

Supranational Attachment and Transnationalism of Hungarians and Immigrants in Hungary

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ABSTRACT: The concept of European identity – problematic as it is – has been amply dealt with in relation to different segments of society. From the perspective of their attachments, third-country immigrants form an interesting population: in balancing between identification with their country of origin and their country of residence, literature indicates that it might be more natural for them to feel part of a transnational social space, such as Europe. In this paper we compare the Hungarian public and third-country immigrants according to their attachment to Europe. Besides transnational embeddedness, different forms of acculturation and social status are also taken into account in the analysis as important determinants of supranational identification. Third-country immigrants are “supposed” to have more transnational ties than the receiving population, and, in opposition to international trends, in Hungary they are also in a better position in terms of their cultural and material resources which makes them more likely to have supranational attachment. However, our findings (based on empirical surveys carried out in 2011) show that, despite their higher transnational involvement, immigrants are less attached to Europe than the receiving population. It seems that the link between “Europeanness” and transnationalism is not as straightforward as expected.

KEYWORDS: Europe, supranational attachment, transnationalism, immigrants, Hungary

Introduction

The concept of identification with Europe or European identity is strongly debated in terms of its definition, its content, its development and its function as well. Several studies have argued that a European identity similar to national identities does not exist. It is often said that a European identity still needs to be constructed following a top-down logic. Nevertheless, it can be also apprehended through a bottom-up approach based on an increase in an individual's number of personal contacts with other Europeans and other transnational experiences. Addressing the question of attachment to Europe through the lenses of transnational embeddedness, transnational practices and networks of individuals is a relevant perspective and the approach is confirmed by recent research.

The question of attachment to Europe has been dealt with for several segments of society, including the general public and elites, while somewhat less attention has been given to the question among immigrants. A few studies have addressed the subject of the identification of non-EU immigrants, or have compared EU “movers” and “stayers”; however, the current authors are not aware of any studies which have compared the receiving population and third-country immigrants in this regard.¹

When it comes to attachment to Europe, transnationalism or immigration, Hungary has peculiarities that differentiate the country from other EU countries. Despite being among the countries most skeptical towards the European Union, the Hungarian population is among the most attached to Europe (Lengyel – Göncz 2010). At the same time, in terms of transnationalism and transnational practices, Hungarians are among those who speak the least foreign languages (Special Eurobarometer 386, 2012) and they also travel less (Flash Eurobarometer 334, 2012) than other Europeans. Although the share of the population which is working in another EU country is constantly increasing (estimated to be 2% in 2010), this share is still lower than for other new member states such as Poland, Romania, Slovakia or the Baltic countries (Hárs 2011). Accordingly, Hungarians in general are somewhat lagging behind in terms of their transnational practices within the EU. Furthermore, Hungary is still not a target country for third-country immigrants who represent around 0.7% of the Hungarian population.² Third-country immigrants in Hungary also differ from their counterparts in other European countries: they are in a more advantageous social position than members of the receiving society. The gap between the receiving society and immigrants in terms of the latter's lower activity rate, overqualification, lower level of self-employment, lower level of education and higher risk of poverty does not exist in Hungary (European Commission 2011).

1 In the European Union, the terms “third-country immigrants” or “third-country nationals” are often used to refer to individuals who are neither from the EU country in which they are currently living or staying, nor from other member states of the European Union. In this current analysis we use the term to refer to those legal immigrants who arrive from a third country and stay in Hungary.

2 Statistics from the National Citizenship Office, 31/12/2010

Although immigrants often have to face prejudice in Hungary, they represent a preselected group of (predominantly male) younger people with a higher presence on the labor market and with higher social and cultural resources than members of the host society in general (Kisfalusi 2012; Szanyi-F. 2012). Another characteristic of immigrants in Hungary is the dominance of migrants of Hungarian ethnic origin. However, these immigrants mostly come from neighbouring countries that are now EU member states (e.g. Romania), so the share drops significantly if only third-country immigrants are considered.

In this article the general Hungarian public and third-country immigrants will be compared along their attachments to different territorial units: to Hungary/to their country of origin, and to Europe. We suppose that transnational experiences (e.g. having lived abroad, having travelled abroad, willingness to migrate, speaking foreign languages, having foreign friends) favor the development of a supranational attachment. Furthermore, for immigrants, who are more likely to be embedded in transnational networks, it might be easier to feel attached to a supranational level than either to their country of origin or to Hungary. Considering this fact, we take into account transnational embeddedness together with different individual socio-demographic characteristics – supposing that neither the receiving population nor immigrants comprise a homogeneous group. The analysis is based on empirical survey data collected in 2011 within the respective publics (see the *Appendix 1* for more details).

The article is structured as follows. The first part summarizes the theoretical frame and the main hypothesis with an overview of the previous scientific work on the subject of supranational attachment and transnationalism. Then the results of a descriptive analysis comparing responses to survey questions about different patterns of attachment among members of Hungarian society and third-country immigrants in Hungary is presented. This is followed by a more thorough analysis of the drivers of supranational identification among the two groups using a regression approach. Finally, some conclusions are drawn.

Issues Concerning Supranational Attachment

European identity, attachment to Europe and transnationalism

Collective or social “identity” is a complex concept with a wide theoretical literature in sociology, social psychology and nationalism studies that each focus on different aspects of the term. It can be understood as self-understanding based on particular categorical attributes, a collective phenomenon based on sameness, solidarity, shared dispositions or consciousness, a core aspect of individual/collective selfhood or as a product of a social/political action. Identities are multiple and contextual; furthermore, beside the cognitive aspect (acknowledgment of group membership/

category) there are emotional (feelings of attachment to group membership) and conative (behavioral implications of group membership) components as well. Indeed, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) point out that “identity” is an ambiguous term that tends to mean too much in social sciences, or too little. As applied in the different analyses it usually leaves us with no rationale for talking about identity. This is why the authors suggest the use of another, more precisely-defined concept. Being aware of these conceptual problems and the limits of our analysis (imposed by both the quantitative survey approach and the length of the paper), in the following, when referring to our analysis, we prefer to use the term “attachment” instead of the term “identity”. Our dependent variable revolves around attachment to different territorial units which would correspond to Brubaker and Cooper’s identification. Identifying oneself emotionally with another person, category or collective captures both the emotional and the dynamic characteristics of the term, while the modern state has been one of the most powerful points of identification (Brubaker – Cooper 2000).

The conceptual ambiguity described above has not prevented scholars from using and studying identity, either at the national or European level. Although the question of attachment to Europe or European identity has been present in intellectual debates since the 1950s, it has increasingly been the subject of scientific research since the 2000s. This was partly due to the increasing supranational character of the European Union after Maastricht (1992) which led to questions about the legitimacy of the EU and its democratic deficit, while the Eastern enlargement of the EU and the debate over the possible accession of Turkey raised questions related to its cultural and territorial borders (Fuchs 2011). However, European identity remains a very much debated concept, both in terms of its definition (see, for instance, Favell 2005) and even its very existence. Several authors have argued that a “European identity” does not exist (e.g. Duchesne – Frogner 1995) and that time is needed for its development through formal socialization, or in a symbolic, affective way. Indeed, Europeans do not form an “imagined community” (Anderson 1983) for many reasons, the lack of a common language being one of them.

Another problem with the concept is that scientists often imagine a European identity similar to the essentialist conception of a national one, based on common cultural heritage (Delanty 1995). However, national identities are results of long-term historical development and have a multidimensional character based both on ethnic and cultural origins or history on the one hand, and a legal, economic, political and territorial aspect on the other (e.g. Smith 1991). While the latter, more ‘civic’ aspect could be developing with the European integration project, the former, rather ethno-cultural traits are not present at the European level (Smith 1992). In terms of the relationship between attachment to the nation and to Europe, Risse suggests that European identity is “gradually being embedded in understandings of national identities” and is a secondary order identification built on the basis of the national one (Risse 2005). Risse talks about the Europeanization of national

identities, meaning that at the individual level the way one identifies with her own nation will be extrapolated to the European level: an exclusive or inclusive national identity will result in an exclusive or inclusive conception of Europe as well. In this regard, cultural resources seem to play an important role: several empirical analyses have confirmed that an individual's level of education determines the way they relate to Europe (e.g. Fligstein 2008; Risse 2010).

Furthermore, with the globalization process the boundaries of traditional nation states are becoming more and more permeable through increases in the number of cross-border transactions in terms of the flow of trade, capital, or the mobility of people and social exchanges. Involvement in transnational networks and everyday transnational practices like communication, travelling, speaking foreign languages and being in contact with foreign people is an inherent characteristic of migration and the everyday life of migrant people (Mau 2010). However, members of the receiving society also have transnational experiences, albeit to different extent. They might have lived abroad, travelled abroad, can maintain contacts abroad, or might be in a relationship with an immigrant. "Transnationalism refers to the relations, networks, and practices arising out of cross-border transactions and exchanges" (Mau 2010:17). As opposed to transnationalism "from above" with reference to macro-structures (meaning the intensification of international exchange relationships created by nation-states), transnationalism "from below" refers to the everyday behavior of individuals associated with a greater demand for autonomy and a rise in mobility and spatial flexibility (Mau 2010:24). Individual-level indicators might include an increase in language competence, mobility, travelling, and transnational identities (Mau 2010:19).

The free movement of goods, capital, services, and people being a core principle of the European integration project, the permeability of the borders characterizes the countries of the European Union to an increasing extent. The European integration process accordingly has a constitutive effect on national identities (Risse 2010). It seems, indeed, that more frequent interactions with other Europeans, migration experiences or changing communication habits (Deutsch 1953; Favell 2008; Fligstein 2008) will lead to changes in identity or to the Europeanization of national identities. According to these arguments, and empirical findings, we suggest that similar mechanisms are at work in Hungary as well. Hence:

(H1) A higher level of transnational involvement favors supranational attachment.

In view of our double target groups (receiving society and third-country immigrants) this hypothesis can be further decomposed, supposing that immigrants have a higher level of transnational involvement due to their previous experiences or migration strategies:

(H1a) Involvement in transnational networks and everyday transnational practices favors supranational attachment.

(H1b) Third-country immigrants have greater supranational attachment than the receiving society.

Just as transnationalism, social, cultural and material resources (Risse 2010) or the social class (Fligstein 2008) of an individual are all defining elements of supranational identification, the same resources may define transnational embeddedness itself (Mau 2010). Higher social, cultural and material resources not only lead to higher supranational attachments, but also favor transnational experiences. This should be taken into account when addressing the effect of transnationalism on supranational attachments – social situation and resources need to be controlled for in our analysis.

Immigrants and their attachments

Immigrants are a special group in terms of their identity, as this often undergoes a transition when migrating from the homeland to the host country (Kumar 2003). The integration of immigrants into a host society is a complex phenomenon. It is a legal and political process on the one hand, during which the immigrant obtains rights and assumes obligations similar to the majority of society and becomes member of the political community. The integration process is, on the other hand, a socio-economic process characterized by the participation of the immigrant in the host country's economy through their holding of a job and payment of taxes. Thirdly, integration has a socio-cultural aspect which includes the building of relations between the immigrant and the receiving society, learning and accepting the language, customs and norms of the host country. According to Berry's model (2001), the level of integration depends on how much migrants wish to maintain their original cultural identity (cultural maintenance) and on how much they wish to establish contact with members of the host society outside their own group, and to participate in the daily life of the host society (contact-participation). Taking these factors into account migrants' cultural adaptation can result in their: (1) integration (an interest in both maintaining one's original culture and engaging in daily interactions with members of the host society); (2) assimilation (no wish to maintain cultural heritage and seek daily interaction with the host society); (3) separation (holding on to the original culture and having a wish to avoid interaction with others); and/or, (4) marginalization (little possibility of, or interest in cultural maintenance and in having relations with others). However, Berry also suggests a narrower, parallel approach to understanding acculturation strategies that uses the concept of cultural identity or the way one thinks of oneself. This can also be constructed along two dimensions.

“The first of these dimensions is identification with one’s heritage or ethnocultural group, and the second is identification with the larger or dominant society. [...] Using these two identity dimensions, strategies emerge that have clear similarities to the four acculturation strategies: when both identities are asserted, this resembles the integration strategy; when one feels attached to neither, then there is a sense of marginalization; and when one is strongly emphasized over the other, then one exhibits either the assimilation or separation strategy.” (Berry 2001:620-621)

In the following we will use the latter approach when dealing with different modes of acculturation.

Nevertheless, instead of a linear process of dissimilation from the country of origin and assimilation into the host country, migration increasingly has a more dynamic character (e.g. Boyd 1989; Melegh et al. 2009). It can be periodic, temporary or incomplete in a sociological sense, while attachment to the community of origin may survive in varied forms. The concept of “migrant transnationalism” refers to the phenomenon when migration happens along transnational communities, which also has implications for identity: instead of a process of adaptation to the culture of the country of residence, this new form of migration deals with concepts such as “world citizens” and postnational identities (Martiniello 2006). Taking into account the transnational character of migration and the fact that migrants are often embedded in transnational networks, the question whether to identify at all with the host country arises.

According to the results of a recent study among immigrants in Hungary, the different immigrant groups differed according to their willingness to obtain Hungarian citizenship. While a higher share of immigrants of Hungarian ethnic origin expressed the wish to be naturalized, the desire was not so evident for others, such as immigrants of Chinese or Turkish origin (Örkény 2011).

Indeed, obtaining citizenship of a country might not be the ultimate goal for every migrant, whose “postnational membership” is increasingly based on universal personhood with universal rules (i.e. human rights) and multiple statuses in transnational communities (Soysal 1994). From this point of view, the search for a more universal kind of identification is perfectly understandable (Kumar 2003). Identification with Europe could embody this universalism.

Furthermore, a recent Hungarian survey among immigrants revealed different migration strategies corresponding both to the linear and to the transnational model of immigration. Örkény and Székelyi (2010) found that the main strategies followed were assimilation, segregation (i.e. Berry’s model) and transnationalism. Segregation and transnationalism followed a similar trend according to their attachments; the difference between them lying in the financial means to migrate further (segregated individuals did not have the means necessary to move to another country). These strategies mostly characterized migrants of Chinese origin

in Hungary. Those who followed a transnationalist strategy were not attached to Hungary but to their community; their motives for migration were rather economic, they did not learn Hungarian and they were ready to migrate again according to interest and need. Correspondingly, we suppose that the different modes of cultural adaptation also influence supranational attachment:

(H2) The different modes of cultural adaptation determine the supranational attachment of third-country immigrants in Hungary.

In our understanding, however, two alternative mechanisms might be at play and lead to two alternative explanations. Based on theories of transnational migration, migrants do not become attached to their host country, but being members of transnational communities they might rather form supranational identities (Soysal 1994; Kumar 2003; Martiniello 2006). Following this logic, migrants might be rather attached to a Europe which represents a supranational entity:

(H2a) Supranational attachment is greater with separation (lower attachment to Hungary, attachment to their community of origin) or marginalization (less attachment to either Hungary or their community of origin) kinds of cultural adaptation.

On the other hand, previous studies have shown that European identity is rather embedded in national identity (e.g. Risse 2010). Attachment to Europe and to one's own country are positively related to each other – this has been proven not only for the general public, but also in the case of migrant populations within the EU (Rother – Nebe 2009). According to this logic, a lower level of attachment to Hungary would lead to a lower level of attachment to Europe. Accordingly, we suggest an alternative hypothesis as well:

(H2b) Supranational attachment is lower with separation (lower attachment to Hungary, attachment to their community of origin) or marginalization (lower attachment to either Hungary or their community of origin) kinds of cultural adaptation.

Immigrants, however, are not a homogeneous group. Their attachments depend on their motivation or the migration strategy followed (which may include the prospect of further migration), their country or culture of origin, the length of time spent in the country of residence, their contacts with members of the host society or the diaspora community. A recent Hungarian survey about six immigrant groups revealed important differences between the migration strategies followed by the different immigrant groups (Örkény – Székelyi 2010). Migrants of Hungarian ethnic origin are the most willing to assimilate, Ukrainians are rather characterized by

having a transnational migration strategy (an economic motive for migration, paired with an extensive international network), whereas migrants of Chinese origin follow either a segregation strategy (living within a closed diaspora community) or a transnational one (this latter approach applies to those who are wealthier and have their own business). Furthermore, when it comes to attachment to Europe, whether third-country immigrants come from a European country or not might also have an influence. Intra-EU (European) movers are usually considered to be the “pioneers” of the European integration process, or, being the first real Europeans (Favell 2008) they are usually more attached to Europe and are more likely to report having a European identity (without national attachments) than their non-mobile European counterparts (Rother – Nebe 2009). However, even among this group the relative majority are attached to both their country of origin and their country of residence – beside their attachment to Europe. These “integrating Europeans” are those who have spent more time outside their country, are highly educated, have friends both in their home country and host countries and good language abilities. However, intra-EU migrants and third-country immigrants form different groups, with ultimately different motivations for migration, which occurs under clearly different legal conditions.

Attachments of Hungarians and Third-country Immigrants

In the following we present and analyze data from two public opinion surveys: a survey conducted among the receiving society (n=1000) and a survey among third-country immigrants who are staying in Hungary (n=500), both collected in the summer of 2011. Detailed information on the design and data collection method of the surveys is available in the *Appendix 1*. The sample of the receiving society is a probability sample, representative for the Hungarian adult population. The immigrant sample, although representative for the targeted population in terms of gender, age and country of origin, needs to be treated with caution when trying to generalize findings: it is a difficult group in terms of sampling, with no complete list of members who are thus difficult to reach and survey. The questions in the survey for the receiving population and the immigrants were identical, making direct comparison possible. The survey question we used to assess attachment was a question designed to measure the level of attachment to different territorial units (Hungary/country of origin/Europe) on a four-point scale.

As shown in *Table 1*, 90% of the Hungarian population declared that they were very attached (52%) or somewhat attached (37%) to Hungary, while a somewhat lower share feel the same towards Europe (73%). In the case of third-country immigrants Hungarian attachment is equally high (88%); however, it is less intense as only 37% feel very attached and 51% somewhat attached to Hungary. Immigrants’

attachment to Europe follows a similar pattern: people feel less attached to Europe than to Hungary.

