? And I already had experience in hitting so I stood up to those boys and you know that boys know how to hit. I also had good reasons to do this: I didn't understand why being Jewish made me different from all the other people in my village. So I hit back. But one day, the girl who was competing against me suddenly cancelled her invitation for the class to come to her home and there was an uproar. So I used this opportunity and rushed to her defense and I also reminded all of them about what had happened to me. I managed to arrange a sort of discussion where boys were also present and I said: "Because one girl was competing against me you had to hurt me and humiliate me? You should be ashamed of yourselves." After this, I don't remember that there were any more anti-Semitic taunts in my class until I immigrated to Israel. My mother called me and told me about a special programme for Jewish teenagers who were migrating to Israel without their parents. She asked me if I would like to join it. I

said yes immediately. I was thinking that I want to experience what I am without being in readiness all the time and without the use of apologetics in the context of my identity.

The second part of the story has a romantic structure. It begins with tears and ends with a resolution of the problem that caused it. The transition from a negative situation to a positive one took place because of the narrator's understanding, abilities and courage. The problem verbalised by the narrator in this story is the choice of the way to deal with an anti-Semitic slur. She does not choose the way suggested by her parents but, in fact, continues to follow the direction she chose in first grade in another context – a direct, active, verbal or physical reaction. The solution to a problem that she describes in detail is the use of physical force, the use of an opportunity to position herself against her classmates with strength, and even to reproach them. Structurally, the use of specific details, such as quoting her words from the past and the primary verbalisation of her reaction through her syntax when she positions herself as an active subject in sentence after sentence: “I hit”, “I used”, “I went out”, “I remembered”, “I went out”, “I said” – all position her as a heroine and the morpheme in the repeated words emphasises the self.

The coda of the story provides validation of her success, which was not just a one-time thing but was long-lasting. Throughout the whole story, psychological dimensions of the narrator's personality appear in the way in which she deals with the problems around her. A prototype of balanced cognitive coping appears in which she prefers to choose an active reaction that is only adopted in moderation and with possible risks. With this moderation and low measure of risk there is a definite ability to control a regressive reaction of powerlessness such as turning inward and crying. Thus when she suffers anti-Semitic taunts against herself in class she freezes and does not allow herself to react. She delays crying until she gets home and even then she waits till she meets her father, the more comforting parent, at home.

In the coda of the story the narrator is positioning herself in the present, in front of me, with an evaluation sentence about her departure, which expresses perhaps her need to explain the rapid decision to leave her home, her family and her life in the Caucasus.

Narration from the interview with Vita:

My immigration to Israel with my family is primarily connected to my brother. My brother is twelve years older than me. When he was a teenager he suffered a lot of anti-Semitic harassment, primarily within the educational setting. I also heard anti-Semitic remarks here and there but they did not hurt me. Generally, I was not particularly bothered by this issue. When my brother had to be enrolled

into the Latvian army we knew that there was a strong likelihood that he would never return or that he would come back disabled, because anti-Semitism was particularly high there. My parents decided that this was the time to do something. And the only thing that could be done was to immigrate to Israel. So, here I am.

The story of Vita's family has the structure of a romantic narrative. The narration describes the family being saved from its difficult situation, which primarily arose because of her brother, by its decision to immigrate to Israel. As a young girl living in her parents' home, her family's story also became hers. She describes it in this manner in the extract at the beginning of the narrative but does not position herself at the center of the immigration story. Her feeling is that her story is connected to that of the family. In the description of the development of the problem, as in the extract, she expresses many details about her brother. She positions herself within the growing problem but as an extra, an innocent bystander. She even gives this clear support by expressing how she was supplementary to this issue within the family. She, in contrast to her family, was not bothered by the anti-Semitism around her. ("I also heard anti-Semitic remarks here and there, but they did not hurt me. Generally, I was not particularly bothered by this issue.")

This is the only sentence where she places herself in the narration in the centre against the other side, the enemy, from the point of view of the events she experienced in the context of anti-Semitism in Latvia. But even though the content of the story refers to her, the linguistic and syntactic structures specifically "reveal" her non-central place in it, her "standing aside" in everything related to dealing with this phenomenon of anti-Semitism. She appears as one who is receiving the action but who does not actually take any action herself. The active, leading party of this story is the other side. This is also the way it is in the text: the remarks were "heard" but they did not "hurt" her. They did not "bother" her. However, her self vis-à-vis "them" appears through personal pronouns ("me", "to me"), or in morphemes within the verb – and indicate the rift between her and her anti-Semitic surroundings. Yet she chooses to remain passive when faced with these manifestations.

This is also the case with the decision regarding immigration. Here the usage is in the third person ("my parents decided"). She is not included in that decision. She could have chosen to verbalise this in the first person plural from her present viewpoint, yet she has chosen to position herself in this story from her past in the Soviet Union as part of her family, and this is expressed by the linguistic structure that adopts a passive line vis-à-vis her environment.