Table 1. Attachment of the receiving population and immigrants (%)

	Attachment to the country of origin Immigrants	Attachment to Hungary		Attachment to Europe	
		Receiving	Immigrants	Receiving	Immigrants
<i>N</i> =	500 100.0	1000 100.0	500 100.0	1000 100.0	500 100.0
Not at all attached (1)	3.0	3.6	1.2	5.6	5.0
Not very attached (2)	25.4	6.8	10.4	20.2	28.2
Somewhat attached (3)	33.6	37.3	51.4	41.5	46.6
Very attached (4)	37.4	52.4	36.8	31.9	18.8
DK/NA	0.6	0.0	0.2	0.8	1.4
<i>Mean (1-4)</i>	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.0	2.8

Source: Survey on the Civic Integration of Immigrants, 2011

Note: The wording of the question was: "How much are you attached to...?"

Receiving population vs. Immigrants: Attachment to Hungary: Cramer's $V=0.174^{***}$, $t\text{-test}=3.652^{***}$

Attachment to Europe: Cramer's $V=0.148^{***}$, $t\text{-test}=4.311^{***}$

These results show that the attachment of Hungarians and immigrants follows a similar trend: attachment to Hungary is stronger than attachment to Europe. While both are positively correlated, stronger attachment to Hungary means higher identification with Europe as well. Nevertheless, immigrants feel less attached to both territorial units than the members of the receiving society. These results seem to disprove our first hypothesis: immigrants do not have a stronger attachment to Europe than Hungarians (and the attachment they have is also lower than their attachment to the country).

Furthermore, it seems that even though they do not have Hungarian citizenship, immigrants feel equally attached to Hungary as to their country of origin (37%). In terms of their identification with their country of origin, an interesting case of polarization occurs; 28% do not feel very attached or attached to it at all. This polarization also appears in the fact that both those strongly attached to their country of origin and those not attached to it can feel very attached to Europe. Typically, immigrants from China and other Asian countries and from Anglo-Saxon countries are more tied to their origins, and migrants from the former Soviet Union and the Balkan are less so. This difference might exist due to many reasons, the length of their stay in Hungary and the circumstances of their migration being among them. Migrants from the former Soviet Union typically arrived in Hungary

earlier than other groups, while some migrants from Serbia are of Hungarian ethnic origin. This might cause a lower attachment to their country of origin. Another question is to what extent immigrants of Hungarian ethnic origins are similar to other immigrants, or to non-immigrant members of Hungarian society. Results confirm that immigrants with Hungarian origins (15% in our sample, coming from Serbia and Ukraine) are more similar to Hungarians than to other immigrant groups in terms of their attachment to Hungary (92% being very or somewhat attached). However, no statistically significant difference is detectable compared to other immigrants in terms of their attachment to Europe.

When looking at patterns of attachment (based on simple crosstabulation), important regional differences were found to exist among Hungarian society. People living in Central Hungary tend to be more attached to Hungary than others, while those living in the Western and the Southern Transdanubian region felt less attached to their country. Regarding Europe, people from Southern Transdanubia were the least attached.

Table 2. Transnational embeddedness of the receiving population and immigrants (%)

		Receiving	Immigrants	Cramer's V
N=		1000	500	
		100.0	100.0	
Foreign languages spoken	0	72.5	14.4	0.615***
	1	19.2	26.7	
	2	6.8	36.1	
	3 or more	1.5	22.8	
Have you been abroad (outside Hungary) in the past 5 years?		29.1	45.8	0.165***
Have you lived abroad (outside Hungary or your country of origin) for over 3 months?		4.8	11.6	0.125***
Can you imagine moving to another country?		10.2	13.4	0.048*
Are there foreigners (non Hungarians) among your friends?		12.6	78.4	0.652***
Are there Hungarians among your friends?		-	81.6	

Source: Survey on the Civic Integration of Immigrants, 2011

In terms of measures of transnational involvement there seems to be a gap between the receiving society and immigrants. *Table 2* shows that immigrants speak more foreign languages (86% vs. 28% speak at least one foreign language), were more likely to have travelled abroad during the past 5 years (46% vs. 29%) and were also

more likely to have lived abroad (12% vs. 5%).³ Regarding social ties, immigrants have more foreigner (non-Hungarian) friends (78%) as opposed to Hungarians (13%). However, equally high shares of immigrants (82%) are embedded in their country of residence as they have Hungarian friends as well. Nearly three quarters of the third-country immigrants living in Hungary have both Hungarian and foreigner friends, 4-7% have either one or the other, while 14% declared that they did not have friends of either type. Nevertheless, these differences might not come as a surprise as immigrant contacts within their own ethnic groups counted as foreigner friends, speaking Hungarian counted as a foreign language and travelling home to their country of origin also counted as travelling abroad – all these factors related to their migrant status and increased their transnational involvement. Interestingly, however, there is no major difference between the two groups in terms of willingness to move to another country (other than Hungary) in the future: 10-13% of the receiving society and the immigrants stated their willingness.

Following the “cultural maintenance” dimension in Berry’s model of acculturation (Berry 2001), we created a typology of immigrants based on their attachment to Hungary and their country of origin.⁴ Those who were very or somewhat attached to both their country of origin and Hungary show a dual identity and correspond to what Berry called “integrated”. These immigrants represent the relative majority (63%). Those who were very or somewhat attached to Hungary but were not very or not at all attached to their country of origin were considered to be “assimilating” to Hungary. About one quarter of immigrants could be regrouped here, with a slightly higher proportion (one third) of immigrants from Hungarian ethnic origin falling into this group, although this difference did not prove to be statistically significant. Fewer were those who were, in contrast, attached to their country of origin but not to Hungary. Those who followed this “separation” strategy amounted to 9%. Finally, only 3% were “marginalized” and did not develop intense attachments to either their country of residence or their country of origin. Interestingly, as shown in *Table 3*, those who integrated have the highest attachment to Europe, followed by the assimilating immigrants, whereas only one third and one quarter (respectively) of the separated and marginalized individuals were attached to Europe. These two previous groups (integrated and assimilated), despite their more intense supranational attachment, also showed less transnational involvement. “Separated” individuals, despite being more involved in transnationalism, were the least attached to Europe. This finding seems to disprove hypothesis 2a (as described above) in favor of hypothesis 2b.

3 “Foreign languages” refers to any language other than the native tongue, thus use of Hungarian among immigrants was considered an additional foreign language. Questions referring to travelling abroad took Hungary as a reference point (an immigrant travelling to the immigrant’s country of origin was taken as a positive answer). For “having lived abroad”, for immigrants this was interpreted to mean having lived outside Hungary or the country of origin.

4 Due to the limitations of our survey we apply Berry’s model in a restrained form, only referring to the subjective perception of attachment to one’s country of origin and receiving country. This restrained approach mainly corresponds to a subjective evaluation of cultural adaptation, leaving out other aspects (e.g. objective measures or numbers of contacts).

Table 3. Attachment to Europe among immigrants with different degree of acculturation (%)

	Marginalization	Separation	Integration	Assimilation	Total
N=	15 100.0	42 100.0	310 100.0	127 100.0	494 100.0
Not attached at all (1)	6.7	14.3	3.5	5.5	5.1
Not very attached (2)	66.7	52.4	20.3	37.0	28.7
Somewhat attached (3)	20.0	31.0	52.6	42.5	47.2
Very attached (4)	6.7	2.4	23.5	15.0	19.0
<i>Mean (1-4)</i>	2.2	2.2	2.9	2.6	2.8

Source: Survey on the Civic Integration of Immigrants, 2011

Note: Cramer's V=0.191***

Those who reside in Hungary for a longer period were more likely to follow an integration strategy with dual identities. Assimilating immigrants have more Hungarian friends, but they are also older (there are more pensioners and inactive in this group), many of whom come from the countries of the former Soviet Union. On the other hand, younger immigrants who have been in Hungary for a shorter time (many of them students) are more likely to be separated. They are more involved in the transnational arena as they have more foreigner friends, they were more likely to have travelled and to have lived abroad and also were more inclined to move to another country.

Determinants of Supranational Identification

In the following we describe the results of our exploration of the drivers of supranational/European attachment with a regression approach. Our dependent variable being measured on a four-point scale, we chose to run ordered logit models. Three models were developed: one for Hungarians (Model 1), one for immigrants (Model 2) and a third one which represents an attempt to deal with these two groups in a combined model. The two samples were drawn with different sampling methods from the two populations. This posed a challenge concerning merging the two samples. Including third-country immigrants into the Hungarian sample through a weighting process (in relation to their actual numbers) would make this population disappear. Furthermore, the two populations (and samples) have a different socio-demographic structure which also makes the comparison more difficult. In order to solve these problems we applied a special weighting process, as suggested by Sik (2012), based on adjusting the sample of the receiving population to the composition of the immigrant sample. This adjustment – namely, the re-weighting of the receiving society sample – was done according to the composition of the immigrant sample by age, gender and place of residence (Budapest/not Budapest). Through this process

we obtained a final combined sample with an equal share and socio-demographic structure which made comparison between the two groups possible. However, no generalizations can be made based on the results of this model (Model 3).

In order to address our first hypothesis, transnational involvement was measured through three indicators: whether a respondent had travelled abroad in the previous 5 years, whether a respondent could imagine moving to another country,⁵ and the number of foreign languages spoken. All three models included these measures.

As showed earlier in the theoretical part of the paper, social status and resources are very important determinants of both supranational attachment and transnational involvement (and indicate the success of the integration of migrants). In order to control for these effects we included the perceived social status of the respondents in Hungary⁶ and their occupational group.

Our second hypothesis was dealt with in Model 2 which addressed immigrants. The indicator used to measure the mode of acculturation was the (previously-described) cultural adaptation typology based on subjective measures of attachment to the country of origin and to Hungary.

Besides general control variables related to one's socio-demographic characteristics (such as age, gender and the region) for the immigrants individual variables related to migration/integration history were also included (Model 2). The length of time of residence in Hungary, the country of origin, and perceived changes in living conditions were taken into account.⁷ Furthermore, not all regions of Hungary were controlled for among the immigrant sample. We only differentiated between Budapest and non-Budapest areas due the special nature of the diffusion of immigrants in Hungary – about half of them live in Budapest, a fact which was also reflected in the sample.

Results

Overall, although the models contain several significant effects, the explaining power of the different models is relatively low – with the exception of the model applied to the immigrants (Model 2). The relatively high explanatory power of this model is explained by the inclusion of the variable destined to measure the different types of acculturation.

European attachment of Hungarians seems to be more likely among older respondents and men (see Model 1). Results showed some variation according to region as well: compared to the Southern Great Plain, supranational attachment

5 The exact wording of the questions was: "Have you been abroad (outside Hungary) in the past 5 years?" (yes/ no/ DK); and "Can you imagine moving to another country?" (yes/ no/ DK).

6 The exact wording of the question was: "In Hungary some people have high social status, some have low. Please define your place on a scale where 0 marks the lowest social status and 10 marks the highest".

7 In calculating perceived changes we used the difference of the following two questions, both measured on a 0-10 scale: "Please assess again your current and earlier living conditions. Where would you place them on a scale where 0 means the worst and 10 means the best living conditions?" (current living conditions/ living conditions before migration).

is stronger both in the Western and Central part of Hungary and the Northern Great Plain. Those who speak at least one foreign language are also more likely to have European attachments; however, the willingness to move to another country is negatively associated with this variable. Nevertheless, Model 1 did not include several variables because their effects were not statistically significant. Education and having foreigner friends did not play an important role, for instance. It seems that there must exist other variables which determine supranational attachment. While satisfaction with one's life, media usage or formal trust are all significant determinants of attachment to Europe,⁸ they do not significantly increase the explanatory power of the model. Attachment to Hungary, on the other hand, seems to be a variable that is able to increase the power of the model significantly, and is positively correlated to attachment to Europe.⁹

Model 2 for the immigrants provided more substantial information about the drivers of attachment to Europe. Similarly to with Hungarians, supranational attachment is higher among those who speak at least one foreign language; however, in the case of immigrants women are somewhat more likely to be attached to Europe. Furthermore, perceived social status also played a role: the higher a respondent placed themselves in the social hierarchy, the more they were attached to Europe. The most important determinant, however, was the mode of acculturation. While a dual attachment to the country of origin and the country of residence plays in favor of European attachment (compared to assimilation strategies) stronger separation and marginalization predicts a lower level of supranational attachment. Among the different variables related to the individuals' migration/ integration history, the length of time spent in Hungary and perceived changes in living conditions were not significant determinants; as for the country of origin, migrants from Asia (except China) are less open to "Europeanness" than immigrants from Africa, Middle East or South America. Alternatively, we also tested a model which examined the effect of having a European origin, (i.e. having come from a European country) instead of being from different country groups. Results of this analysis showed that, all other parameters being very similar, coming from a European country as opposed to a non-European country had an effect, although it was not very significant.¹⁰

8 Not included in the models because examining these factors was not the objective of the analysis.

9 Findings from the model which include attachment to Hungary are not reported in the article.

10 We decided whether a country was European based on its membership in the Council of Europe: countries of the former Soviet Union (except for Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan) were included, together with countries from the Balkans and Turkey. Coming from a European country made it 1.5 times more likely that a respondent would be attached to Europe (however, this effect was significant only at the $p=0.038$ level). This model is not reported in the article.

Table 4. Determinants of supranational identification (ordered logit models – odds ratios)

	Model 1: Receiving society	Model 2: Third-country immigrants	Model 3: Joint model
Age	1.01***	1.01	1.01**
Male	1.29**	0.65**	0.95
Central Hungary/ Budapest	1.43*	0.73	0.75
Central Transdanubia	1.79**		0.90
Western Transdanubia	1.50		1.08
Southern Transdanubia	1.22		0.61
Northern Hungary	1.28		0.77
Northern Great Plain (Reference category: Southern Great Plain)	1.70**		0.94
Professional/ managerial	0.94	1.01	1.49
Office worker	1.28	0.93	1.44
Manual worker	1.01	0.67	1.21
Student	1.29	0.95	1.20
Pensioner/ other inactive (Reference category: Unemployed)	0.90	0.40	0.98
Perceived social status	1.06	1.16**	1.13****
Speak at least one foreign language	1.54***	1.78**	1.87****
Has been abroad	1.04	0.82	0.65****
Would move to another country	0.60**	0.74	0.72*
Immigrant			0.43****
Countries of the former Soviet Union		1.03	
China		0.74	
Balkans		1.09	
USA/Canada/Australia/New Zealand		0.54	
Other Asian (Reference category: Africa/Middle East/South America)		0.52*	
Length of time spent in Hungary		0.99	
Change in living condition		1.04	
Marginalization		0.25**	
Separation		0.29****	
Integration (Reference category: Assimilation)		1.87****	
- 2 LL	2309.2	983.6	2211.7
Chi-squared (d.f.)	39.5 (17)	78.5 (22)	66.0 (18)
R ² _L	0.02	0.07	0.03
N	972	443	949

Notes: See Appendix 2 for detailed results. Statistical significance: **** < 0.001, *** < 0.01, ** < 0.05, * < 0.1.

The likelihood ratio R² was used to assess the predictive power of the model (Székelyi–Barna 2003:391, Menard 2010:47). The R²_L = ((-2LL₀) - (-2LL₁)) / (-2LL₀) shows the proportional reduction of the -2LL₀ log-likelihood function.

The joint regression model (Model 3) purely serves for comparison purposes between the two target groups; no generalization of the results or mechanisms is possible. However, what can be said based on these results is that even if the socio-demographic structure of the receiving society were similar to the immigrants', there would still be differences between these two groups in terms of their attachment to Europe. Immigrants are less likely to form a supranational attachment than members of the receiving society. Furthermore, previous results are also confirmed: while knowledge of a foreign language and having travelled abroad favors Europeanness, intentions to move to another country have the opposite effect.

Discussion

These results do not fully confirm our initial hypotheses. Our first suggestion that a higher level of transnational involvement would favor supranational attachment is only partly confirmed (H1a). Transnational involvement shows several ambiguities: while the influence of knowledge of a foreign language followed the expected pattern and was a positive determinant of European attachment (both for Hungarians and immigrants) (Model 1 & 2), it seems that having the intention to move to another country had a negative impact. A possible explanation for this phenomenon for the Hungarian public might be that intentions to migrate are rooted in some kind of frustration with one's current situation that might erode both national and European attachments.¹¹ Moving to another country, however, is at the core of the concept of migrant transnationalism. Among migrants, this measure did not have significant effect (Model 2). This shows the difference in the way this indicator (intention to migrate) is perceived between the two groups. Furthermore, we hypothesized that, due to their higher involvement in transnational ties and practices, immigrants would be more open to having attachments beyond those they have to their nation. This hypothesis proved untrue (Model 3); immigrants show a lower level of attachment to Europe.

Secondly, we wanted to explore the link between the different modes of cultural adaptation and supranational attachment. Indeed, following separation, marginalization, integration or an assimilation strategy is a powerful determinant of attachment to Europe among immigrants. A dual attachment to the country of origin and Hungary favors European attachment, whereas those who are rather attached to their country of origin and less to Hungary are also less liable to be attached to Europe. Correspondingly, of the two alternative hypotheses we proposed, the second one proved better. Our first suggestion (H2a) that third-country immigrants with transnational involvement would not bother to form attachments to their country of residence (Hungary) but would rather become attached at the supranational level

¹¹ Indeed, based on crosstabulation, both national and European attachments were weaker for native Hungarian respondents who had the intention to move to another country.

(in the view that eventually they might migrate further away) proved to be wrong. Instead, attachment to Europe seems to be similar for third-country immigrants and the general population: European attachment is embedded in attachment to Hungary. Those who were less attached to their host country were also less attached to Europe.

It seems that the link between supranational attachment and transnational involvement is more complex than we expected. The reasons for this might lie either in the conception of transnationalism and Europeanism or in the characteristics of Hungarian immigrants, who, despite being more involved in transnational ties, do not differ significantly from Hungarians when it comes to moving to another country (see *Table 2*).

Conclusion

In this article we addressed the question of attachment to Europe through the concept of transnationalism. Even though European identity is a widely-researched topic, approaching it from this perspective can be considered a relatively new and relevant approach. Through the possibility of including in our analysis third-country immigrants in Hungary together with the Hungarian population, we benefitted from examining the concept of transnationalism using a wider perspective.

In this article the general Hungarian public and third-country immigrants were compared along their attachments to Hungary/to their country of origin, and to Europe. Based on previous academic research we supposed that transnational involvement would lead to stronger supranational attachment in both groups. Furthermore, in the case of immigrants who are more involved in transnational networks and practices, we proposed that supranational attachment would be stronger than either their attachment to their country of origin or to Hungary.

Results did not confirm our initial expectations. Despite their higher transnational involvement immigrants are less attached to Europe than Hungarians. While national attachment favors supranational identification among the receiving population, a dual attachment to both Hungary and the country of origin made it more likely that a pro-European feeling would exist among third-country immigrants. An exclusive attachment to the country of origin (or the lack of any attachment at all) seems to work against supranational identification, despite the fact that these groups are more involved in transnationalism. It seems, indeed, that the link between Europeanness and transnationalism is more complex than we expected.

A possible explanation for our results might be found in the specificities of the Hungarian context, both in terms of the receiving population (who are attached to Europe in greater-than-average proportions), and the characteristics of the migrant population in Hungary. Their more advantageous social situation might serve to explain the fact that in terms of intentions to move to another country, there were no significant differences between them.

Another possible explanation is that Europe may not ultimately give rise to the kind of post-national membership that scholars have referred to in previous works (e.g. Kumar 2003, Martiniello 2006). It seems that Europeanness is indeed embedded in the national identity of Hungarians, as suggested by Risse (2010), but it is also embedded in the attachment to Hungary of third-country immigrants.

In conclusion, exploring the overlapping or contradictory elements of the concepts of transnationalism and Europeanness seems to be relevant to further research. This subject has already been somewhat addressed through mobility within the European Union; however, the inclusion of third-country immigrants might prove interesting. Comparisons between the concept of Europeanness and transnationalism related to people's attachment and everyday practices might show some similarity with comparisons between the concepts of globalization and Europeanization in the economic sector. While globalization and transnationalism are not restricted to Europe, the other two concepts are part of the core characteristics of Europe and the European Union. Indeed, Fligstein found that in the economic sector there was a regional concentration of trade that suggested that a Europeanization process had occurred which was not only due to globalization processes (Fligstein 2011). Maybe there is a similar difference between transnationalism and Europeanness. A pertinent question remains: is Europe or the EU able to form a transnational social space that could trigger the attachment or identification of the people who live within it, and if so, to what extent?

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodological appendix

The surveys about Hungarian society and immigrants were both part of the “Survey on the Civic Integration of Immigrants”, a research project funded by the European Integration Fund and carried out by the Centre for Empirical Social Research of the Corvinus University of Budapest. The two surveys were carried out in the summer of 2011 and were based on similar questionnaires, allowing for direct comparability. The representative survey of adult members of Hungarian society (of at least 18 years of age) was based on a two-stage, proportionally-stratified probability sample containing 1000 randomly selected persons. The sample was

proportionally representative of Hungary's settlements, with 111 sampling units (first stage). The second stage of sampling in the selected settlements was done using random selections of individuals from the electronic database of the Central Office for Administrative and Electronic Public Services (COAEPS). Data collection was undertaken using the CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) method. The composition of the sample corresponds to the composition of the entire adult population according to the most important socio-demographic indicators (sex, age group, level of education and type of residence).

The immigrant survey targeted third country immigrants who were staying in Hungary with: (1) an immigration permit; (2) a permanent residence permit; (3) an interim permanent residence permit; (4) a residence permit; (5) a national permanent residence permit; or, (6) an EC permanent residence permit. A portion of the 500 interviews (n=156) was based on a random list of these people provided by the COAEPS following a multi-stage sampling method according to settlements. However, the list did not prove to be sufficient to complete the 500 interviews. The basic problem with the address list provided by the COAEPS was the high number of invalid addresses, and there were also a large number of addresses at which the assigned persons: a) had never been seen; b) had already left Hungary; or, c) had received Hungarian citizenship in the meantime. The poor quality of the registration list for this population was a significant hindrance to accurate surveying. Immigrants are thus considered to be a difficult population in this regard. Accordingly, the snowball method was applied for the remaining interviews (n=344). The starting points (persons) for this sampling were recruited through organizations for immigrants and specially-selected locations (shops, restaurants, marketplaces, shopping centers, - e.g. the Asia Centre in Budapest). Data were collected in face-to-face interviews in a paper-based format.

Finally, in order to make minor corrections the native Hungarian sample was weighted for sex, age groups, education and type of settlement, while the sample of migrants was weighted for age groups and sex. As a result, the final sample of immigrants adequately represents the above-specified elements in the (at least 18 year old) immigrant population in Hungary in terms of age, gender and country of origin (for more information see Göncz et al. 2012).

Appendix 2: Results of the ordered logit models

Table A1. Results of the Model 1 (Receiving society)

Model 1: Receiving society			
	B	S.E.	Exp(B)
Threshold 1	-0.48****	0.36	
Threshold 2	0.29	0.34	
Threshold 3	2.15****	0.35	
Age	0.01	0.00	1.01***
Male	0.25	0.12	1.29**
Central Hungary/ Budapest	0.36	0.20	1.43*
Central Transdanubia	0.58	0.25	1.79**
Western Transdanubia	0.41	0.26	1.50
Southern Transdanubia	0.20	0.25	1.22
Northern Hungary	0.24	0.24	1.28
Northern Great Plain (Reference category: Southern Great Plain)	0.53	0.23	1.70**
Professional/ managerial	-0.06	0.28	0.94
Office worker	0.25	0.27	1.28
Manual worker	0.01	0.23	1.01
Student	0.25	0.30	1.29
Pensioner/ other inactive (Reference category: Unemployed)	-0.11	0.24	0.90
Perceived social status	0.06	0.04	1.06
Speak at least one foreign language	0.43	0.16	1.54***
Has been abroad	0.04	0.16	1.04
Would move to another country	-0.51	0.21	0.60**
- 2 LL	2211.7		
Chi-squared (d.f.)	66.0 (18)		
R ² _L	0.03		
N	949		

Notes: Statistical significance: **** < 0.001, *** < 0.01, ** < 0.05, * < 0.1.

Table A2. Results of the Model 2 (Third-country immigrants)

Model 2: Third-country immigrants			
	B	S.E.	Exp(B)
Threshold 1	-2.26***	0.91	
Threshold 2	0.12	0.89	
Threshold 3	2.46***	0.90	
Age	0.01	0.01	1.01
Male	-0.44	0.20	0.65**
Central Hungary/ Budapest	-0.31	0.24	0.73
Professional/ managerial	0.01	0.56	1.01
Office worker	-0.08	0.60	0.93
Manual worker	-0.39	0.57	0.67
Student	-0.05	0.63	0.95
Pensioner/ other inactive (Reference category: Unemployed)	-0.91	0.59	0.40
Perceived social status	0.15	0.06	1.16**
Speak at least one foreign language	0.43	0.29	1.78**
Has been abroad	0.04	0.20	0.82
Would move to another country	-0.51	0.32	0.74
Countries of the former Soviet Union	0.03	0.33	1.03
China	-0.31	0.36	0.74
Balkans	0.09	0.36	1.09
USA/Canada/Australia/New Zealand	-0.62	0.48	0.54
Other Asian (Reference category: Africa/Middle East/South America)	-0.65	0.36	0.52*
Length of time spent in Hungary	-0.01	0.01	0.99
Change in living condition	0.04	0.04	1.04
Marginalization	-1.37	0.57	0.25**
Separation	-1.23	0.40	0.29****
Integration (Reference category: Assimilation)	0.63	0.22	1.87****
- 2 LL	983.6		
Chi-squared (d.f.)	78.5 (22)		
R ² _L	0.07		
N	443		

Notes: Statistical significance: **** < 0.001, *** < 0.01, ** < 0.05, * < 0.1.

Table A3. Results of the Model 3 (Joint model)

Model 3: Joint model			
	B	S.E.	Exp(B)
Threshold 1	-2.29****	0.43	
Threshold 2	-0.13	0.42	
Threshold 3	1.85****	0.42	
Age	0.01	0.01	1.01**
Male	-0.05	0.13	0.95
Central Hungary/ Budapest	-0.29	0.23	0.75
Central Transdanubia	-0.10	0.46	0.90
Western Transdanubia	0.07	0.46	1.08
Southern Transdanubia	-0.49	0.44	0.61
Northern Hungary	-0.26	0.39	0.77
Northern Great Plain (Reference category: Southern Great Plain)	-0.06	0.33	0.94
Professional/ managerial	0.40	0.30	1.49
Office worker	0.36	0.30	1.44
Manual worker	0.19	0.27	1.21
Student	0.18	0.32	1.20
Pensioner/ other inactive (Reference category: Unemployed)	-0.02	0.31	0.98
Perceived social status	0.12	0.04	1.13****
Speak at least one foreign language	0.63	0.16	1.87****
Has been abroad	-0.44	0.14	0.65****
Would move to another country	-0.33	0.19	0.72*
Immigrant	-0.83	0.14	0.43****
- 2 LL	2211.7		
Chi-squared (d.f.)	66.0 (18)		
R ² _L	0.03		
N	949		

Notes: Statistical significance: **** < 0.001, *** < 0.01, ** < 0.05, * < 0.1.

Class and the Social Embeddedness of the Economy

Outline of a Normative-functionalist Model of Social Class

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ABSTRACT: The paper undertakes the task of elaborating the outline of a normative-functionalist model of social class. Traditional Marxist and Weberian theories of social class both assume that with the emergence of capitalism the social embeddedness of economy dissolves and thereafter it is the capitalist economy that shapes society upon its own image. Hence, these theories imply the necessity of a description and understanding of social structure on the basis of relations of exploitation or of different market chances offered by the capitalist economy. In opposition to these theories, this paper attempts to grasp the structure of modern societies as if the capitalist economy were still embedded in society. The paper is based on the Parsonian thought that all societies institutionalise some balance between equality and inequality and that social stratification contributes to the normative integration of society. According to this view, the institutionalised norms and value standards of equality and inequality prescribe in what respects the members of society should be treated as equal and unequal. If economy is conceptualised as if it were embedded in society, i.e. as if its functioning were subject to the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality, an alternative viewpoint should be chosen to describe the class structure of society. In the course of classification it should be asked which norms of equality and inequality are institutionalised in modern societies and what kind of social groups could be differentiated in accordance. The paper tries to draw up a comprehensive class schema on the basis of this starting point. The theoretical framework applied in the paper places special questions in the centre of class analysis. By analysing the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality and their enforcement in society empirical investigations should find out whether social stratification could fulfil its integrative function or, contrarily, it leads to different social-political conflicts among different groups of society.

KEYWORDS: social structure, social stratification, social inequalities, class theory, class analysis

If we take a quick look at the main peculiarities of the recent neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian occupational class models (see Breen 2005; Wright 2005), it can be noted, as Esping-Andersen (1993) does, that they represent the class structure of modern societies in a very similar way.¹ These models rely on almost the same classification criteria and they thereby differentiate quite similar social groups. According to

¹ This paper is based on the author's previous work that was published in the Hungarian Statistical Review under the title "Foglalkozási osztályszerkezet (III.) – Egy normatív-funkcionalista osztálymodell vázlatára" [91(7): 718–744]. The research activity on which the paper is based was supported by the Bolyai János Research Fellowship.

these models, at the top of the social structure there are classes that excel with respect to their property, power or education, while at the bottom different working class positions are located. In the middle various groups are distinguished but the category of petty-bourgeoisie is always included. Thus, the empirical content of these models is, if not exactly the same, very similar. It might be said that class analysis functions in mainstream sociology as a largely fixed paradigm, in which the appropriate questions and their answers are well defined and consequently the measuring devices which are applied are also very similar.

In spite of their salient similarities, these models are far from being the same. A well elaborated class model has to meet several requirements. First of all, a class schema that is designed to map the class structure of society always has to be anchored in a comprehensive theory about the structural constraints of society. On the one hand, this theory is needed to determine which criteria need to be used in the classification, and on the other hand, it is also the theory that must formulate questions and hypotheses for use in empirical research (cf. Breen – Rottman 1995; Huszár 2011a). Regarding the theories on which the different class models are based and with respect to the special questions and hypotheses that are attached to them the different approaches that are taken to class analysis are quite distinct and their explanatory power may be really diverse in different fields of social research as well.

In this paper I undertake the task of elaborating at least the outline of a new class model.² This task, as we have seen, requires giving an answer to at least three different questions. In what follows I deal first with the problem of theory: how does one grasp the structural constraints of society that determine the structuring of the class system? The starting point of this work is to assume that with the help of the functionalist stratification theory an alternative class model could be elaborated.³ More precisely, it is Parsonsian thought, according to which “all societies institutionalize some balance between equality and inequality” (Parsons 1970: 19) on which this study has its foundation (1).⁴ After a delineation of the main features of the theoretical framework, the next task is to formulate the appropriate criteria which will enable us to classify members of society according to the theory’s claims (2–3.). Finally, I then try to highlight those special questions that may be answered with the help of this model of the class system (4).

Theory of Social Structure – Theory of What?

All models of class structure are anchored in a theory about the structural constraints

2 In the recent debates many have pointed out that the stratification of society could be described adequately through using many different theoretical and methodological approaches (see Berger 2013; Harcsa 2013; Tardos 2013; Vastagh 2013). I completely agree with these remarks. I would like to emphasise, however, that this paper (as with my previous ones: Huszár 2012, 2013a, 2013b) concentrates exclusively on the approach of (occupational) class analysis.

3 According to Péter Róbert (2013) functionalist stratification theory can hardly be used progressively in the field of class analysis. I hope that, in what follows, I manage to prove that we should pay attention to this tradition.

4 On Parsonsian functionalist stratification theory, see e.g. Hess 2001, Huszár 2013a: 50–52.

of society that is designed to clarify and elucidate the distinctions that are applied in the class model. It is, however, a relevant question what kind of starting point should be chosen to understand the structural constraints of society.⁵

Different class models of recent times have given quite differing answers to this question.⁶ Erik Olin Wright (1985, 1989, 2005) relies on the Marxian tradition to understand the structural constraints of society with the help of the notion of exploitation. For Wright the task of representing social structure means nothing more than to explore the relations of exploitation in society.⁷ In contrast, John Goldthorpe's ideas and the class schemas that were constructed on the basis of his theory rather follow the Weberian way (Eriksson – Goldthorpe 1992; Goldthorpe 2007).⁸ For them, the structural constraints of society are incorporated in different life chances that are created by the various market and particularly labour market positions. Goldthorpe tries to grasp these differing positions by identifying the different types of employment contracts (Goldthorpe 2007). The class schema of Esping-Andersen (1993) may be related first of all to the Weberian tradition. It is important to note, however, that his class model is anchored in a theory about the post-industrial development of western societies. Hence, the structural constraints of society are interpreted by Esping-Andersen in the framework of a broad modernisation theory.

Thus, the different approaches to class analysis offer different theories about the structural constraints of society, but all of them focus the attention on the inequalities and conflicts of interests that can be observed in the economy or on the labour market. Exploring these conflicts and inequalities is key to how they represent social structure and differentiate social classes. However, the problem could be approached differently if we raise (as Parsons does) the following question: what forms of equality and inequality are institutionalised in society? Nevertheless, this question becomes clear only if we assume that all societies – and the functioning of their economies as well – are subject to certain value standards and norms that ensure their normative integration (Parsons 1970, 1991).⁹ Or, to put it alternatively, if it is assumed that the functioning of the economy is *embedded* in society (Polányi

5 Tamás Kolosi (1987: 27–47) also pointed out that there is no unequivocal and widely accepted definition of social structure. Different approaches can be identified that understand the problem in alternative ways.

6 Traditional and current theories of social class are reviewed by Péter Róbert (1997, 2009).

7 In Hungary, Erzsébet Szalai (2001, 2006) tries to utilize the concept of exploitation, and the works of Iván Szelényi are tied explicitly to the Marxian tradition (although he turned to Bourdieu in his latest works) (see Konrad-Szelényi 1989; Szelényi 1992; Eyal-Szelényi Townsley 1998).

8 In Hungary, Erzsébet Bukodi and her colleagues explicitly follow a Goldthorpean approach (see e.g. Bukodi 2006; Bukodi-Altorjai-Tallér 2005), but Zsuzsa Ferge (1969, 2002, 2006, 2010) and the circle of Tamás Kolosi are both tied first of all to the Weberian tradition (see e.g. Kolosi 2000; Kolosi-Róbert 2004; Kolosi-Dencső 2006; Kolosi-Keller 2010).

9 Parsons emphasizes the normative aspects of social stratification in several places (see e.g. Parsons 1939, 1940a, 1940b, 1949, 1963, 1970). For the issue of the social embeddedness of the economy see especially Parsons' (1991) Marshall lectures. Of course Parsons is not alone in these findings; his works are part of a long social theoretical tradition whose representatives equally emphasize the role of social norms in the sphere of economy, albeit differently. There is no space here to review this tradition in detail, I would simply like to draw attention to the works of Axel Honneth who discusses with profundity the main figures in the tradition, from Hegel, Durkheim, Parsons and Karl Polanyi to the recent theoreticians (see Honneth 2011: 320–360.) In addition, Honneth could be regarded as being the most important recent representative of the tradition, and as someone who reinterpreted the problem with the help of the concept of recognition and undertook the task of understanding the economy as an order of recognition that is integrated by social norms (see Honneth 1994, 2003, 2011).

1944a, 1944b). These value standards and norms are incorporated in different forms. They appear in the legal documents of society and they are expressed in the attitudes, judgements and acts of individuals as well. If we take the social embeddedness of the economy as a basis, a new conception could be elaborated on the structural constraints that determine the structuring of the class system.

Traditional versions of class theory all assume that with the emergence of capitalism the social embeddedness of the economy breaks up and thereafter it is the capitalist economy that shapes society after its own image. This is why it is suggested in these theories that one should describe social structure according to different conflicts of interests, or according to market chances. However, if we contrarily conceptualise the capitalist economy as still being subject to institutionalised social norms, class structure should be represented in a different way. We should then ask which forms of inequality are underpinned by institutionalised norms and which ones violate these norms. The constraining force of these norms – to which the capitalist economy is subject as well – lies in the fact that that they prescribe to what extent members of society must be treated as equals (or unequals). They determine which forms of equality could be justified and which ones are illegitimate. It is a basic assumption of this paper that we can only describe the structural constraints of society adequately if we suppose the social embeddedness of the capitalist economy and consider the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality.