The coda of the story, ("So, here I am") reinforces this direction, and means that immigrating to Israel was "their" decision.

Her story, as part of the family narrative, describes development; and its structure, as stated above, is a romantic narrative that presents a transition from a negative situation to a positive one. However, a critical look at it reveals a more complicated

narration expression. Her personal story is not as progressive as that of her family. She does not describe a need to be saved from a crisis in a personal manner, and her migration is not portrayed as having influenced her feelings in this regard. Her personal story presents the fairly stable situation in which she was living before immigration and which reflects her life as a condition of acceptance of the reality as it is, without the willingness or readiness to challenge it or change it.

Narration from the interview with Irena:

My Jewishness is connected with my rebellious attitude to lessons and schools. In Magnitogorsk, in the Ural Mountains, where I used to live, my grades were bad; I hated learning and mainly hated the teacher that had accompanied me from second grade. Here in Israel, it's hard to believe, I actually began to like school and learning in spite of the language limitations. I didn't understand how that happened to me. That teacher in Russia, who was old and ugly, never missed an opportunity to remind the other students that I was Jewish, and always added a cynical comment. When I told the other students happily that I was moving to live in Israel she said: "Good, there you will be better off; there you will be smart like everyone else." Even though I had bad grades I was well-liked in class by the other students. That teacher didn't bring me down. Here in Israel the studies for me were like entering into a different world. All of a sudden I was saying what I thought in class – not necessarily what I had learned, and the teacher would relate to what I said seriously, and also there aren't so many prohibitions and strict rules. I called the teacher by her name, didn't have to stand up when she entered the room... it suited me well...in Israel I could be me.

In this narration, Irena presents two periods – that of her childhood and that which was just before her migration. She combined them for the purpose of the interview into a single story that she constructed. The events that she relates do not appear in the order in which they actually occurred. She moves forward and backward, breaking the chronological sequence, which creates a convenient way for her to express her opinion of the main dimension of her story. This dimension is presented in the opening extract of the story: her negative attitude to studying, which is related metaphorically to the Jewish issue in her past. Later on, she verbalises the orientation that explains the nature of the formation of the problem, including words of evaluation of the content, such as "I hated learning" and the description of the teacher as "old and ugly".

To the structure of fluctuations in time, an additional structure is added – comparison, through which she reveals the end-point of her story (Gergen and Gergen 1988), meaning the claim or message that she seeks to prove with her story: her hatred for learning in the Soviet Union that stemmed from the teacher's anti-Semitic attitude. The proof is her attitude to learning in Israel.

Using a construction of comparison is considered to be a means of rhetoric and persuasion (Sabar and Dargish 2002) in discourse research. According to Gergen and Gergen (1988), breaking the chronological order expresses a different evaluation of the events that are described, and the more the evaluation changes the more the dramatic suspense in the story is increased. In Irena's story, this technique reflects the dramatic tension between the two cultures.

As she jumps back and forth between times she positions herself between these two cultures that shape her identity – that of the Soviet Union and that of Israel. The first is one which was hostile to her and where she was not wanted and is seen from her teacher's reaction to her announcement of her migration to Israel: "Good, there you will be better off"; and the second one is one which accepts her. In her leaps from there to here, when she describes the attitude of both teachers to her, she uses several structural means: the devices of positioning of repetition and of quoting ("and always added a cynical comment", or "the teacher never missed an opportunity to remind the other students that I was Jewish" and more). These are linguistic signs which attest to the importance of this subject for her.

This structural commentary is reinforced not only by the fact of her choice of these specific situations for her narrative after so long, but also by these sentences integrated into her story, sentences which were spoken then and are engraved (or she chose to engrave them) in her memory. Irena's personal stories are constructed from two main events that are significant (Denzin 1999) to her (her studies in the Soviet school and those in Israel), which she organised as one within another. In this way, she created a coherent narrative that is characterised by a romantic-comic structure: This is a story that passes from a negative situation in her country of origin, the Soviet Union (the teacher's anti-Semitic attitude, her bad grades and her hatred of learning) to a positive situation in Israel. The way she is saved from a difficult situation is not described as something that she actively did, but as stemming from an external force beyond her control – her migration and its ramifications (her acceptance as an autonomous person by her Israeli teacher).

An additional angle to this story that distinguishes between the stories within the uniting narrative, between the descriptions of the events that happened in the two countries, is presented by a more complex narrative structure. The past before the migration, which is generally grasped within the one story as negative – is not actually so negative. The narrator may have been discriminated against by her teacher but the relationship with her peer group is not like the one she has with her teacher. In fact, it is the opposite. Irena relates: "Even though I had bad grades I was well liked in class by the other students."