The emergence of western capitalism is inseparable from the development of modern societies that have changed fundamentally the equality and inequality relations among members of society. Especially important elements of this process were the introduction of the institution of citizenship and universal law, because they lay down the principle that, regarding their rights, all members of society are equal (see Marshall 1992). However, in terms of individual rights, this can change historically and through societies. According to T. H. Marshall's comprehensive study, three major epochs can be distinguished regarding the content of citizenship. Accordingly, civil rights were recognized in the 18th century, political rights were formulated in the 19th century and the most important achievement of the 20th century was the emergence of social rights.

In traditional societies the most important forms of social inequality were determined by a kind of substantive law that was underpinned by tradition. In these societies the place of the individual in social structure was ascribed such a way that they had no, or very limited opportunity to change it. In modern societies, in contrast, universal law does not inform us about the social standing of individuals. Universal law rules out certain types of former inequalities but at the same time opens up the space for new forms. In the light of this development feudal privileges and feudal forms of exploitation turn out to be illegitimate and new principles emerge and become accepted to justify social inequality. At this time, in parallel with the emergence of a capitalist economy, the principle of achievement becomes

the most important reference point for justifying inequalities (see Honneth 1994: 173–211, 2003: 162–277; Huszár 2011b).

According to the most general formulation, the achievement principle claims that equal achievements should be rewarded equally, and unequal ones unequally. Thus, according to the principle, those who are able to achieve more deserve higher remuneration as well, and vice versa. This general formulation of the achievement principle is quite ambiguous because it does not specify what is to be meant by achievement. There are, however, two things that are intrinsically tied to the meaning of achievement: on the one hand, achievement always supposes a kind of individual effort or work, and on the other hand some kind of result as well, which comes into being due to individual effort (see Offe 1970: 42–49; Neckel – Dröge – Somm 2004: 144; Voswinkel–Kocyba 1970: 23–24). What is reckoned as “work” or “result” (i.e. as achievement), however, can change historically; the achievement principle claims only that that everyone must be evaluated equally on the grounds of his or her achievements.

Therefore, roughly speaking, the equality and inequality relations of modern societies are determined on the one hand by the types of individual rights that have been recognised, and on the other hand by what is seen as achievement in society. It is this normative background that ascertains the framework of the functioning of the capitalist economy. Thus, if we assume that the capitalist economy is embedded in social norms, in the course of the representation of social structure it needs to be taken into account what forms of equality and inequality are institutionalised in society. It is not therefore conflicts of interests or different market chances that should be examined, as was suggested by traditional Marxian and Weberian theories. In opposition to these theories one should ask what sort of “normative statuses” have been created by society. Hence, in the course of classification those people should be put into the same category who are in the same position according to the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality; that is to say, those who are integrated into the normative order of society in a similar way.

In what follows I attempt to elaborate a comprehensive class schema on the basis of this starting point. This approach may be called – by using the terminology of Axel Honneth (2011: 332–334) – a normative-functionalist one. Such an approach goes back to the tradition of functionalist stratification theory and follows the Parsonsian line that puts the emphasis on the problem of the normative integration of society. Accordingly, in what follows I attempt to first describe the horizontal division of class structure by examining the institutionalised norms of equality. After this I address the hierarchical nature of social structure and try to represent it according to recognised norms of inequality.

The Horizontal Division of Social Structure

The most important disagreements in the recent models of class structure have crystallised around the classification criterion of status in employment. It is debated, first of all, whether employers and employees should be distinguished from each other when describing social structure, and if so, how.¹⁰ It can be noted, however, that if the criterion is included in a class model it plays a central role in it that indicates the main dividing lines of class structure. Thus, in connection with the first distinction regarding class structure I suggest that it is worth having a look at the debates about the criterion of status in employment.

The first question is whether the criterion should be taken into account at all when attempts are made to represent social structure. Among the recent theoreticians of occupational class structure it was Gosta Esping-Andresen (1993) who outlined a class model in which this variable plays no role. There are a lot of arguments to underpin this approach. It can be stated, first of all, that the criterion of status in employment is far from being an exact distinction. It may be enough to mention that the distinction that is made between employers and employees is in many cases very problematic. Consider, for example, the manager who works as an employee at the firm that he partly owns, or think about those self-employed people who repeatedly make contracts solely with the same client. Another argument against the application of the criterion is that if we would like to better understand the vertical structure of society, there is simply no need to include these distinctions in the class model. As Esping-Andersen's model shows, it is possible to consistently elaborate a class schema that aggregates the different occupations according to the power or knowledge that are attached to them. Moreover, because of its timelessness such a class schema would make it possible to perform long-term comparative studies which could examine the effects of the position one occupies in the occupational system.

Timelessness, however, is not only an advantage, but a disadvantage as well. A class schema that is designed merely on the basis of the peculiarities of occupations may help us to examine such societies as feudal, capitalist or state socialist ones but at the same time it is the class schema that tells the least about the characteristics of any of them. It should be added, however, that Esping-Andersen's approach can not be said to be timeless. By differentiating between industrial, post-industrial and agrarian sectors his model is anchored in a modernisation theory that is designed to highlight the distinctions between societies that are at different levels of development. The differences between capitalist and state socialist societies, however, get lost in this theoretical framework as well because these societies appear

¹⁰ There are other categories that are distinguished by the employment status variable. See, for example, the categories that were used in the 2011 Hungarian Census: employee (1); sole proprietor, self-employed (2); working member of a company (3); casual worker (working by special commission contract, casual worker, day worker) (4); employed in public works (doing work for public benefit, public purposes, etc., employed in public employment) (5); helping family members (6).

here to be basically similar, industrial societies, although they follow different paths of industrialisation.

Esping-Andersen does not rely on the criterion of status in employment, but most of the recent class schemas do. This criterion is usually introduced to help identify the peculiarities of capitalist societies that differentiate them from other kind of societies. Actually, the different traditions in the field of class analysis could be distinguished from each other on the basis of how they theorize the relationship between employers and employees. The next question that must follow: if we choose to take employment status criterion into account in a class schema, how should it be done?

Among the current approaches to occupational class structure the theory of Erik Olin Wright introduces the criterion as an indicator of capital-labour relationships and, in accordance with the Marxian tradition, he understands it as if it were fundamentally hierarchical (see e.g. Wright 1985, 1989). As was already discussed, Wright concentrates on exploring the relations of exploitation in society, and in capitalist societies he holds the capital-labour relationship to be the dominant form of exploitation. The fruitfulness of the approach is of course justified by the results that were produced by Wright and other Marxian scholars. It can be noted, however, that those who would like to do class analysis on the grounds of the concept of exploitation make very strong claims. They have to prove that “the welfare of the rich causally depends on the deprivations of the poor – the rich are rich because the poor are poor; and [that] the welfare of the rich depends upon the effort of the poor – the rich, through one mechanism or another, appropriate part of the fruits of labour of the poor” (Wright 1989: 8) – as outlined in the definition of exploitation by Wright.¹¹ It is not enough, moreover, to state this claim theoretically but for the Marxian versions of class analysis it is the task of empirical research to find evidence that supports this preliminary theoretical assumption.

The status of employment criterion appears in the EGP schema as well and also plays a significant role in the theory of Goldthorpe, on which the EGP is based (see e.g. Erikson – Goldthorpe 1992, Goldthorpe 2007).¹² As a starting point, Goldthorpe differentiates between employers, the self-employed and employees. These distinctions he treats as self-evident and he does not find it important to explain them in detail.¹³ It may be emphasized, however, that Goldthorpe regards the relationship between employers and employees as being neither fundamentally hierarchical nor horizontal.¹⁴ This fact differentiates Goldthorpean theory from Marxian ones very

11 C.f. János Kis's (1993: 274–279) work, where he elaborates an alternative Rawlsian conception of exploitation.

12 The next comments on the EGP pertain completely to the European Social-economic Classification (ESeC) (see e.g. Rose-Harrison 2010) and also to Erzsébet Bukodi's class schema that was developed for the 2001 Hungarian Census (see Záhonyi-Bukodi 2004; Bukodi-Altörjai-Tallér 2005; Bukodi 2006). These models completely follow the EGP in the respects that are discussed here.

13 See: “Why these three categories should exist is not itself especially problematic, or at least not in the context of any form of society that sustains the institutions of private property and a labour market” (Goldthorpe 2007: 103).

14 For a discussion of the problem of hierarchy by Goldthorpe, see Huszár 2013b: 122–124.

clearly. It is also worth noting in connection with Goldthorpe's approach that while his theory is based on primary distinctions between employers, self-employed and employees, at the end these distinctions play a subordinate role in the class schema itself. The EGP's first level includes only one single class category for employers and the self-employed and, moreover, from this category larger employers are removed.¹⁵ Similarly, the subdivision of the category is also not completely consistent with the preliminary theoretical foundations, insofar as a single farmer class is included in the same level, in which employers and the self-employed are differentiated from each other (see Breen 2005: 40–42, Huszár 2013b: 122–124)

Thus Wright, by referring to the concept of exploitation, regards the relationship between employers and employees to be hierarchical, while Goldthorpe does not take a definite position about this question. In conclusion, we can find in the middle of the EGP schema a category of self-employed whose relationship to employee classes is not clarified at all.¹⁶ However, the problem could be approached alternatively if we assume – in opposition to the views of Wright and Goldthorpe – that the categories that are distinguished with the help of the employment status criterion stand in a horizontal relationship with each other. It is my claim that this suggestion could be well founded on the basis of the normative-functionalist approach that is followed in this paper by referring to the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality.

What must be emphasised first is that capitalism can function only when the freedom of enterprise and the right to work is recognised,¹⁷ and insofar as the emergence of capitalism presupposes a certain degree of the development of rights. As Marshall put it, the relationship between the emergence of capitalism and the development of rights is manifold and complicated. In certain epochs the two processes have supported each other, while in others their relationship has been rather conflictual. Marshall emphasises that it is significant that the right to property and the right to work appeared among the first generational civic rights; namely in parallel with freedom of speech, the freedom of assembly or the freedom of religion. At that time the two processes fundamentally supported each other because the recognition of civic rights made it possible for members of society to act freely and to make contracts as equals in the sphere of the economy as well. Thus, this stage of development of rights foreshadows the emergence of capitalism, and – among other things – makes its development possible (see Marshall 1992: 8–27).

On the grounds of this starting point a new conception can be elaborated using the criterion of status in employment. Accordingly, the categories that are distinguished

15 They are classified as being in the service class. See the explanation of Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992: 40–41) and the critique of Breen (2005: 36–47).

16 Interestingly, this problem came up in the Ferge-Andorka schema that was used for compiling official statistics in Hungary. In Ferge Zsuzsa's original model – which did not include a distinct category for self-employed craftsmen and tradesmen – the class categories could be ranked vertically and the schema was clearly hierarchical (see Ferge 1969: 151–158). The self-employed category was introduced later on by Rudolf Andorka and it disrupted the clear hierarchical character of the previous schema (see Andorka 1970: 24). Ferge avoids this problem in her newer works as well (see e.g. Ferge 2010; Huszár 2012: 8–9).

17 This idea is emphasized both by Marx (2007: 784–849) and Weber (2007). See, furthermore, the important study of Robert Castel ([2003]).

with the help of the criterion denote those forms of employment that are created by modern capitalist societies and that are recognised as legitimate ways of acquiring the goods that are indispensable for the satisfaction of basic needs. These societies differ from other kinds of societies in that they develop exactly these forms and not others. In modern capitalist societies slavery, for example, is prohibited and nobody is obliged to perform socage. In these societies, on the other hand, everyone has an equal right to start an enterprise and to acquire profit. Similarly, every member of society is equally allowed to dispose freely of their workforce and to draw up contracts. In modern capitalist societies the practitioners of different forms of employment are in this important respect equals, and their relationship to each other should be regarded as horizontal.¹⁸

According to the work of Marshall, the recognition of social rights has opened a new and conflicting epoch in the history of the relationship between capitalism and the development of rights (see Marshall 1992: 27–44). This has great significance for class analysis as well (Esping-Andersen 1990; Huszár 2011c: 119–121, 2013b: 124–127). From our point of view the most important effect of this is that, by recognising social rights, new ways of acquiring income have been created that are outside the occupational system. Social rights lay down the principle that everyone has the right to a certain degree of social safety.¹⁹ The state facilitates the enforcement of these rights with different tools. These tools include (among other mechanisms) redistributing income which creates different entitlements that make it possible for the eligible persons to obtain earnings without working. These entitlements are based on different principles: disabled people, for example, are entitled to a social income because their health status does not allow them to work, while old people get a pension because of their previous achievements. The unemployed are supported to help them reintegrate into the world of work, etc.²⁰ These entitlements, accordingly, create social statuses that are not grounded on participation in the occupational system but with respect to their normative base these statuses are equal with occupational ones.

In this chapter I argued that employment status is taken into account as a classification criterion in those class schemas that stress the peculiarities of capitalist societies compared to other types. The relationship between employers

18 It is worth having a look from this viewpoint at the historical changes in the constitutional regulation of the right to work and at the history of the freedom of enterprise in Hungary. Although the Stalinist constitution of 1949 laid down that “the means of production could be owned privately”, it also added that “the working people gradually displace the capitalist elements”. The constitution which followed the regime change in 1989 and the new basic law that was adopted by the Fidesz-KDNP recently unequivocally established the freedom of enterprise. The right to work was ensured by all of the three constitutions (see *Appendix*).

19 Although in different ways, all of the three Hungarian Constitutions refer to social rights (see *appendix*).

20 In the related question about economic status the following groupings are distinguished in the 2011 Hungarian Census: working (employee, entrepreneur, helping family member, casual worker, primary producer, member of co-operative) (1); jobless, job-seeker (2); old-age pension, recipient of private pension (3); disability pensioner, accident annuity private beneficiary (4); survivors’ (widows/widowers’, parents’) pension, retirement provision recipient (5); recipient of nursing allowance (6); child attending infant nursery or kindergarten, student, student receiving tertiary-education (7); 0–15 year-old child not attending infant nursery, kindergarten or school (8); living on own assets or through leasing real estate (9); housewife (10); recipient of social support (11); other (12).

and employees could be interpreted in various ways, but according to the normative-functional approach that is followed here they are in a horizontal relationship with each other. This variable, together with that of economic status, informs us about the legitimate ways of acquiring income in modern capitalist societies. In this respect all forms of economic or employment statuses are equally legitimate and none of them could be ranked above or below the other. Consequently, if we use these classification criteria we can arrive at the horizontal structure of modern capitalist societies. According to the variables of economic status and those of employment status, various groups may be distinguished, but if we take into account their significance, groups of employers, employees, unemployed and pensioners should certainly be differentiated from each other.

The Vertical Division of Social Structure

After this examination of the horizontal aspect of social structure the next task is to explore its vertical nature. It is this question that was predominantly raised by traditional versions of class theory, and it was at the centre of the functionalist stratification theory as well. In their famous work Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore (1945) offered an universal explanation for the existence of social inequalities with the help of the functionalist stratification theory, and, in his early writings, Parsons, by emphasising the normative respects of social stratification, also concentrated almost exclusively on the vertical aspect of social stratification (Parsons 1940a, 1949).

If we would like to examine the hierarchical division of class structure by relying on the normative-functional approach that is followed in this paper, we should ask which forms of social inequalities are institutionalised in society. As was discussed earlier, in modern societies the principle of achievement becomes the most important ground for justifying social inequalities. According to this moral evaluation of modern societies, those who achieve more must occupy higher positions in the inequality system of society.²¹ Thus, to explore the hierarchical structure of society it should be determined what is considered to be an achievement. Additionally, besides the achievement principle, it should be understood what kind of other, secondary principles are recognised in the justification of social inequalities. It is through these investigations that we could define the classification criteria that are to be applied in the class schema.

The categories that were distinguished horizontally in the previous chapter are far from being homogenous; each of them could embrace upper and lower social positions as well. Therefore each could be analysed independently regarding their internal hierarchy. The existence of these categories is underpinned by different

21 The achievement principle also has its constitutional basis in Hungary. Both of the constitutions of 1949 and 1989 include reference to the principle but, interestingly, from the new constitution reference was omitted (see appendix).

normative principles, so their internal hierarchy rests on different bases. In what follows I analyse only groups of employers and employees in detail and I do not deal with those who are outside the occupational system.

It is first of all the right to property and the freedom of enterprise that constitutes the normative grounds of entrepreneurial activity in modern societies. These rights mean that within the given legal framework everyone has the right to start their own business and to profit thereby. These rights belong to the category of fundamental civil rights, but the regulating role of the state can restrict their practice. These regulations can be embodied in tax or environmental laws, the state may keep business activity away from certain spheres and finally, the state also determines the relationship between entrepreneurs and two important groups – employees and customers (c.f. Honneth 2011: 317–469). If this normative framework is respected then entrepreneurial achievement has no other measure but that of success (c.f. Parsons 1940: 199). No matter in which sectors the enterprise functions and no matter how much the entrepreneur works, his achievement will be judged only by the profit he is able to generate.²² However, if success itself becomes the benchmark of achievement, all forms of inequalities that emerge within the group of entrepreneurs due to their business activity must be regarded as legitimate. Therefore, those entrepreneurs that are more successful and hence occupy inferior positions in the inequality system of society are justified in their positions: according to the institutionalised norms of inequality in modern societies their place is their due.

Consequently, if we follow the normative-functionalist approach that is applied here, the vertical division of the entrepreneurs' group should be carried out on the basis of the success of their business activity. In the course of the operationalization many different indicators could be taken into account. Success may be measured by the amount of profit generated, by the revenues of the firm or by the number of employees; the same indicators that are applied traditionally in the current models of class structure. How many classes is it worth differentiating within the group of entrepreneurs? This can depend on practical and technical factors (e.g. on the sample size). The key point in this respect is, however, how deep a division is required by a concrete piece of research. It may be concluded that a tripartite division that distinguishes between large, medium and small entrepreneurs makes possible manifold forms of analysis.