She considers the relationships with her peers as very important and, immediately after her positioning regarding her teacher, she introduces it in terms of her classmates. Though she describes their relationship with her, she does not verbalise her active processes towards them on the social field. From

the juxtaposition of the sentences to each other it is understood that important to her is to show that her social success is also part of her active way of coping with that particular teacher.

The proof is the coda that ends the narration from the Soviet Union – (“That teacher didn’t bring me down”) in which she uses a metaphorical structure to express this feeling. The apparently negative story concludes with an episode on a very optimistic note: the narrator does not surrender to this teacher. She positions herself as a heroine who can cope with difficulties and deals with them in a way that is suitable for her.

The story has an optimistic direction and it even reinforces her in the part that describes the period after the migration. In this way, the narrator maintains the continuity of her identity by telling a story that is, after all, positive (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber 2010), despite the negative background of its first part.

The coda of the story (“It suited me well...in Israel I could be me”) verbalises the narrator’s evaluation of the development of the story of her life, in which she emphasises her feelings of optimism. In this evaluation, there is a kind of “signal” (Spector-Marzel 2010, 70) of a component within her identity.

From the structural point of view, the opening story (the opening extract) and the summary (the coda) of the story complete each other from the point of view of their ramifications for the ethnic-national identity of the narrator. Her studies in the USSR are noted in the opening as producing a negative connotation, from her point of view, for her Jewish identity, while her studies in Israel are described at the end as something that awoke her positive attitude towards her Israeli identity. Through the narration constructed by Irene it is possible to discover different dimensions of the narrator’s self (Kupferberg and Feingold 2005).

The attitude of the teacher in the Soviet Union reflects the dimension of the culture immersed in anti-Semitism in which Irena lived (Duranti 1997) that did not spare its educational institutions either. The social dimension of the narrative, which relates to the attitude of the children, displays a positive interpersonal communication (Schiffrin 1996) which Irena was able to create, while the psychological dimension, which reveals the way that a person deals with his problems, is expressed here in this story by the sophisticated way in which Irena behaved towards her teachers. Here the narrator positions herself vis-à-vis her teachers as one who takes a firm stand regarding the autonomous status of the student. For example when the Russian teacher belittles and even insults her she does not enter into a state of powerlessness or retreat within herself. She does not fight with her teacher but she disengages herself from her and from what is connected with her – the studies. In contrast, she is definitely active and cooperates, learns and takes an interest in her teacher in Israel, who treats her with respect.

Discussion and conclusion

The study relates to a certain part of four life stories which appears also as an independent story, as a narration within each whole narrative, told by four women of about seven to seventeen years old after the events have taken place. In their stories they deal with the reality of their lives and inner worlds in their countries of origin, in the USSR, during the period that preceded the act of immigration to Israel as they experienced them – and through their own eyes.

Despite the uniqueness of each story, it is possible to locate certain connections between the stories of the women immigrants and the findings that emerge from the analysis of the significant events from their childhood and youth – these were chosen by the narrators to be included in the narrations and are presented in this work.

The events, accompanied by the narrators' descriptions and arguments, reflect the development of the narrators' lives by focusing on the idea of immigration, and this leads towards a positive point, particularly in those stories which tell about the transition that takes place in their lives: from living in the former Soviet Union – a dictatorial society, to living in Israel – a democratic western society (Berger 1999). It can be said that the formal structure of the plot of all the narrations can be identified – using Gergen and Gergen's (1988) typology – as forms that express progress that is characterised by a romantic or romantic-comic structure. When the narrator acts directly or indirectly against hostile elements and, as a result, emerges with the upper hand (Christina and Irena) it is romantic; and when the "salvation" comes from an external source (Olga) it is comic-romantic. The fourth narration appears to be characterised, like the previous ones, by a progressive, romantic structure where the events within it lead towards a positive goal: emigration to Israel. But a closer look at that narration reveals that within the family story there is also another story – Vita's personal story, which goes in a different direction. It portrays a stable structure as opposed to the story of her family. Reality in the former USSR was viewed quite differently by her. Nonetheless, from her words we can understand that she also identifies with the family story.

In fact, it could be said that in each narration there are two interconnected stories: the story of the family, which provides a framework, and the personal story of the narrator. The narrator constructs her story within a dialogue that is part of the family narration. Sometimes the stories are combined and move in the same direction, and sometimes they are divided and head towards different, even opposed horizons, such as in Vita's story.

The cultural-social picture in all of the stories, whether familial or personal, appears to be full of repressed anti-Semitism that bursts out from time to time, either as a result of establishment or government intent or as a random episode. All of the family stories describe the decision to emigrate as a solution to the

problem, as a release. It can be said that the story of the immigrant women's lives as children and young adolescents in their parents' homes is described in the shadow of anti-Semitism. The feeling of fear of the danger in which they grew up became a dominant part of their social and interpersonal experiences.

Manifestations of anti-Semitism and the creation of the awareness of that by the family made the girls develop different ways of coping with the threatening reality – either by using tools that their parents had given them, or by ways that they developed themselves. Their behaviour and way of thinking, as these appear in their stories, can be explained by Freud's theory of the defence mechanisms of survival. Within these a range of reactions were adopted – sometimes within the same girl – along the continuum that runs between fight and flight.

Olga and Vita positioned themselves in these narrations vis-à-vis the others in their environment as people who were yielding and powerless. Olga is fearful throughout the period before the emigration in an almost permanent manner. Emigration in her narration is a positive option for her family, which saves her from hardship. In contrast Vita tells her narrative of the emigration as a story that is not hers but is about her brother and her family. She accepts the situation in Latvia as it is, does not report on fears, and is satisfied that no one insulted or harmed her too much because of her identity. Her acceptance/complacency and her desire not to stir things up are understood in her case as apparently being a similar communication pattern to that of Olga.

The role of the emotional processes that are reflected in their conduct is to defend them from negative feelings and especially from fear. They can be defined as “ignoring” and “avoiding” feelings of threat and of being harmed by some tangible danger and are ways of coping with reality. They instituted a kind of denial of the negative reality since, if they didn't react to this, it was as if it didn't really exist and this diminished the power of the offence committed against them. This behavior is a kind of escape from the need to focus on the problem and contains elements of the first primitive defense mechanism, called “denial”.

Vita displayed other reactive behaviors in which disassociation from the problem appeared. As a girl, for example, she saw the problem of her ethnic-Jewish origin as being disassociated from her and, in this way, she “normalised” it. This perception of disassociation-normalisation makes the defender/victim equal to everyone since every individual has one “problem” or another and, in this way, the person becomes the same as everyone else. This is also an expression of the defence mechanism that is used in rationalisation, but here it is being taken in a specific direction. The role of this defence mechanism is to diminish fear by using a logical argument that includes and conceptualises every threat or injury in an equal manner so that it becomes disassociated from the victim.

Irena and Christina, on the other hand, describe in their narrations a greater control over the circumstances in which they live when they deal with it with

finesse, using opportunities for action and primarily employing a reaction of some kind. They deal with their fear by fighting against it. Both were very pleased by the idea of emigration, which promised to save them from this kind of interaction with their surroundings. Christina and Irena describe active, offensive coping when faced with the anti-Semitic hostility expressed in the childhood social environment of their schools. Christina talks about an outward, direct reaction that is both physical and verbal, while Irena talks about a more roundabout attitude to such insults due to her real inability as a child to deal directly with her attacker – who was her teacher.

Christina speaks about the importance of standing up to anti-Semitism in order to express its unacceptability. She presents a firm, constant view of this subject. Her reactions, from her point of view and within the framework of her abilities, are an expression of her power and control over her life vis-à-vis her peer environment. Similarly, this action, as she perceives it, has an effect upon the consolidation of her self-confidence.

Irena is also not prepared to remain in a situation of powerlessness against the offensive behavior of her teachers and she finds an alternative way to cope with this. She becomes a social leader among her peer group, the children in her class. She explains that her social connections as a child were a reaction against the teachers who sought to humiliate her.

These two women express their awareness of the importance of being proactive initiators like those who take the details of their lives in hand and in this way initiate practical steps towards achieving their goals.

According to them, the existence of this understanding, not as reflective but as the foundation of a rational approach, already began in their childhood. In their descriptions, they express self-confidence and a positive self-image both of which reflect assertiveness.

The four narrations that tell us about the period that preceded the immigration of the girls with their families from the USSR to Israel reflect the situation of the people in hostile regimes or frameworks who adopt a variety of alternatives to struggle with this, which can take two directions: general opposition, which includes types of active actions against the factors or frameworks that threaten them, and the direction that expresses opposition to them, as well as the varied manifestations of these, the goal of which is to preserve, as much as possible, the framework of a stable life with no great shocks and without giving up on spiritual, cultural and educational expression.

Both of these were accompanied by psychological processes having the role to protect the individual from the consciousness of negative feelings, especially anxiety. Theoreticians of the psychology of the self claim that these processes also act to preserve a stable identity with positive value and are an expression of mental health (Mirsky 2001, according to WHO 1987 – World Health Organization, Division of Mental Health).

Since individuals are, up to a point, defined by their social identities, they – according to the theories about social identity (Tajfel and Turner 1986) – strive to achieve or preserve positive social identities.

Social reality in the former Soviet Union, as it is reflected in the above stories, did not allow the young women to crystallise their identities in this direction. The immigration to Israel provided them with the option to do this and, as Irena says: “In Israel I could be me.” I imagine that the crystallisation of a valuable identity is the dominant motive for the majority of the “olim” (those who made “aliya” to Israel as Jews coming home).