The next and the largest social category that is to be examined here is the category of employee. The normative status of employees is fundamentally different to that of entrepreneurs. Their economic activity depends less on their own initiatives but it is rather determined by their relationship to employers. This relationship is arranged

22 C.f. the dual characteristics of the concept of achievement that was discussed earlier, according to which achievement is always a kind of result that comes into being through individual effort. It is inconsistent to some extent with this definition, if entrepreneurial achievement is exclusively tied to the outcomes of market activities.

by employment contracts that fix the rights and duties of the contracting parties towards each other.²³

In differentiating between employee classes, Goldthorpe (2007) places employment contracts in the centre of the inquiry as well. According to his theory different types of employment contracts can be differentiated from each other by taking on the viewpoint of the rational employer. This presupposes that making different types of contracts with different groups of employees will be done according to the employer's own interests. This is how he differentiates between labour contracts and service relationships and this is how he identifies some mixed forms of employment contracts as well. However, if we would like to follow the normative-functionalist approach, employment contracts should be conceptualised alternatively. Accordingly, when defining different types of employment contracts it is not satisfactory to take on the viewpoint of employers and to refer solely to their self-interests. If the class position of employees rests merely on the interest calculations of employers as suggested by Goldthorpe, this would be completely incompatible with the fundamental civil rights of individuals.²⁴ If, however, these rights are respected it must be assumed that employment contracts are agreements that are concluded freely by equals and that their contents can not be derived unilaterally but must be determined by both actors. These contracts are being made with reference to the background of the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality and their content can not violate these norms seriously and permanently. Consequently, identifying different types of employment contracts and, respectively, different class positions, requires an examination of the following question: what agreement would be freely reached by employers and employees regarding the content of the contract? To put it another way, it should be clarified what both actors consider an achievement to be, and what other principles would they consider when entering into an agreement about the contents of an employment contract.

This question, of course, can be answered only hypothetically – similarly to Goldthorpe's question about the self-interests of employers. However, we may come closer to a solution if we first have a look at a special group for whom the normative principles that determine their employment relations are obvious, and then we try to eliminate the distortions arising from the special characteristics of the group. It is my claim that those who work in the public sector could be regarded as being

23 Contracts are of fundamental significance regarding the normative grounds of modern capitalist societies and also play a central role in the work of representatives of the social theoretical tradition that is followed in this paper (see especially Parsons 1991: 38–58; Honneth 2011: 320–360).

24 Goldthorpe himself is aware of this problem, but he does not think that it has to be taken into account when differentiating class positions: "I also recognize that although employers have the initiative in the design and implementation of employment contracts, the constraints under which they act are likely to include those created by employee responses to their initiatives, whether individually or collectively expressed, and also those that follow from the legislative and regulatory framework that is imposed on employment relations by the state. The nature of such constraints can, however, be expected to show great variation by time and place; and thus, a focus on the actions of employers in dealing with highly generalized contractual problems would seem appropriate, given that my concern is with explaining broad probabilistic regularities in the association between forms of contract and types of work rather than with the deviations from these regularities that will certainly be found" (Goldthorpe 2007: 10. footnote).

such a special group (c.f. Huszár 2011c: 116–118). Although the members of this group most often do technically the same job as their peers in the private sector, their employment relations are fundamentally determined by the fact that their employer is the state itself, or one of its organisations. Employees in the public sector are far from being equals with their employers; their employment contracts and employment relations are usually regulated by special laws that overwrite in many cases general laws that regulate the labour market.²⁵ These laws could be regarded as being ones that express the conviction of the legislator about justice and those that regulate normatively the inequality relations that exist in the public sector. Thus, if we would like to find out what kind of normative principles the inequalities in the public rest on, these special laws must be examined.

Laws which regulate the legal status of those working in the public sector furnish special rights and prescribe special obligations for this category of employees.²⁶ Of particular interest here is the fact that these laws, by introducing special pay scales, regulate the income relations and career opportunities of employees of the sector in detail (although there is some variation for different areas of the public sector). These pay scales determine the income conditions of employees through the combination of two dominant principles: one the one hand they rely on the educational level of employees, and on the other they take into account the number of years spent in the civil service. Accordingly, those whose educational level is higher and who have worked for a longer time in the sector can almost automatically count on receiving a higher income. Besides these factors it is also taken into account if someone performs managerial duties. Regulations prescribe higher salaries and better working conditions for employees at higher levels in the hierarchy. Earnings in the public sector finally also depend on a centre-periphery principle as well. Higher salaries are given to those who work at central institutions and lower ones to those who work at county or local-level organisations.

To sum up, the special laws for the civil service determine the earnings of employees in the public sector by relying on several principles. Their emphasis could be different, but I suppose that each of them plays a significant role in the private sector as well when employers and employees agree on the conditions of employment contracts. An estimation and ranking of the importance of the different principles could be attempted. According to legislation, the greatest differences can be found between managers and subordinates and, thereafter, between higher and lower skilled occupational positions. The role of the other principles is, if not insignificant, small compared to these factors. If the different normative principles of inequalities are institutionalized in the public sector according to this order, they must apply to the private sector even more, because among the principles examined here it is the

25 In what follows I concentrate only on Hungarian regulations. See first of all Act XXXIII of 1992 and Act CXCI of 2011 on the legal status of civil servants and government servants.

26 This condition would explain by itself the treatment of employees of the public sector as a distinct class, if analysis required this.

factors of management and education that can be associated most directly with the efficiency or productivity of a company.

These assumptions are confirmed if we briefly recall what classification criteria are applied by the different occupational class models to the hierarchical division of employees. Although Wright uses the language of exploitation and refers to organizational and skill assets, his model relies similarly on the classification criteria of management and education and, actually, it is these variables that play a prominent role in the EGP schema as well. Zsuzsa Ferge (1969: 86–122), whose early class model still has a central role in Hungarian official statistics, considers several factors for the hierarchical division of groups of employees, among which these two factors have special importance. Ferge, however, identifies other classification criteria that may be especially relevant from the viewpoint of the normative-functional approach applied in this paper. For instance, she takes into account the difference on the one hand between blue collar and white collar occupations, and on the other hand between jobs that involve either creative or routine work. These distinctions could serve as a basis for the justification of different forms of inequalities and the class structure could be represented in more detail if these criteria were also considered.

Thus, it can be concluded that there may be several different principles that regulate normatively the inequality relations which exist between employees. Moreover, according to the above reasoning we may also assume that when employers and employees draw up their contracts they would agree that those employees who perform management tasks and who occupy white collar jobs that require high level skills and creativity should get favourable positions. With the help of these four classification criteria employees could be categorized into different classes. Accordingly, at the top of the hierarchy those managers who perform management tasks and supervise the work of several employees can be found. This group of managers is then followed in the hierarchy by the class of professionals, whose higher position is underpinned by their outstanding knowledge and skills. Below these two upper classes an independent category could be distinguished for those white collar employees whose occupations require some skill but who undertake rather repetitive and routine work. By differentiating the lower, blue collar class positions we could also rely first of all on the variables of education and skills. According to this, it seems appropriate to distinguish two or three working class positions. On the one hand a distinct class category could be maintained for skilled workers whose favourable position is underpinned first of all by their special skills and experiences. A further category should exist for unskilled workers, whose place in the inequality system of society is determined by their lack of special skills and knowledge. Finally a third, intermediate semi-skilled worker category may also be included in the class schema.

Conclusions

The distinctions that were made in the previous chapters can be summarised graphically (see *Table 1*). As was described above, this paper was designed to follow a normative-functionalist approach whose starting point is that all societies institutionalise certain norms of equality and inequality. It further assumes that these norms need to be taken into account when any representation of social structure is attempted. In this model as a first step the group of entrepreneurs, employees, the unemployed, pensioners and the other inactive was differentiated horizontally. In the second step I started identifying the internal hierarchy of the group of entrepreneurs and employees.

Table 1. *A normative-functionalist model of social structure*

Entrepreneurs	Employees	Unemployed	Pensioners	Other inactive
Large entrepreneurs	Managers			
Medium entrepreneurs	Professionals			
Small entrepreneurs	Routine non-manual employees			
	Skilled manual workers			
	Semi-skilled manual workers			
	Unskilled manual workers			

If we compare this class schema with other currently-utilised models of occupational class structure, we will not find large differences between them on the sociological level. This schema relies on almost the same classification criteria that are being used by the other models, and the class categories that are differentiated here are also very similar to those that are traditionally identified.²⁷ What is conspicuous, however, is that the relationship of the traditional class categories to each other is differently determined.

Thus, the largest differences can be found at the theoretical level. All theories of class structure formulate special questions for empirical research. Wright tries to explore the relations of exploitation in modern capitalist societies, Goldthorpe investigates

²⁷ As the model relies largely on the classification criteria that were used in the early work of Ferge (1969) it resembles the most this latter schemata; it actually can be regarded as a slightly modified version of Ferge's proposition.

the relationship of labour market positions to different social phenomena and Esping-Andersen would like to test hypotheses about the post-industrial development of modern societies. As with these theories, the normative-functionalist approach that is followed here raises specific questions for class analysis.

Unlike other theories of occupational class structure this approach assumes that the capitalist economy is embedded in society. Accordingly, the empirical question that is raised by the theory is whether this is really the case. Is it true that social stratification really fulfils the integrative function that was attributed to it by Parsons and his followers, or, conversely, is it a source of different social-political conflicts (cf. Parsons 1949; Honneth 1994, 2003)? Thus, the class model refers to the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality, because it would like to serve as a yardstick: a yardstick that helps us to find out whether the inequalities that are produced by the capitalist economy are in accordance with the norms that are laid down in the normative documents of modern societies.

The starting point of this paper was an assumption that the constraints of the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality regulate in which respects the members of society must be treated as equals and unequals. This has consequences for the class structure of society: these norms also prescribe which place must be occupied by different groups of individuals in the inequality system of society. Thus, the task for class analysis is to find out whether the different social categories do, in fact, occupy the place that was ascribed for them by institutionalised norms. To put it another way, class analysis should explore whether inequalities can be traced back to differences in achievements, and whether horizontal relationships themselves function as sources of different kinds of inequalities. If empirical studies reveal that institutionalised norms and inequalities are in accordance with each other, then it suggests that the integrative function of stratification is not violated. However, if it is found, conversely, that they contradict each other, then this could be identified as a source of different forms of social-political conflict. It is the task of empirical social research to elaborate appropriate indicators for investigating this relationship.

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Appendix

The constitutional regulation of the right to work, the right to enterprise, social rights and the achievement principle in Hungary

	Act XX of 1949	Act XXXI of 1989	The Fundamental Law of Hungary (2011)
The right to enterprise	<p>"Article 4. (1) In the People's Republic of Hungary the majority of the means of production is owned by the state, the public bodies or the cooperatives. The means of production could be owned privately as well. (2) In the People's Republic of Hungary the driving force of national economy is the state power of people. The working people gradually displace the capitalist elements and consistently build a socialist economic order."</p> <p>"Article 8. The Constitution recognises and protects the property that is acquired through work. Private property and private initiatives should not violate the public interests."</p>	<p>"Article 9. (1) The economy of Hungary is a market economy, in which public and private property shall receive equal consideration and protection under the law. (2) The Republic of Hungary recognizes and supports the right to enterprise and the freedom of competition in the economy."</p>	<p>"Article M. (1) The economy of Hungary shall be based on work which creates value and freedom of enterprise. (2) Hungary shall ensure the conditions for fair economic competition, act against any abuse of a dominant position, and shall defend the rights of consumers."</p> <p>"Article XII. (1) Every person shall have the right to freely choose his or her work, occupation and entrepreneurial activities. Every person shall be obliged to contribute to the community's enrichment with his or her work to the best of his or her abilities and potential. (2) Hungary shall strive to create conditions ensuring that every person who is able and willing to work has the opportunity to do so."</p>
The right to work	<p>"Article 45. (1) The People's Republic of Hungary ensures for its citizens the right to work and emolument that corresponds to the amount and quality of the work performed."</p>	<p>"Article 70/B. (1) In the Republic of Hungary everyone has the right to work and to freely choose his job and profession."</p>	<p>"Article M. (1) The economy of Hungary shall be based on work which creates value and freedom of enterprise. (2) Hungary shall ensure the conditions for fair economic competition, act against any abuse of a dominant position, and shall defend the rights of consumers."</p> <p>"Article XII. (1) Every person shall have the right to freely choose his or her work, occupation and entrepreneurial activities. Every person shall be obliged to contribute to the community's enrichment with his or her work to the best of his or her abilities and potential. (2) Hungary shall strive to create conditions ensuring that every person who is able and willing to work has the opportunity to do so."</p>

<p>Social rights</p>	<p>“Article 47. (1) The People’s Republic of Hungary protects the health of workers and helps them in the case of disablement. (2) The People’s Republic of Hungary shall implement this protection and help through extensive social security system and through the organisation of medical care.”</p>	<p>“Article 70/E. (1) Citizens of the Republic of Hungary have the right to social security; they are entitled to the support required to live in old age, and in the case of sickness, disability, being widowed or orphaned and in the case of unemployment through no fault of their own. (2) The Republic of Hungary shall implement the right to social support through the social security system and the system of social institutions.”</p>	<p>“Article XIX. (1) Hungary shall strive to provide social security to all of its citizens. Every Hungarian citizen shall be entitled to statutory subsidies for maternity, illness, disability, widowhood, orphanage and unemployment not caused by his or her own actions.(2) Hungary shall implement social security for the persons listed in Paragraph (1) and other people in need through a system of social institutions and measures. (3)The nature and extent of social measures may be determined by law in accordance with the usefulness to the community of the beneficiary’s activity. (4) Hungary shall promote the livelihood of the elderly by maintaining a general state pension system based on social solidarity and by allowing for the operation of voluntarily established social institutions. Eligibility for a state pension may include statutory criteria in consideration of the requirement for special protection to women.”</p>
<p>Achievement principle</p>	<p>“Article 45. (1) The People’s Republic of Hungary ensures for its citizens the right to work and emolument that corresponds to the amount and quality of the work performed.”</p>	<p>“Article 70/B. (2) Everyone has the right to equal compensation for equal work, without any discrimination whatsoever. (3) All persons who work have the right to an income that corresponds to the amount and quality of work they carry out.</p>	<p>There is no reference to the principle.</p>

Puzzled Reflections on Huszár's Article¹

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Ákos Huszár's article left me perplexed. It is a strong and successful effort to build up a transparent and logical theoretical construct about social structure. Its end-results – the type of model it describes, the categories it uses – represent a reassuringly realistic variation of the well-known best models. This model is certainly more appropriate for understanding socio-occupational differentiation than (for instance) the model of categorization according to employment status and the main categories of occupation used in the CSO Microcensus 1995² that had no theoretical underpinning and did not explain the principles it followed. In fact, Huszár's paper represents an attempt to work out a transparent theoretical construction that could support a defensible social-occupational system of categories. Since I was several times involved in a similar exercise, I think I can understand the motivation.

I am puzzled, though, because the efforts to build up the theory to support a clear descriptive model seem to ignore the here-and-now reality that the model had to fit in some ways. In fact, the model is built on *normative* criteria. It should therefore be not astonishing if there is a striking distance between the normative model and the facts and trends which exist in the Hungarian (or the global) world. To spell out only one of the major concerns: in Hungary at least 10 per cent of the people who are able and willing to work are continuously moving, passing through the revolving door leading from unemployment to public work and back again. At one moment a person is employed and belongs to the occupational structure, the next s/he is out in the cold. But this ten per cent represent just the tip of an iceberg. The precariat which are emerging all over the globe (Hungary included) complicates the conceptualisation of recent processes of structuration. The precariat means, among other things, that "millions of people across the world are living and working in economic and social insecurity, many in casual or short-term, low-paid jobs, with contracts they worry about. Their incomes fluctuate unpredictably, they lack benefits that most people used to take for granted." (Standing 2012). The clear dividing line between employment statuses has become fluid. Who knows whether there are new

1 The editors asked for papers containing new insight into possible structural models and about structural continuation and change in Hungarian society. Since I have not changed my opinion much since I wrote my book about Social streams and individual actors (Ferge 2011) I preferred to add a note to Ákos Huszár's keynote article.

2 Mikrocensus 1995, volume III., figure 2.1.10.

social norms that consensually support the fatal exclusion of large segments of the population?

The avoidance of mundane concerns may be partly due to a misinterpretation of Parsons' ideas about social norms. Jeffrey C. Alexander, an important re-discoverer of Parsons analysed the impact of Parsons on German sociology. One of his observation concerns the German "penchant for philosophy" that leads "in many cases to an either/or approach to epistemological and ideological dilemmas... Although (Parsons) emphasized the normative aspects of society, he often demonstrated their interpenetration with the material world. What Parsons sought, in fact, was to overcome the either/or choices posed by the German tradition: He tried to transform the polar choices of modernism and romanticism, norms and interests, into interpenetrating positions on a single "continuum". (Alexander 1984: 398).

In what follows I attempt first to draw a rough sketch of the logic of the study as I understand it. Next I spell out in a cursory way my main scruples concerning the theory. At the end I deal in more detail with the author's interpretation of equality-inequality norms.

The logical steps seem to me to be the following:

1. Unlike other theories of occupational class structure, the starting point is that all societies institutionalise certain norms of equality and inequality. Institutionalisation is possible if we assume that all societies – and the functioning of their economies as well – are subject to certain value standards and norms that ensure their normative integration. Or, to put it alternatively, if it is assumed that the functioning of the economy is embedded in society.

2. The capitalist class structure has a horizontal dimension shaped by the categories of different employment statuses. "These categories denote those forms of employment that are created by modern capitalist societies and that are recognised as legitimate ways of acquiring the goods that are indispensable for the satisfaction of basic needs." The main categories are employers, employees, unemployed and pensioners. They have equally legitimate ways to acquire basic goods. "Everyone has an equal right to start an enterprise and to acquire profit. Similarly, every member of society is equally allowed to dispose freely of their workforce and to draw up contracts." Social rights assure legitimate redistributive income for some groups outside the occupational system such as pensioners or unemployed. Since all these statuses are rooted in institutionalised rights "their relationship to each other should be regarded as horizontal." The proposed model covers only the two groups in the occupational system.

3. Traditional versions of class theory describe the structural impact of the economy "according to different conflicts of interests, or according to market chances." Normative functionalism builds however on the embeddedness of the economy.