It can be said that the research results need cautious extrapolation due to some limits of the research consisting in: a) The size of our sampling is not enough in order to sustain theoretical generalisations. One future possibility is to extend this micro-research to a representative sample of young population (girls); b) It is obvious that many other groups of young people have more or less similar identity issues, not just Israeli young adolescents. One productive sociological extension in this direction can be to compare Israeli adolescent groups (girls or/and boys) with other adolescents arrived in Israel from other cultures and countries, in the light of challenge and identity construction.

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On the Issue of Ethics Codes Legitimation

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Abstract. The topic of the study is the legitimacy problematic of professional ethics, more precisely of ethics codes. There are many problems concerning the topic of professional ethics in our modern society, which are the signals of a deeper problem, that of the question of social integration of professional ethics. The study tries to grasp the main topic of legitimation, of which two are more prominent: the undefined difference between legality and morality and the confusion of professional expectations with social ones. Considering these contradictions, it is questionable whether specific professions will solve the problem of social integration by creating codes of ethics.

Keywords: professional ethics, code of ethics, legitimacy, modern societies, morality, legality

Introduction

Nowadays there is an ongoing controversy concerning the different professional ethical questions. The modern, institutionalised social life, which is organised around specific professional activities, tends to generate complex and controversial situations that are not self-evident and it is questionable how they fit in a modern, diffuse and divided social value system. The topics of euthanasia, abortion, legal practice, police brutality, genetic engineering and other here omitted practices raise complex questions that often divide the social public. If we take a closer look on these practices, we find an ambiguous materialisation of an over-extended professional practice. I use the expression over-extended in the meaning that these above mentioned practices are driven to an unprecedented level, have no basis of comparison in the social coexistence and though the solutions revealed by them actually resolve or neutralise real social problems they are not usual, accepted and in many cases are ethically ambiguous. This can cast a negative light on these practices, which leads to a socially negative adjudication.

Debates related to these ambiguous situations are merely signs of the approach that generally questions professional ethics. The problematic nature of professional ethics is clearly stated by John Rohr in his study entitled *The problem of professional ethics* (Rohr 1992). In his opinion, the above mentioned ethically ambiguous situations are a result of a conflict between professional ethics and social ethics. General social ethical principles that inherently exist in the everyday life of a society are often violated while practicing professionally. Dennis F. Thomson also tries to identify the relationships that lead to the questioning of professional ethics (Dennis F. Thomson 1990). His most important view is that the equity of the acknowledged morality in private life-situation is questioned in organisational life. Within an organisation, the locus of the moral subject is unidentifiable because either the subject is not following their own moral guide or they are not directly responsible for their actions, the organisation is, or its leaders.

We cannot present the whole of the questioning standpoints of professional ethics within this essay, but there is a concrete manifestation of professional ethics that would allow us a glimpse in those legitimation and justification issues that arise related to their existence. These manifestations are the ethical codes, which are increasingly important in organisational life.

Ethical codes

Nowadays it is generally expected from an organisation to create and disclose its own code of ethics and to imply it in its own operating practices. Despite all this, it is hard to reach a consensual definition related to codes of ethics. In Gyula Koi's definition a code of ethics is "a collection of rules and principles of a particular profession that could effect not only to the social conduct but also to some aspects of the private life" (Koi 2002, 74). Thus follows that codes of ethics are a set of rules and regulations that are specific to the particular organisation and is created primarily to strengthen and uphold the inner values of the profession. At the same time, disclosure is an important gesture because the profession communicates by it the values it follows.

Codes of ethics raise a lot of questions, such as: who can create a code of ethics, whom does it affect, should there be one "central" code of a specific profession or many local ones depending on organisations, should it be law-like or ethics-like, should it contain laws at all, when should they apply, should there be any sanctions, etc. A well-constructed code of ethics should contain a preamble, which is the list of principles or general directives, the concrete and specific dispositions, notices related to it becoming operative, as well as the application, the definition of terms and the basic principles of the ethical committee. However, this essay was not inspired by these concrete application

related questions, but much more by the legitimacy, validity of a code of ethics. Why do we need codes of ethics? What is the real message of their content? On a general scale these questions can be viewed as the subincidences of the following problem: what meanings can the concept of “ethics” be associated with on the area of professional-organisational operation?

The justification of ethical codes is not unanimously positive in the professional life. Though it is more and more accepted to ethically weigh the activities in different professions, many consider the existence and regulations of ethical codes unnecessary. In one of his blog entries public relations manager Bogdan Theodor Olteanu formulates three meaningful dissents regarding codes of ethics (Olteanu 2009): 1) ethical codes are unnecessary because they contain only generalities (they are organised by abstract concepts); 2) public relation consultants will always seem untrustworthy since they provide for money certain services that they do not need to believe in; 3) the morality of a profession is easily manageable if we consider basic human values.

These thoughts clearly outline the main problems which usually arise related to codes of ethics and they also point out certain questionable issues of professional ethics. In the following we shall review these problems and demonstrate them through concrete examples.

The analysis of the problems

The first dissent of Bogdan Theodor Olteanu draws attention to the exaggerated generality and conceptual ambiguity of these codes of ethics, which in his opinion makes them unusable. The profession of public relations in his opinion needs a much more concrete, lifelike orientation, which cannot be served by these codes. If we start from the expression “code”, the denomination makes one believe that on the area of professionalism the moral expectations can be conceptualised, listed and applied much like in the codes of justice. In certain opinions, only the moral of religion can have a code of ethics, where the legitimacy of the laws is derived from an unworldly source (Földesi 1978). These codes are similar to the tablets of Moses with the difference that while the tablets were inspired, dictated and thus legitimised by God, in the case of ethical codes this function is served by the democratic common good, the commitment to the working of democracy. So we come to the question: of what interest and to whom are codes of ethics designed for? Are they meant to give orientation to employees of an organisation (for which they are usually too general and complicated) or are they there for a totally other – not clearly specified – reason?

To answer this question we need to analyse more closely the second statement of the public relation professional. In this entry, Olteanu draws attention to a

trait also noted by John Rohr. Rohr considered the most pressing problem of professional ethics the fact that its rules often conflict with general morality. Olteanu modulates this statement even further and actually unifies the views of Rohr and Thomson. In Olteanu's opinion in the case of the public relation profession the traits of the profession makes it inevitable that the responsibility of the person is forcibly suspended. The professional who adheres to their profession does not have to follow their own conviction, it is sufficient if they comply with the rules of their profession, which can easily lead to immorality or in the best case scenario – amorality.

The fact that the morality of a profession can conflict with the morality of society means that a new view of society is necessary to be delineated. This change has long been perceived by sociology and it has been described by theoreticians like Jürgen Habermas (2002) and Niklas Luhmann (2012). It is impossible to sketch the complexity of adherent views of the topic within this essay but we can state based on the works of the mentioned theoreticians that professionally organised bureaucratic societies find their coherence primarily in functionality not morality. Thus follows that not a social system of expectations expressed by morality but functionality (usefulness in society) verifies the specific practice of professions, which creates a gap between the morality of the profession and that of the society that has to be bridged or mediated.

This situation refutes the optimism shown in the third opinion of the public relations professional. If the ethics of the profession differs, or – to be more precise – is based on different grounds than that of society's, then it is useless to try to adhere to basic human values because situations will arise when these cannot help anymore and though they are not cancelled they are suspended by the specific operation of the profession. Professional codes of ethics have to adjust to this contradictory situation and their texts have to reflect this adjustment.

Reading the text of ethical codes shows a certain ambiguity concerning their legitimacy due to their regulations, indeterminate nature and the not clearly defined operational concepts. There are two primary indeterminates constantly present in these documents, which make it hard to define their status: 1) the unclarified difference between legality and morality; 2) the combination of the professional standpoints and society-originated expectations.

At the same time there is a particular incertitude in the putting into effect of these codes of ethics. There is no uniform practice how these codes should be viewed: are they rules to be kept or merely guidelines. There is no consensus regarding sanctions. In the following we will search for examples for these incertitudes and try to further reveal the ambiguous nature of the legitimacy of these codes.

The unclarified difference between legality and morality

In the majority of codes of ethics the importance of the code is motivated with the insufficiency or ineffectiveness of legal regulations, without clearly defining the meaning of the completion. Two typical examples follow:

“This Code of Ethics is a code of conduct that lists and systematizes the behaviors expected from public officials defined not by the law but by the unique and intransigent moral.” – From the Civil Service Code of Ethics draft.

“Regarding certain questions (for ex. corruption or conflict of interest) it was reasonable to reinforce legal regulations with moral standards by the Code of Ethics.” – From the Code of Ethics of the Internal Affairs Office.

The two quotations invoke the dilemma of legality versus morality with a clear impliance to its resolve. Regarding the first quotation there is no dilemma, the areas of legality and morality are clearly defined and differentiated and what is more, there is a unique and intransigent morality as opposed to legality. The claim for moral standards is questionable despite the seemingly self-explanatory nature. Every profession is regulated by a well-elaborated set of laws so the question offers itself: why is it necessary to reinforce or amend them with moral expectations?

It is hard to draw a dividing line between legality and morality in modern society. The difference between the two regulating systems could be formulated in the following way: while legality is fixed in a system of set laws, morality is a more general system of norms and its effect reaches beyond that of legality. In the relation of legality and morality the latter proves to be the wider, more integrative system of which legality is delimited. This relationship and hierarchy seems to switch in the developed western societies where it came true for the first time that the Roman law based legal system became independent of classes and theology – as ascertained by Max Weber (Weber 1989). In modern democracy legality is primary over morality. The simplest example is the question of capital punishment, which is widely supported by the population of Europe according to surveys but it is not included in the legal system. Thus the legal system overrides the social expectation.