Therefore it asks which forms of inequality (and how much inequality) is underpinned by institutionalised norms which are then seen as justified and legitimate.

4. The most important reference point for justifying inequalities is the achievement principle. The meaning attached to achievement has historically changed. The principle states only that those who achieve more must occupy higher positions in the inequality system of society. There are also some secondary principles (like, for instance, level of education) that underpin how social inequalities are justified. These norms all contribute to shaping unequal “normative statuses.”

5. The norms thereby “prescribe which place must be occupied by different groups of individuals” in the system of unequal statuses. Classes are formed by those groups of individuals who occupy the same normative status according to the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality.

Two complementary theses refer to the empirical validation of the theoretical model. First, validation is important because the class model built on the institutionalised norms of equality and inequality would like to serve as a yardstick: *a yardstick that helps us to find out whether the inequalities that are produced by the capitalist economy are in accordance with socially accepted norms or the norms that are laid down in the normative documents of modern societies.* Second, “if empirical studies reveal that institutionalised norms and inequalities are in accordance with each other, then it suggests that the integrative function of stratification is not violated. However, if it is found that they contradict each other, then this may be identified as a source of social-political conflict.” The author proposes in the latter case “to elaborate appropriate indicators for investigating this relationship.”

Cursory Comments on the Theses

Ad 1. The norms of equality and inequality play a crucial role in the model. They therefore deserve more than a cursory glance, so I shall return to this issue in the next section. Here I raise some questions only in connection with the embeddedness of the economy. The model assumes that the economy is so strongly embedded into society that it follows (submits itself to) general social norms about legitimate inequalities.

Some norms certainly must be generalised in a society to prevent it from bursting (whatever this means). But norms change over time and it is an open question what generates these changes. Polányi (1944) describes the process of the emergence of capitalism. With capitalist development the various spheres of life acquired a certain relative autonomy. The economy itself which used to be embedded in (or perhaps enmeshed with) social life in general built up an increasingly autonomous, ultimately

self-regulating market with its own institutions, rules and values. This mechanism triggered economic development and simultaneously caused many new social troubles. Yet – and this seems to support Huszár's thesis – members of society (as well as the different spheres of life) slowly complied with the new rules and norms, including those about legitimate (in)equality. Thus – to give only some examples – competition squeezing out all the weaker participants, the “sanctity” of limitless ownership and the exclusion of many from access to basic needs have become self-evident, unquestionable components of social life. This has transformed the original, embedded character of the economy, leading (in the words of Lockwood or Habermas) to the separation of social integration from system-integration, or of the lifeworld from systems of instrumentality. The instrumental systems, particularly the rules of the market, started to dominate the norms and rules of most other spheres. The “excesses” of the self-regulating market, particularly the phenomenon of massive exclusion, conflicted with social values or norms about social justice (that were – at least in Europe – practically ubiquitous). The intervention of the state seemed to be inevitable. For some decades after World War II boundaries imposed by the state were effective at least in most European market economies. However, as shown by the neoliberal turn from the nineteen-eighties onwards, economies successfully rejected many state-enforced limits, thereby strengthening the socially dominant role of market norms. Thus, Polanyi's “great transformation” regained its full force and the embeddedness (not to say the submission) of society into the economy remained a growing feature of present-day global capitalism. As far as I know, the historical analysis of Polanyi does not seem to have been invalidated by competing analyses of other scholars (Parsons, Granovetter or Honneth) who espouse the thesis of the embedded economy. I think that this central building block of Huszár's theory needs more proof to support it.

Ad 2. The second thesis about the horizontal dimension of employment or economic statuses hypostatizes the normative equality of the groups that acquire their life-sustaining resources in different ways. It may not be a vital issue for the model whether this assumption is “right” or whether it is not. Still, there are (in my view at least) some unclear points that deserve perhaps to be elucidated. On the one hand I gladly concede that social rights which give access to resources are legal, are often anchored in the constitution (fundamental law) and their equal legality with other rights should not be questioned. Their legitimacy (i.e. the shared belief that the government's legislative power is used appropriately when creating social rights) seems, however, to be weaker than that of the two other employment statuses. In fact, the waning legitimacy of the welfare state leads in many countries to weakening social rights and the cutting back of many social benefits (the phenomenon is prominent in Hungary). It seems to me that legitimacy cannot be ignored when shared norms are explored. My other doubt concerns the assumption that the

relationship between employers and employees is characterised by normatively-accepted horizontal equality. Long-standing debates exist about this point. Their central question concerns (implicitly or explicitly) the formal and the substantive equality of the rights of contractors. While the legal position of contractors has been recognized by everybody as unquestionably equal, many have diagnosed (Max Weber included) the weaker bargaining power of the employee.

One of the main functions of labour law has been to restore this balance (e.g. by collective bargaining). The question from Huszár's perspective is whether the imbalance may be detected in the legal documents. I think that knowing this is impossible through analysing just a single act. It may become possible, though, by comparing various acts between or within countries. One may compare, for instance, the Hungarian Labour Law of 2012 (Act I) with its predecessors (adopted in 1992, modified in 2005). The new rules explicitly and intentionally serve to increase the flexibility of the labour force. Analysts agree that for this objective it strengthens the positions of employers and weakens the positions of employees. For instance, it declares that only employers should be compensated for their losses during a crisis by assuring them more freedom in defining the terms of contracts; or in order to increase labour flexibility it makes layoffs easier and weakens the role of collective bargaining. It may be assumed that the changes are due to changes in institutionalised norms so that weaker employees' rights have become the norm. This may or may not be the case. But when one studies a system of normatively accepted inequalities, such objective and factual changes should not be left unarticulated.

Ad 3. The third thesis attempts – in the Parsonsian spirit – to deprecate the role of interests and conflicts of interest in class formation. It proposes to discard traditional approaches to social structuring that take into account interests or market chances. “Normative functionalism that builds on the embeddedness of the economy asks *which forms of inequality are underpinned by institutionalised norms* which are then seen as justified and legitimate”. Whether a sociological theory may disregard interests and conflicts that are thoroughly interconnected with the dynamics of society may be a matter of ideological taste (since the issue is continuously an object of passionate debate this is not the place to look for new arguments). I raise here a much more technical problem. According to Huszár, the value standards and norms that form the basis of normative functionalism “appear in the legal documents of society and they are expressed in the attitudes, judgements and acts of individuals as well.” In other words, we are supposed to know what the institutionalised social standards and the shared norms about justified inequalities are. It is on this basis that the criteria of the various normative statuses are defined. This assumption, of crucial importance for the whole normative theory, does not seem to be verified in a satisfactory way. I shall voice my doubts regarding this point in some detail in the next section.

Ad 4. The most important reference point for justifying inequalities is the achievement principle. Huszár points out that there may be some uncertainties about the meaning attached to achievement, but mentions only historical change. He accepts that “the achievement principle claims only that that everyone must be evaluated equally on the grounds of his or her achievements” which implies that those “who achieve more must occupy higher positions in the inequality system of society.” The basis of achievement is different in the two employment categories. For entrepreneurs, achievement is measured by success; that is, by the profit they are able to generate. Hence a higher position is the legitimate due of a successful entrepreneur. Milton Friedman (1962) evaluates much more highly the role of property: “The ethical principle that would directly justify the distribution of income in a free market society is ‘To each according to what he and the instruments he owns produces.’” According to him, distribution according to the achievement or merit or work of the employees also reflects to a large extent “initial differences in endowment, both of human capacities and of property.” While Huszár does not seem to share this view, he is not too far from it. The achievements of employees (merit, work, products) is not defined by intrinsic or substantive characteristics but by the terms of the contract freely signed by both actors. Contractual agreements and remuneration in the first place are usually shaped by factors such as education or managerial position; i.e. mostly “initial differences in endowment.” Thus the two approaches are not too far apart.

I am not sure whether achievement is really synonymous with (monetary) success or with high social positions, or that in reality equal achievements are rewarded equally. The example of the unrewarded accomplishments of – for instance – brilliant poets or painters is well-known. A less demagogic empirical example is the difference in earnings in 2013 in Hungary between two persons doing exactly the same job, employed by the same local authority: one a street cleaner employed as public servant for a net 64000 forints (the minimum wage), the other a street cleaner employed as a public worker for a net 49000 forints, the public work wage. One may argue that their employment status is different. This is true, but the observation puts in doubt the thesis of horizontal employment statuses. Let me suggest another international example about the relationship between achievement and its recognition. MPs of various countries have, by and large, similar functions which are determined, together with their pay, by legislation. Empirical facts show that their earnings vary quite significantly. Only within Europe the pay of an MP fluctuates between £ 112 000 in Italy and £ 27 000 in Spain. It is £ 74 000 both in Germany and Ireland. The figures show that there is no relationship between the pay and the economic situation or the developmental success of the country. The ratio between MP's pay and GDP per capita (an indicator of the country's economic level) reinforces this statement. The ratio is 1.6 in Spain, around 3 in many Central

European countries and reaches a peak of 9.3 in Italy.³ Could these differences be explained by norms which vary by country but are consensual within countries?

Ad 5. Occupational achievement and some secondary (also normatively unequal) factors shape *normative statuses* that are unequal in terms of the institutionalised norms of economic-occupational equality and inequality. According to the model, social classes are formed by those groups of individuals who occupy the same normative status. This hierarchy is ranked on an ordinal scale: we assume we know the position of each group or individual in the social hierarchy. The number of classes we define in this hierarchy is not predetermined. It depends, as Huszár puts it, “on practical and technical factors”. Thus it may vary according to the size of the sample, the objective of the research, and so forth. This indeterminateness of classes regarding their number, their borders, their characteristics and so forth applies both to employers and employees.

In my view this indeterminate and pragmatic approach to defining groups is acceptable for the construction of all socio-economic categorizations of occupational groups, or of models of stratification. I am not sure, however, that “social class” is an appropriate name for these groups. This is not the place to discuss the various concepts of social class or the concept of a “class society”. I have always shied away from employing this concept, except for in my book about structure and action which I wrote in 2010 (Ferge 2011). I had then to reckon with the ongoing debate about whether Hungary approached a traditional class-society model or not, and also with the fact that the notion of social class or its social equivalents cropped up more and more frequently in everyday speech, in public discourses and in the social science literature. References to new and old elites, upper, middle and lower classes, the underclass, *grande bourgeoisie*, *petite bourgeoisie*, proletariat and subproletariat and a plethora of similar expressions proliferated. My former efforts were aimed at finding the differences in the structuring factors between the previous (“state-socialist”) and the new capitalist structure. I always thought that relationships anchored in the unequal distribution of resources such as property, knowledge and power were knitted together and appeared on the surface as the division of labour of (occupational) groups that acquired the resources for their subsistence in different ways. I saw the main difference between the two structures in the relative importance of the resources (or capitals). In the former system the dominant role of the power relations resulted in a stifled dictatorship which was hardly sustainable in the long run, while in the new system the overwhelming importance of property led to a liberal market-society with unleashed inequalities and increasing exclusion on all markets, first of all on the labour market. In my book I attempted, half ironically, half seriously, to relate the former nominal categories (ultimately socio-economic

3 <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/datablog/2013/jul/11/mps-pay-uk-foreign-comparedi>

groups) to the newly-appeared class concepts, taking into account the historical and symbolic contents of the various class labels and also the importance of the “subjective” self-positioning of people. This attempt was not very successful: the “message” about the complexity of social structure and the intricacies of the concept of class and the ubiquity of change and of conflicts over resources apparently did not come through.

Since the early 2000s there has been a revival of Bourdieu's approach to social classes. Numerous scholars have started to build up a synthesis about social class from the various concepts and insights dispersed in Bourdieu's whole oeuvre, starting from multiple capitals to symbolic violence or habitus. Wacquant (2013) recently published a study about the reframing of Bourdieu's approach to social classes and the social space. He emphasises the many-sided, synthetic character of the thinking of Bourdieu, and the important role he assigned to the symbolic dimension of group formation and to the symbolic power which shapes the ability to draw, enforce or contest social boundaries. I do not know whether this approach has already resulted in the emergence of a clear model. However, an empirical survey has already been carried out based on Bourdieu's multiple capital concept and many other insights – the BBC's 2011 Great British Class Survey. An international group of scholars worked with a huge sample of 161,400 web respondents, as well as a nationally representative sample survey. The questions were unusually detailed in many respects, particularly concerning social, cultural and economic capital. The new classes (obtained by latent class analysis) were defined as being:

- **Elite** - the most privileged group in the UK, distinct from the other six classes through its wealth. This group has the highest level of all three capitals
- **Established middle class** - the second wealthiest, scoring highly on all three capitals. The largest and most gregarious group, scoring second highest for cultural capital
- **Technical middle class** - a small, distinctive new class group which is prosperous but scores low for social and cultural capital. Distinguished by its social isolation and cultural apathy
- **New affluent workers** - a young class group which is socially and culturally active, with middling levels of economic capital
- **Traditional working class** - scores low on all forms of capital, but is not completely deprived. Its members have reasonably high house values, explained by this group having the oldest average age at 66
- **Emergent service workers** - a new, young, urban group which is relatively poor but has high social and cultural capital
- **Precariat, or precarious proletariat** - the poorest, most deprived class, scoring low for social and cultural capital.

The researchers emphasize that the model reveals both social polarization in British society (the huge economic distance between the “elite” and the rest and the new visibility of the precariat) as well as class fragmentation or fuzziness in its middle layers. It is clearly a combination of the usual occupational categories and the traditional class concepts. Let me add that it is the first time I saw the word precariat incorporated into a “scientific” model (see Standing 2011). The BBC classification takes into account many aspects of social life, thus giving new insight into the situations of groups which occupy different social positions.

To sum up this excursus on classes, I think that the concept has to be used with more caution. It seems to me that “occupational class structure” and “social structure” are not necessarily synonyms. In any case, even if the concept of class was used in many models to designate clear-cut occupational groups, this practice must be reconsidered in the light of global trends and new findings.

An Exegesis on the Theme of Equality and Inequality

The first thesis of Huszár specifies that the starting point for the construction of the occupational class structure model is that all societies institutionalise certain norms of equality and inequality. These are assumed to be known. This is why they may define a system of “normative status positions” that serves as a yardstick to measure the distance between the material world and the normative model. While I am very glad that equality and inequality are considered to be of primary structural importance, lots of questions crop up.

I have already voiced my doubts about our knowledge of norms. How do we know what the accepted norm is with various inequalities (wealth, income, education and such like)? Do we really dispose of official documents and regulations that define the acceptable range of inequalities? Contrary to what is assumed in Huszár’s study, we have very few documents about what the shared norms about equality and inequality are. Minimum wages are often legislated, and so are (in a few cases) social minima. But since the decline of the power of trade unions no upper limits on earnings have been defined, and there has never been any attempt in a market society to limit wealth. Progressive taxation and its legitimacy in many countries points to some shared norms about excessive income inequality, but it is hard to measure this limit. With wealth it would seem anathema to try to set up a ceiling. We know even less about the norms which concern other forms of capital. In short, I think that we have no means to measure shared norms, officially defined or not.

There have been many attempts to define norms. For a present-day model it is irrelevant what the position of the Bible or Greek philosophers was about these matters. However, Plato’s insights still make one think: “In a state which is desirous of being saved from the greatest of all plagues ...there should exist among the citizens neither extreme poverty nor, again, excessive wealth, for both are productive of great

evil." Aristotle's theory of distributive justice still appears more or less regularly on the agenda of public issues. The dream of European societies at least had always been the creation of a "just society." Whatever this means, one of its main characteristics is a limit to inequality in the distribution of resources.

The norms of acceptable inequalities have always been contested and have changed. Statistics abound about variations in wealth and income inequalities since at least the early 1800s (some go much farther back). Baten and his colleagues gathered data from, or made estimates for, over 130 countries to calculate the Gini coefficients from 1820 to 2000 (Baten et al. 2009). Changes were not significant at the world level; Ginis moved between 40 and 48. The most notable decreases were seen after World War II. Due to the efforts of the welfare states in the west of Europe Ginis went down to 35. Political dictatorship in Eastern Europe pushed them even lower, down to 28 for some time. After the 1990 transition inequalities started to grow again. The Gini coefficient is, however, a sensitive but restrained indicator which shows a subdued reality. Table 1 shows (by taking Hungary as an example) that a relatively slight increase in the Gini may go together with very radical changes in other inequality indicators such as the distance between top and bottom incomes. In 1987 the richest ten per cent of the population had less than five times as much income as the poorest ten per cent. By 2012 this multiplier had gone up to 9 (Table 1).

Table 1. *Changes in income inequalities in Hungary 1987-2012. (Based on per capita income)*

	1987	1992	2003	2007	2009	2012
Gini-coefficient	0.24	0.27	0.32	0.29	0.29	0.31
Top/bottom decile, multiplier	4.6	6.0	8.1	6.8	7.2	9.0

Source: Szivós 2013: 24.

There is indeed some eastern exceptionalism: the stifling years of dictatorship produced unusually low inequalities. As soon as these times were over inequalities exploded and soon reached Western European levels. These waves are summarised in Table 2 which shows the types of change since 1950 (Table 2).

Table 2. Trends in inequality (as measured by Gini coefficient of income distribution) from the 1950s to around 2000, in 85 developed, developing and transition economies

Percentage distribution of population who live in countries experiencing different inequality trends			
	World	OECD	Transition economies
Rising inequality	76	62	98
<i>U-shaped increase</i>	66	55	43
<i>Linear increase</i>	10	6	55
No change	19	15	2
Falling inequality	5	23	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: Cornia 2011:19.

The rapid post-1990 changes require closer scrutiny. New findings revealed that the richest members of society profited inordinately from the overall increase of incomes and inequalities. Studies started to focus on the top percentiles. The study by Atkinson et al. (2011) covers 16 countries, 9 of them in Europe, the others from all over the world. They measure (based on tax data) the share of income of the top 1 per cent and the top 0,1 per cent in two periods, between 1949 and the early eighties, and then between 1998 and 2005. The results are amazing. In the first period the share accruing to the top remained unchanged, or decreased – there was no single instance of increase. The scenario changed in a breath-taking way after 1998. With the exception of two countries (Germany and the Netherlands) the share of income accruing to both top groups increased significantly and in some cases very significantly. The USA is the leader in this league. Between 2002 and 2007, for instance, the top 1 per cent captured 65% of all income growth.