It is safe to conclude that the need for ethical codes is driven by this situation. Since in modern society morality and legality have come apart it has become important to make steps in order to narrow the gap between them. The narrowing in this case means that we try to conciliate rules that derive from professions and laws with ethical expectations of the society. This conciliation is meant to correct the impression that professional rules concerning public interest are many times self-serving – as shown by John Rohr. Nonetheless the starting point also marks the intent. It seems that there are two societies: that of the law and that of morality. That is the reason for the presence of both legal and ethical requirements in these ethical codes.

The combination of the professional standpoints and society-originated expectations

Texts of the ethical codes often contain notices that enforce the observance of an already existing law. Two examples follow:

“Members of the university must comply with regulations stipulated by the Charta, laws in effect, the educational decree, labor decree and all regulations that control the teaching, research, tuition-organization, economical and other activities taking place at the university.” – Code of Ethics of the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania.

“It is basic requirement that all members of the professional staff live and work by those stipulated in the Constitution, the legislation and other legal implements of the state.” – Code of Ethics of the Internal Affairs Office.

What can these statements be viewed as? It is surprising that the guidelines contained by them are also ethical requirements and in the Ethical Code of the Internal Affairs Office it is also extended on the area of the private life. The reinforcement of legality by morality can be viewed as redundant since the adherence to legality is enforced by laws. The texts of the ethical codes actually double the legitimacy of these regulations, question remains, what their intent is by it. In our interpretation it is merely a gesture towards society and more a symbolic than a real one. In relation with the operation of the profession the society is an outside environment that is hard to define. It is not by chance that the modern society is primarily described by surveys – except for the regulation and institution systems. Or by different demonstrations and demonstrative events, which are usually set up by an organisation. The translation of the above statements might be that the profession, in order to claim legitimacy beyond its own functionality must reach the society.

Conclusion

The topic of this essay is the specific situation of ethics codes as part of the wider problematic of professional ethics. We tried to discover the legitimacy of these codes within the organisational-professional operation. One of our basic ascertainties is that contradictions present in the professional ethics problematic must reflect in the texts of the ethics codes. Via a few examples we tried to demonstrate that the legitimacy issues of the professional ethics lead directly to the core problems of modern society, that is the complicated question of difference and congruence of legality and morality. In the texts of ethics codes, we find legal and moral regulations that try to bridge the gap between the morality of society and profession. This endeavour reveals the different genesis

of legality and morality. While morality derives from the social coexistence, legality is the product of the social system. The basic problem of the modern society from the moral integration standpoint is that the general sociality was disconnected from systematic organisation. That is why nontraditional ways of integration are needed.

The final conclusion is that the specific professional ethics signal their demand to be integrated in the social coexistence. That many receive this phrasing as ambiguous is understandable. The gesture resembles that of an oil company funding an environmental organisation or a bank patronising an art gallery. In both cases legitimation is accomplished by helping a practice opposing the basic function of the helper. By comparison, the different professions try to combat their distance from social ethics by enforcing morality. Whether this effort will be able to exceed the ambiguous circumstances of its genesis remains to be seen.

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BOOK REVIEW



**Zoltán Rostás – Florentina Țone (eds.): Tânăr student caut revoluționar (I.-II.).
București: Curtea Veche, 2011–2012¹**

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The two volume book which was edited by *Zoltán Rostás* and *Florentina Țone* under the patronage of *The Romanian Institute for Recent History* contains half-hundred oral histories about the Romanian Revolution of December 1989. In 2009, two decades after the December 1989 events, Rostás and Țone asked their university students to register the participatory memories about the revolution of those common people among their acquaintances who had taken part in the December events.

The novelty of these volumes consists in the fact that the interviews give us an insight into the Romanian revolution through the lenses and interpretations of those common people (i.e. “small revolutionists”) who have not become well-known leading figures of the revolution. The editors recurrently accentuate this aspect of their volumes in the form of a *different revolution*.² Rostás, in the foreword of the volumes, warns the reader about the difference of their approach compared to those many works which tried to answer some “major” questions about the revolution (e.g. was it a revolution or a coup d’état; who shot in the masses; were there any terrorists and, if yes, who those people were, etc.). Indeed, this work does not answer directly these questions. However, through the bottom-up interpretations of the events by the interviewees, the book offers various dissections of these major dilemmas. Consequently, the volumes constitute a very diverse perspective on the Romanian revolution and, as Țone puts it, all these interviews which resemble several “small experiences” of the “small revolutionists”, finally make the “puzzle of the revolution”.

1 Title in English: *Young Student Is Looking for Revolutionist*.

2 This approach is referred to in several reviews as the major quality of the book, for instance those written in Romanian, e.g.: A. Dumitru: O altfel de revoluție. *Evenimentul Zilei*, 26 June 2011; P. Cernat: În căutarea revoluției pierdute. *Revista 22*, 12 June 2012; A. Zaharia: O altfel de carte despre revoluție. *Historia.ro*.

L. Nistor, the author of the present review has also outlined the major values of the book in Hungarian under the title: Figyelem! Ez egy másik forradalom. In *Erdélyi Múzeum*, 2013/1.

Through the memories of the participants, the reader gets the chance to see the revolution from inside and from the bottom. The December 1989 events are remembered on the basis of the interviewees' personal experiences so that we are able to read some very personal repertoires on the interpretations of the revolution. For instance, the cavalcade of the revolution is remembered as going on with different degrees of speed, ranging from slowness ("In Focșani the revolution took place on December 22, between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Then, they've put a chair in the doorway and closed.") to agitation ("Shit! We did it. My children will remain without parents."). Through the personal life stories going on in connection with the revolution, the reader gets an insight into the kitchen of the revolution, both literally ("The revolution caught me with four kilos of meat in the fridge.") and in terms of how different segments of the population waited for this event and tried to prepare themselves for a new era ("Change – it was in the air for a while."). In the days of the revolution, the interviewees solved different kinds of everyday dilemmas ("to wait a line for meat or to go to demonstrate against Ceaușescu") and fears ("Father, I did something bad, I took part in the revolution, but I'll go home if you promise you won't beat me."), meanwhile they got imprisoned and then liberated and, finally, they ended up by asking the major, recurrent question about the revolution: was all this worth it?

The interviews show us the smaller, human scale dimensions of the revolution and the reflexive interpretations of it by these citizens. On the basis of the interviews, the impression is that the *big* moments of the revolution have disappeared by now, and the revolution has lost its major importance among the life events of those interviewed. *Then*, the events around the revolution had crucial importance. *Now*, two decades later, all these events have lost their saliency in the life of the interviewees. Thus, the revolution became just one puzzle among the many others which compose the life of the interviewees: they took part in the revolution, but before and after that December, there happened many other events to them and, two decades later, the revolution does not necessarily constitute a cornerstone event of their life-worlds.

Besides the vast collection of interviews, the volumes have a number of other aspects which need to be mentioned as important contributions in connection to the methods of teaching history, on the one hand, and of teaching the methodology of oral history, on the other.

As the title of the volumes (*Young Student Is Looking for Revolutionist*) suggests, the interviews were recorded by young students in their twenties, who thus have no memories about the revolution, except some urban legends they have heard from their parents. In the course of the interview-making, these students had the chance to learn about the recent history of Romania in a participatory manner. During their field research they became more and more curious about the December 1989 events and also tried to look all by themselves

for several other sources and documents about the revolution. It is interesting in this respect how the work methodology has changed during the research. At the beginning of their project, students tried to locate their potential subjects for the interviews on the basis of the registers of the revolutionary associations. Later on, as their curiosity grew, students began to look for subjects among their acquaintances. Thus, the intensity of students' personal involvement in terms of their interest and curiosity was rising in parallel with the duration of the project. These youngsters have learnt in a participatory way not only the methodology of oral history but also the recent history of the country.

In terms of oral histories, the volumes constitute an extremely valuable source for those interested in oral history in particular and in qualitative methods in general. All the interviews constitute genuine pieces and examples of how to ask questions and how to let the stories develop during the process of interview-making. Indeed, the major aim of the interviews is to register the memories about the revolution of the participants, but these core-questions are carefully prepared throughout the course of the interviews and thus subjects get the chance to prepare themselves for evoking these memories. Consequently, the reader gets valuable insight not only into the personal memories about the revolution, but also into the everyday life of the interviewees before and after the revolution. These latter segments of the interviews constitute very important documents in connection with the everyday life during Communism and during the period of transition. As a result, the reader gets much more than a bottom-up approach in connection with the Romanian revolution.

In accordance with the deontology of oral history, the editors do not interpret the texts of the interviews and the sole editorial artefact consists in arranging the interviews in several thematic blocks, based either on the succession of events in connection with the revolution (e.g. firstly there was fear; the moment of decision; revolutionists in action, etc.) or on the socio-demographical background of the interviewees (e.g. soldier, women, revolutionists with experience, nostalgic revolutionists, etc.). This thematic arrangement does not steal the original, unprocessed nature of the interviews which thus constitute a first-hand, qualitative dataset for researchers aiming to undertake a more in-depth analysis on the major themes of this bottom-up revolution.

Given the fact that the students who realised the interviews were based in Bucharest, they succeeded in reaching mainly subjects from Bucharest and from towns situated more or less close to Bucharest. Thus, the interviews in the volumes constitute a call for completing the oral history archive of the Romanian revolution with further oral history documents based on the memories of revolutionists from other parts of the country. In this way it would be possible to reveal if there are any differences between the discursive repertoires of revolutionists and if the distance from Bucharest and Timișoara, i.e. from the main sites of the revolution, has any role in structuring these repertoires.

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