The question from the perspective of normative functionalism is how the norms adjusted to these changes. Nowhere were there major upheavals, except perhaps for the Occupy Wall Street movement, so one may assume that inequalities and the norms related to them moved in parallel. Atkinson argues “that the relation between skill and pay reflects social conventions, where adherence to the pay norm is endogenously determined... But the fact that the driving force is social in origin, rather than trade or technology, means that there is more scope for political leadership. The evolution of social norms is influenceable by policy decisions” (Atkinson 1999, p. 24). I would add that it is not only policy (government) decisions that impact on social norms, but many other actions and discourses (the media influences people’s beliefs and norms to the highest degree). The influences are never “neutral”: those whose interests are served by increasing inequalities produce also the means to influence people to accept them. However, the parallel movement of facts and norms is somewhat illusory.

Public opinion surveys inform us about the uniformity or diversity of some norms. We may indeed know about, for instance, how just people find the society

they live in. The ISSP (International Social Survey Program) has repeatedly asked people over the last two decades their judgement about income inequality in their countries, what changes or interventions would they find desirable, and so forth. Among other questions they asked to what extent people agreed or disagreed with the statement that differences in income in their country were too large. On a 5-point scale the percentage of those who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the statement was over 80 in 12 out of 16 countries both in 1999 and in 2009. Out of these, the proportion of those who “strongly agreed” was over 50 per cent in 10 countries. It stands out that Eastern countries have more egalitarian feelings than the West, but the difference is neither too large nor fully consistent. During the decade both proportions grew in more than half of the countries surveyed (*Table 3*).

Table 3. *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement that differences in income in your country are too large?*

	Strongly agree and Agree		Out of it: Strongly agree	
	1999	2009	1999	2009
Hungary	93	97	67	78
Slovenia	91	95	60	69
Portugal	96	95	82	62
Latvia	97	95	74	61
Bulgaria	97	94	50	58
Slovak Republic	94	92	57	58
Spain	89	91	84	57
France	87	91	47	53
Germany	82	90	60	53
Austria	86	89	29	52
Poland	89	88	40	48
Czech Republic	88	85	29	32
Great Britain	76	78	36	32
Sweden	71	73	25	29
Cyprus	66	67	12	26
Norway	72	61	22	12

Source: ISSP 1999 – 2009 (Thanks for help from Zsombor Farkas).

Note: Increasing values are in italics.

Opinions and existing income inequalities have always been to some extent correlated, but not very strongly. The same is true for changes in income inequality. Growing inequalities usually heighten the sense of injustice that people experience.

Some Conclusions

- I think Huszár's thesis should be reversed. It seems to me to be impossible to build up a structural model based on shared norms that could serve as a "yardstick" to check whether inequalities are too large or not. If we start from the existing situation, captured in terms of some socio-economic classification (be that Huszár's construction), we could ask questions like to what extent does this reality conform to society's desires, their expectations and consensual or divided norms in different spheres of life. This could well serve public policy.
- Parsons was an important thinker. Yet his best students and close friends, such as Robert Merton or Niklas Luhman (not critical theorists), added to his work many new insights. It is enough to mention Merton's theses about manifest and latent functions, dysfunctions and intended and unintended consequences which are now an organic part and parcel of sociology. All these developments in functionalist thinking lead to the conclusion that conflicts and dynamics cannot be left out of social thought.
- Social class is a difficult and overloaded term. It is obviously a matter of taste what concepts one uses and in what sense. Yet, in my view, the term "social class" is worth using if we want to express more than just the existence of nominal occupational groups. Because of the controversial interpretations of social class which exist and because of its importance in understanding the social world it seems worth being cautious with its use but also audacious in searching for its multifarious meanings.

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Normative-functionalist Occupational Class Analysis in Context

Normativity, Social Exclusion and the EU/Global Dimensions of the Labor Market

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ABSTRACT: This short contribution is designed to reflect upon the whole body of debate that Ákos Huszár's series of studies (2013a, 2013b, 2013c¹) gave rise to (Berger 2013, Róbert 2013, Tardos 2013, Vastagh 2013, Harcsa 2013, Lakatos-Záhonyi 2013a, 2013b). Two issues seem to have inspired participants of the debate: the current theoretical possibilities of social structure analysis (Berger, Tardos, Harcsa and Huszár himself) and the current challenge posed by the new set of census data from 2011 (Róbert, Vastagh, Lakatos – Záhonyi). This duality was already evident at the workshop "The stratification of Hungarian society" organized by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office back in November 2012, and is likely to prevail on the pages of the current issue of *Szociológiai Szemle*. I myself try to combine the two issues. First, I would like to add a few ideas to expand Huszár's perspective of a normative-structuralist approach, chiefly in the area of normativity (Part I.). Then I turn to the question of the "social embeddedness" of the occupational system: this prospect entails the problem of the social terrain outside the occupational system, mainly as regards scholarship on social exclusion, including issues of human capital, social capital and spatial social structure (Part II.). In the course of this overview, the merits of various empirical data sources like the census, as well as at least partly longitudinal databases such as EU SILC and the Labor Force Survey will be addressed. Finally, I close with a few remarks on the EU and the global context of the occupational system (Part III.).

KEYWORDS: rights theory, social exclusion, social capital, project proliferation, project class

Part I.

The idea of a normative-functionalist class analysis is a very interesting and refreshing suggestion, especially in terms of its attempt at reintegrating the normative aspect into the theoretical and empirical edifice of social structure analysis. I am not sure that it will ultimately work as a comprehensive framework for occupational class analysis when fleshed out in full detail along the lines of the outline proposed by Huszár (2013a: 50–52, 2013c and Huszár in the present volume). At the same time,

1 The latter is the extended Hungarian version of Huszár's English language article in the present volume.

I am certain that in order for it to be successful it will have to be more complex in its handling of the normative sphere.

At the moment, the outline of Huszár's theory envisions class structure as composed of so called normative statuses formed against the background of various rights: occupational statuses are predicated upon business, property and labor rights, whereas inactive statuses are anchored in social rights. Huszár goes to great lengths to theorize them not only as non-hierarchical (rather, as horizontal) but also as normatively equal. It is puzzling why he does not utilize the possibility of presenting them as "normatively recognized" social statuses (à la Honneth, via Hegel), thereby circumventing the issue of equality, one of the most challenging moral callings of modernity.²

I support the idea that the normative dimension shall be part of a sociological analysis of social structure, making it part of a theory on the structural constraints of society. Taking normativity (and not only rights) seriously,³ however, implies (at least) three areas of investigation: research has to tackle social norms, legal (statutory) norms, and constitutional norms. These are very different fields both in terms of their sociological nature as well as regarding the methodological skills required for their study. I agree with Huszár that "it is an empirical question which values and norms are institutionalized in a society" (2013c: 724) but I would submit that this is a much more complicated issue than simply looking at what positive constitutional or statutory provisions stipulate. The linguistic turn's implications for the social sciences offers a range of methodological possibilities for addressing the understandings of norms and the practices of their institutionalization in these three areas.

There is also the added problem brought to light by the sociology of law: to what extent and in which manner are normative prescriptions adhered to in these various fields (a question which goes beyond the philosophical distinction between Sein and Sollen). Hungarian society is notoriously complex in this regard. There is a certain despising of and disdain for adherence to legal (statutory) norms,⁴ in sharp contrast to constitutionality which is held in high esteem amongst Hungarians in general (Örkény – Scheppele 1997).

I address the constitutional terrain in some more detail, as the problem of rights, considered central in Huszár's analysis, arises primarily here. I would like to propose that there is no need to confine the conceptualization of the normative dimension of rights to individual freedom: rights can grasp a much richer, sociologically

2 Huszár himself refers to this challenge in the concluding paragraph of his study, assigning it to empirical investigations to determine "whether horizontal relationships themselves function as sources of different kinds of inequalities" (2013c: 738).

3 Paraphrasing here Ronald Dworkin's famous book, *Taking Rights Seriously*, serves the purposes of suggesting that any discussion of normativity should be open to legal and political theory as well as to the investigation of the social practice of using various political and legal languages. Huszár does so to the extent of relying extensively on Axel Honneth's scholarship. I propose he goes further.

4 Think of the widely-shared belief that he who pays all his taxes is a dupe, whereas he who pays as little tax as he can get away with is smart.

substantive normative dimension in the life of the political community (as e.g. in Weimar constitutional theory, Füzér 2008: 112–13). The idea that the language of rights can cover institutions (like the university) and universal or community-based particular values that integrate society (Füzér 2008: 77–97) was shared by a wide range of scholars across the political spectrum of Weimar Germany – in opposition to liberal legal positivists who attributed no great force to rights at all (Füzér 2008: 47–76).⁵ These alternative uses of the language of rights can be fruitfully applied when reconstructing the normative context in which the social structure analysis proposed by Huszár is carried out.

Part II.

Any occupational class analysis has to grapple with the problem that the “rest of society” (i.e. those without labor market or independent business positions) also have to be accounted for in a decent social structure analysis. Huszár is in a very advantageous position in this regard as his focus on the normative dimension allows him to take stock of a range of social positions outside the occupational system. He refers to social rights as grounding “new ways of acquiring income”, “entitlements that make it possible for the eligible persons to obtain earnings without working” and thereby creating “social statuses that are not grounded on participation in the occupational system” (2013c: 729) – but unfortunately falls short of offering a comprehensive model to either theoretically or empirically grasp these statuses. He explicitly skips two opportunities to do so “at this time” (2013c: 731, 736) and leaves the well-populated category of “other inactive” standing awkwardly beside pensioners and the unemployed.

I would like to propose that scholarship on social exclusion (in the Hungarian context cf. especially Monostori 2004, Hegedűs – Monostori 2005) offers both theoretically and also in terms of empirical investigations a way to complete occupational class analysis in its normative-functionalist version. That is to say, social exclusion research is a perfect match with normative-functionalist occupational class analysis in every important aspect of social science scholarship: theory, operationalization and data sets (and of course the interpretation of empirical results in light of the outgoing theory). In terms of theory, social exclusion scholars strive primarily to counter the paradigm of income poverty research and they do so by evoking various material and non-material dimensions of social exclusion: among the latter, exclusion from the labor market is of prime importance⁶ but exclusion from acquiring knowledge (human

5 Weimar constitutional thought in general and the rights theories of communitarian Rudolf Smend, socialist Hermann Heller, Otto Kirchheimer, Franz Neumann and the riddling Carl Schmitt had a significant impact on post-WWII German social and political thought (including the Frankfurt School, Füzér 2007: 16) as well as on constitutional culture and adjudication (Füzér 2007: 15–20). The latter, in turn, served as the chief orientation point for the emerging post-communist Hungarian constitutional culture of the 1990s (Sólyom 2000, 2003, Füzér 1997).

6 Theorized by Amartya Sen as well as the recently-deceased Robert Castel and empirically examined in the Hungarian context e.g. by Erzsébet Bukodi (2004) or Gábor Kertesi (2005).

capital), social capital (Füzér 2007, Füzér–Monostori 2012), health inequalities as well as social conceptions of welfare and poverty, including subjective poverty (Spéder 2002), are also important, as is segregation and the spatial social structure of society (Németh 2011).

The proposed extension would, for better or worse, be in line with a long tradition of Hungarian sociology: that of dual society models (Éber 2011); especially with Iván Szelényi's and Tamás Kolosi's social structure models which conceptualized the two terrains of market and redistribution, spotted with mixed social statuses. The approach of the normative-functionalist theory to the structural constraints of society would have the occupational system be analogous with the market, relying on redistribution to complete the picture for "the rest."

Viktor Berger (2013) has also offered rudiments of theoretical constructs under which "the rest" of society could be grasped. I would like to join him in highlighting the dynamic character of processes which push people away from traditional social statuses towards other ones with less stability to start with.⁷ The new structural constraints seem to loosen up positions that earlier were thought to have been entrenched (between the occupational system and those on its outside) as well as distinctions within the occupational system. Professions are being traded during these days of life-long learning in a contemporary knowledge society; processes that have been highlighted by Tardos (2013: 321–322) and shown by Lakatos and Záhonyi (2013a: 635, 2013b: 756–758) to prevail empirically, both in the very debate under discussion here.

In terms of empirical social research there are two key datasets that offer themselves for the study of social exclusion as well as the transformations of professions and the occupational system. While I am no expert on these data sources, to the extent that I am familiar with EU SILC (Statistics on Living and Income Conditions) (Füzér 2007, Füzér – Monostori 2012) and LFS (Labor Force Survey) (Lakatos – Záhonyi 2013a, 2013b), they strike me as apt empirical resources for the detailed study of the varied normative statuses of inactivity outlined by Huszár, and also the dynamic character of occupational statuses. Their research design is such that they offer some longitudinal data (1–4 years on four subsamples of EU SILC and 1,5 years in LFS) on very large samples which respond to the content of internationally-standardized questionnaires, carrying extra (and expendable, cf. Füzér 2007) modules (yearly in EU SILC and in almost every quarter of LFS) which makes the study of various specialized sociological questions using extra-large samples feasible (in contrast to the few thousand-sized samples that research funds normally allow for).

⁷ I would dispute, however, that pensioners (as such) can be adequately assigned to a precarious position, as Berger does (2013:311) – practically all empirical evidence suggests the contrary; namely that exactly because of their stable income and housing conditions, pensioners as a group show remarkable stability in terms of their basic social standing. The group, naturally, is far from being homogeneous: certain subgroups such as widows or pensioners whose pension was determined a very long time ago bear a high risk of poverty, but even with these qualifications the everyday conceptions about "poor pensioners" are ill-conceived.

The merits of the census are manifold⁸ and I would like to draw attention to its almost unique role in the field of spatial social structure analysis. Portrayed above as an important dimension of social exclusion, it is arguably also a vital element of any social structure analysis. When we look, as Zsolt Németh does (Németh 2011), at the concentration and migration routes (something like the flocking together) of low status versus high status households and individuals during the 1990s in Hungary, we become aware of the fact that, on the level of everyday social intercourse, in vast parts of the country, experiencing the complexity of “Hungarian society” is no longer possible. Certain social groups (particularly those at the upper and lower extremes) are simply missing from extended areas of the country and the so-called settlement ladder (against a thin layer of normative background) distributes social groups in very radical ways.

Part III

My closing comments reflect upon the fact (also briefly noted by Vastagh 2013: 430–431) that the EU as well as the global context has to be part of a theory about the structural constraints of society – with further implications for the transformation of the occupational system.

Within and across countries there are sites where professionals are organized into global economic activities (dubbed global cities by Saskia Sassen), and there are regions that remain less (if at all) involved in globalized activities, at least as far as occupational statuses are concerned. The reigning paradigm of migration research offers clues to the factors that push and pull potential employees across the globe in search of jobs. A normative-structuralist class analysis has to take note of the fact that the EU, besides being many other things (Böröcz – Sarkar 2005a, 2005b), is also a normatively regulated realm that defines a “common” labor market. This implies that occupational statuses have to be understood in a European context and migration has to be a key issue in any normative-functionalist social structure analysis.

Another element of the EU context highlights an important line of transformation in the occupational system. The normatively regulated EU model of access to public funds via projects is arguably becoming a key element of the structural constraints of European societies. Project proliferation (Sjöblom et al. 2006, Sjöblom et al. 2012, Kovách – Kristóf 2007) within the European realm brings with it the reconfiguration of significant portions of the public sector into (partly) project-based organizational forms (including universities), the spread of short-termism in several areas (including employment contracts central to occupational class analysis) and the

8 On the applicability of the census to social exclusion research (roughly: for the study of those outside the occupational system) see from the current debate Róbert (2013: 317), Harcsa (2013: 525), Vastagh (2013: 426).

rise of an allegedly new social class; the project class (Kovács – Kucerova 2009). Projectification results in “patchwork” employment, where professionals’ project contracts might overlap in time and connect them to various locations of work simultaneously.

Another aspect of projectification should also be of interest for Huszár’s program of inquiry: development policy (within the EU and internationally) too is normatively anchored and delineates groups of “project beneficiaries” whose statuses are greatly, (albeit not fundamentally) affected by their positions within development projects. Especially so called rehabilitation projects (Bukowski et al. 2007) have come to acquire complexity and are intended to enhance beneficiaries’ human capital, labor market positions, health behavior, and via participation⁹, their social capital as well (Füzér 2013).

At this closing point we might reflect again upon Huszár’s central theoretical aspiration; namely on his objective of including the normative dimension into social class analysis. It seems as though the normative dimension, a political community’s ability to regulate its own life, extends only so far: until the boundaries of its sphere of influence and legitimacy, be it the EU or the boundaries of traditional nation states. However, much if not all of the global economy is beyond that and is regulated by few norms which are not transparent in any case – an enormous challenge to normative-functionalist social structure analysis.

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9 Development policy has recently undergone a “participative turn”; a process whose merits have been greatly disputed. Cf. Cook and Kothari’s (2001) critique and Hickey and Mohan’s defence (2005).

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From State Socialism to Postsocialist Capitalism

Comments on “Class and the Social Embeddedness of the Economy: Outline of a Normative-functionalist Model of Social Class” by Ákos Huszár

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ABSTRACT: While appreciating the novelty of Ákos Huszár’s model, the article criticizes his normative concept of capitalism by drawing the attention to the essential differences between postsocialist capitalism and the normatively understood West-European and Anglo-Saxon capitalist development. Privatization has never been accepted by Hungarian society as legitimate. The dispossession of the working people, who were the “owners” of property in principle, reinforced unequal competition. This undermined social trust in the established norms and the new democracy, which rendered democratic institutions essentially fragile in Hungary.

KEYWORDS: postsocialist capitalism, privatization, unequal competition, social trust, underclass

Introduction

Ákos Huszár’s ambitious theoretical attempt to develop a new model of social class is a pioneering project, all the more so because class theory seems to have no place in modern sociology. This is especially true for the postsocialist countries, where the eventual and rapid collapse of communist regimes discredited the legitimizing narratives of official working-class histories; the events of the transition years disproved notions of a simple equivalence between class position and class consciousness that characterized the dominant trends in Marxist thought. There was no country in Eastern Europe in which workers supported any kind of democratic socialist alternative to the existing system. Nor was the East European political and intellectual climate favorable for revisiting working-class histories after the change of regimes: all forms of class theory were regarded as utterly discredited, and the working class was often uncritically associated with the state socialist past as intellectual elites invested in futures based on embourgeoisement which downplayed the social and political roles of industrial workers. Against this

mainstream current, it is refreshing to read an article which seeks to outline a new model of social class.

I am, however, critical of the way Huszár employs the normative concepts of both postsocialist capitalism and global capitalism in order to show that a certain degree of inequality is tolerated (furthermore, sanctioned) by society. While I agree with two central statements of Huszár that: (1) economic functions are embedded in social norms; and, (2) postsocialist transformation requires special consideration when developing new class models in Eastern Europe, in my critique I would like to take a closer look at the social norms, or rather the violation of these social norms, under postsocialist capitalism. That said, my paper is divided into five major parts. The first section introduces prognoses which critical thinkers formulated during the change of regimes. Here I seek to show that, contrary to the optimistic expectations of a quick catch-up with Western levels of consumption (Bryant – Mokrzycki 1994), these prognoses warned of the possibility of peripheral development and the establishment of autocratic regimes. In the second part I discuss the social embeddedness of privatization and I conclude that the way it was implemented essentially violated accepted social norms in the eyes of the public. This is why many people today consider the change of regimes to be illegitimate and why they look at big fortunes with suspicion rather than admiration. The third part gives examples of how the norms of equal competition are violated in the new, capitalist regimes and why the catchwords of moral renewal can be attractive to the “little man”. The fourth part discusses the inequalities of postsocialist capitalism which were not sanctioned by Hungarian society, and which explain why social and political programs that promise greater material equality and a new redistribution of property (which it is claimed will benefit local people rather than multinational or “foreign” capital) are popular among the public. In the fifth and last section I offer a general critique of the *Leistungsprinzip* and the concept of normative capitalism – since, in its radical form, the *Leistungsprinzip* excludes forms of solidarity and collective action and individualizes the representation of labor interests (see e.g. Trappmann 2013). Furthermore, the very existence of the *Realgeschichte* of peripheral development and postsocialist capitalism (with the survival of quasi-feudal elements – e.g. in Hungary [Hann 2012]) contradicts the concept of normative capitalism.

To conclude, while I agree with the project of developing a new class model, I am critical of the thesis that the inequalities of postsocialist capitalism are in line with the social norms accepted and sanctioned by society. My critical approach seeks to show that people are responsive to the catchwords of greater social and material equality and moral renewal precisely because they consider the emerging class structure to be unjust and illegitimate.

Critical Prognoses about the Change of Regimes

I will first reflect on Ákos Huszár's criticism that the class models elaborated in the Western sociological literature fail to take into account the specifically Eastern European phenomenon of postsocialist transformation, so they don't say much about it (and therefore it is necessary to develop a class model which pays sufficient attention to the wider historical-social context and the legacy of the state socialist past). Claus Offe (1996) has argued that such a requirement had not been present at any previous time in history, referring to the problem of what he called multiple transitions. Transition has been studied in the literature but in the former examples transition led from autocratic rule into parliamentary democracies (post-1945 Germany, Italy and Japan, the South-European democracies established in the 1970s, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile and Paraguay [O'Donnell et al. 1986]). While in these countries democratic transition took place in a capitalist environment, in Eastern Europe capitalist transformation went hand in hand with the establishment of democratic institutions. Offe argued that the unique nature of the Eastern European change of regimes lay in the problem of simultaneous transformations. He stated that it was unlikely that economic transition could be successful in a democratic environment because of its enormous social and human costs, which would not bear fruit in the lifetime of the "transitional" generation (whose consent is, however, badly needed because democratic transition requires the *legitimacy* of transformation). Thus, Offe reaches the conclusion that the experiment of transplanting western models to Eastern Europe would open the Pandora's Box of paradoxes, which renders it impossible to make a valid prognosis for the future of the region. He, however, assumed that, even in the best case, weak democracies and weak capitalist regimes would be created in the ex-socialist countries, but in the worst case he did not exclude the possibility of *the restoration of a dictatorship*.

In the Hungarian literature Erzsébet Szalai had pointed out this possibility as far back as 1989. The Hungarian sociologist explained the collapse of state socialism through structural factors inherent to the regime (such as the exhaustion of its adaptive capacities) and the appearance of a new elite, which *was no longer interested in the survival of the regime*. According to Szalai's prognosis, the consumption level of the new elite in the new regime would catch up with that of the Western elite (a phenomenon which she calls 'new capitalism'), while the remaining part of society would be affected by massive unemployment, impoverishment and the downgrading of their former social status. In 1989 she wrote:

"I don't exclude the case that in order to halt the continuing economic depression, *the bureaucratic new elite will experiment with the introduction of a reform dictatorship*.¹ This presupposes the support of strong parties. The purpose of the dictatorship is the

1 The emphasis in italics here and throughout the quote is mine.

weakening of the power of the new large industrial manager elite, the enforcement of a compromise, and the mass import of foreign capital... I, however, think that this is no real alternative. Even if the bureaucratic new elite were successful in winning over the strong parties neutralizing the new large industrial manager elite *and excluding the strata, which can't articulate their interest or possess a weak bargaining power, from the political sphere*, the democracy of the elite and the security of foreign capital would be undermined by frequent hunger riots. I think that the turbulent state of society would sooner deter foreign capital from the country than sufficient profit could be accumulated to satisfy the poor and the larger segment of the middle class, which is falling from grace. In order to suppress opposition, harsh and ruthless measures are needed – these methods are, however, alien from the new elite, which studied and worked in Western countries. Further, *a strong dictatorship would be unacceptable in the eye of the Western political public opinion* (whose judgment is important for the new elite). Finally, I expect the weakening of the power of the new elite because the intensification of economic and social tensions would increase its internal conflicts.” (Szalai 1989: 68–72)

The (still) ruling communist party, the MSZMP (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party), would have to deal not only with mass unemployment but outright revolution should an extensive, “maximal” structural reform program be realized (Földes 1989).

While a revolution failed to materialize, the disappointment of those who hoped for a quick and low-cost “transition” (which as Bryant – Mokrzycki (1994) rightly argue, combined the desire to catch up with Western levels of consumption with the maintenance of universal employment)² manifested itself in the electoral victory of postcommunist parties throughout Eastern Europe in the middle of the 1990s. However, the job security and the standards of living that the masses enjoyed in Hungary under state socialism could not be restored. The social prognosis that Erzsébet Szalai outlined on the eve of the change of regimes was fulfilled in many regards.

The above argumentation sought to support the thesis that any new class concept in Hungary should take postsocialist transformation into account. I fully agree with the thesis that Ákos Huszár develops in an earlier study (Huszár 2012) that the class models outlined by Erzsébet Szalai and Zsuzsa Ferge are good examples of the structural explanation of transformation. Both concepts of state socialism rely heavily on the process of rational redistribution by the state. Konrád – Szelényi (1979) and Erzsébet Szalai formulated a pioneering thesis about the rise of a new, technocratic elite which “administered” the change of regimes in Hungary and profited most from the privatization of state property, next to foreign capital (Szalai 2001). Iván Szelényi's extensive Eastern European studies supported Szalai's thesis that the technocratic elite could convert its economic capital into political and

2 For a critique of “transition” see Bartha (2010).

economic capital under postsocialist capitalism (Eyal et al. 1998). Tamás Krausz documented, using the example of the Soviet Union, how the Soviet political elite turned away from the social program of self-management and the democratic reforms of socialism and supported the neoliberal project advocated at that time by Yeltsin (Krausz 2003). In *Revolution Betrayed* Trotsky had already predicted that as soon as the nomenklatura felt that its political power was endangered, it would not hesitate to privatize state property and thereby preserve its power over society (albeit he was writing about the whole of the Soviet power elite, without distinguishing the technocratic elite) (Trotsky 1937).

As presented above, critical prognoses for postsocialist capitalism were already developed before the actual collapse of state socialism. These prognoses, however, received little publicity and were limited to a narrow group of intellectuals who were critical of both socialism and capitalism (as it actually existed). At the time of the general euphoria the opinions of these circles did not reach wider society – partly because many of the authors failed to distance themselves from the discredited Communist regime (Szalai 2004a).

With or Without Society? The Birth of Postsocialist Capitalism

A new class concept should take into consideration the social embeddedness of capitalism in Hungary. And here it is worth taking a wider look at the history of the development of capitalism in Hungary. As Ferenc Erdei's famous class model of interwar Hungary shows, the country was characterized by a strict caste society, in which "quasi-feudal" structures persisted alongside other elements which were undoubtedly modern; notably the urban proletariat brought into existence by capitalism (Hann 2012). We may find highly critical reflections on this "quasi-feudal" society in contemporary Hungarian literature ("Elmegy a kútágas/Marad csak a kútja/Meg híres Werbőczy/Úri pereputtya/Árvult kastély gondját/Kóbor kutya őrzi/Hivásd a törvénybe/Ha tudod, Werbőczy").³ The rules of equal competition thus "traditionally" remained invalid in Hungary. I will not get into a discussion here about the proposal that neither in developed Western countries is this normative approach valid: England is characterized even today by a caste society and competition between Western enterprises is not equal. However, in the former countries talent is, after all, sufficient for success; in Hungary, meanwhile, success is traditionally linked with string-pulling, something which Gyula Rézler sharply criticized even in the 1930s (Tóth 2011) and the Hungarian writers Kálmán Mikszáth and Zsigmond Móricz even before this. After 1945 there was a massive change in the elite in Hungary; both the Rákosi and Kádár regimes, however, built on

3 Rough translation: "Only the well is left/Deprived of the sweep/Together with the gentry families/following Werbőczy's lead/Stray dogs are guarding/the crumbling walls of the former castle/Make a new legislation/If you can, Werbőczy.." Werbőczy was a famous Hungarian legislator of the 16. century.

existing structures and mentalities. Therefore it is unjust to blame only János Kádár or the leadership around him for the fact that even though an industrial society was created under state socialism, a “quasi-feudal” mentality continued to exist alongside the modern structures, just as it did in interwar Hungary (Hann 2012). I think of the continuing importance of string-pulling, informal individual bargaining (Burawoy – Lukács 1992) and state control of private competition. The appearance of a new elite and the luxurious lives of its members (not even comparable with the luxury of today’s elite!) continue to trigger critical responses from contemporary Hungarian literature and working people (Majtényi 2009, Bartha 2004). Condemnation of the “rich” frequently is reported during surveying: workers complain because worker-peasants live better lives than they do (Bartha 2009). Lately, the same critique has been directed against those who work in the private sector.

And here I arrive at the most essential point of my criticism of Huszár’s study. One of the central theses of his model is the proposition that economic functions are *embedded* in valid social norms. But how do we identify valid social norms in contemporary Hungary? Are capitalist norms represented across the country, or do people feel an essential resentment towards postsocialist capitalism? Indeed, the norms of equal competition have been consistently violated and the “Fall” is linked with the birth of postsocialist capitalism: according to public opinion it was the postsocialist elite who benefited most from privatization – in any case, people who had connections under socialism “were close enough to the fire” to benefit. This is why cases of political corruption and stories of enrichment through dishonest means are widely publicized. Enrichment *in itself* is linked with corruption and disgrace or, even in the best case, with informal bargaining, string-pulling, the use of contacts, etc. in the eyes of the public. This is why the situation of János Kóka (who travels by private plane and wears a watch which costs millions of forints) evoked only envy and disapproval instead of the admiration usually granted a successful entrepreneur.⁴ “Behind every great fortune there hides a sin” – states Ben Mezrich (2010). This statement would meet with definite approval from the contemporary Hungarian public.

Privatization increased social mistrust since postsocialist capitalism everywhere created greater social and material inequalities than those which existed under state socialism. The drastic reduction in heavy industry resulted in massive unemployment and foreign capital created unfair competition for domestic enterprises which badly lacked capital and infrastructural investment (Swain 2011). Western authors also criticized neoliberal capitalism as a new “colonial” project for Eastern Europe (Gowan 1995; Amsden et al. 1994). To the question what kind of new structural positions postsocialist capitalism created in Hungary, we can answer that – in accordance with Western trends – it decreased the size of the industrial sector while significantly

4 This example can be seen as an aberration rather than a product of capitalism of course (see Csepeli et al. 2005).

increasing the share of the service sector in the economy. Outsourcing, however, reinforced structural inequalities between the East and West; this explains the relatively low proportion of capitalists and the high proportion of unskilled workers in Hungary in comparison with Western Europe. Szalai's model thus fairly depicts the state of internationally-structured inequalities, or the inequalities *embedded* in the global capitalist economy.

However, this form of inequality was not institutionalized (let alone sanctioned) by Hungarian society. I can explain the Hungarian susceptibility to conspiracy theories through this legitimacy gap ('the postcommunist elite sold the country to foreign capital', 'a narrow elite profited from the change of regimes', 'multinational companies destroyed Hungarian industry with the assistance of the Hungarian state governed by "Communists"', 'they only wanted to acquire Hungarian markets', etc.). My research confirmed the presence of strong anti-multinational feelings and *resentment* among the large, postsocialist, industrial working class even in 2004 (Bartha 2011). Their experience of the change of regime was that valuable factory units were sold, production was reduced as there was no demand for their products and management could not develop the required infrastructure, in sharp contrast with multinational companies which brought new technology to the country (Bartha 2013b). "We can't utilize our knowledge and this market economy has just knocked us out" – this was the general opinion and the feeling of my interviewees. It is not accidental that workers were disappointed "in capitalism": their skills and knowledge were downgraded under the new regime while they had to reconcile themselves with the fact that, even though people were also not equal under the Kádár regime, social-material inequalities significantly increased since 1989. Many of my interviewees complained that their children can't compete with the children of managers, doctors and lawyers who start their adult lives with much better chances (having had access to private language courses, sports classes, dance schools, ski camps, etc.).

Criticism of the new regime failed, however, to translate into a full-fledged anti-capitalist critique. Workers typically expect the state to protect domestic producers from multinational companies and unfair competition, and see a strong state and a kind of "third-road" national capitalism as a positive alternative. This can be explained through many different factors – the lack of a strong anti-capitalist public sphere, the discredited notion of 'the working class' and deeper historical-economic reasons which have tended to conserve the backwardness of the region (Hann 2012).

A Non-normative Capitalism

Here I arrive at my next criticism which deals with the issue of how homogenous the categories of Huszár's class model are. I argue that one should distinguish between public and market sectors because success is achieved through different norms and values. The public sector even today guarantees certain (albeit decreasing) security

and predictability; in the private sector, however, only multinational companies guarantee a predictable career (at least more so than smaller enterprises with less capital). I therefore consider Szalai's model (which distinguishes between multinational sector employees and domestic sector employees) to be relevant. The latter are described as poorly-paid, badly exploited '*bricoleurs*' who are often informally employed and who live from one day to the next, while the former are considered to be part of the new labor aristocracy (Szalai 2004b). At the same time, Szalai stresses the differentiated character of the Hungarian working class; the very weak (or non-existent) class consciousness and the weakness of local trade unions, both of which severely hinder domestic workers from developing into a class – and of course, from representing their labor interests.

Norms of success are likewise different. Ákos Huszár stresses that, in the public sector, the period of service is proportionate to pay and better career opportunities (managerial positions, top functions, etc.) but in reality political connections can (and frequently do) overrule this condition. In other words, we often find, in reality, systematic contra-selection. In the market sector, thanks to increased competition, results count more in principle.

After reaching the conclusion that the structure of vacant positions in Hungary significantly differs from that of advanced Western countries, it is worth taking a closer look at the question of how these positions are filled. Ákos Huszár assumes that this process is governed (or at least should be governed) by a normative order, equal competition and a performance-based pay system. In practice, however, we see that society strongly mistrusts the existing democratic institutions (Laki 2009), and that the technocratic elite of the late Kádár era acquired property through privatization *at the expense of the general public*. As one of my interviewees, a Rába employee who became an entrepreneur, put it:

"Plundering capitalism...the Communist gang which was close to the fire gained fortunes after the change of regimes. Everybody knows this, and it is a different question that the newspaper *Kisalföld* is silent about similar issues. He [the manager] bought two dredgers which the factory bought for 100 000 HUF, but he got them for 5 000 HUF when the unit was privatized. This was an enterprise and what I did was also an enterprise...but we started out with *unequal chances*.⁵ He became the manager of a factory with 500 workers and he invested nothing in his business because he even stole 5 000 HUF from the factory. Nine out of ten enterprises were created this way in this country. I ask you: what is the difference between socialism and today's system? Our balance will always be negative because we cannot produce anything, because they sell everything. We won't have any national property. What was advocated after 1945 – that everything belonged to the working people... now, I ask you, *where* is that property? Either it was sold to foreigners or it went

5 Stress is mine.

into the bank accounts of these types of Hungarian businessmen. I mean also the management of this factory who are stealing the last pennies from the workers – here is the property!”

How then are vacant positions filled in contemporary Hungary? A few empty positions can be found at the top of the pyramid and the majority of capitalist positions have already been filled. It is doubtful that in the given international economic environment and under the constraints of the performance of the Hungarian economy this circle can be extended. In the middle strata, schooling is usually the dominant criteria for getting a job; however, today when it is a European requirement to increase the number of college graduates (although the present Hungarian government advocates the opposite) it is a valid question which criteria really determine the fulfillment of positions, which require special knowledge and which can ensure a satisfactory income. This is one reason why the state can be “omnipotent”, since working in the public sector still carries prestige as the state can offer a secure job, income and career opportunities. The market sector can’t provide enough jobs for (young) university or college graduates. This again reinforces “quasi-feudal” practices and mentalities in the fulfillment of jobs.

Erzsébet Szalai speaks of two models of capitalism in Hungary: the first *laissez faire* model is being replaced by a semi-autocratic/autocratic regime because only major foreign and domestic capital can restore rule over an increasingly divided society (Szalai 2012, 2013). I stress her thesis that capital is creating no new jobs on the semi-periphery (Szalai 2013). The role of capital in the administration of the state is well demonstrated by the fact that the quality of training schools is centrally downgraded by the removal of so-called general knowledge classes from the curriculum – as if those who are at the bottom of the job hierarchy do not need the general knowledge which would help them develop a critical perspective about the whole system (instead of accepting wholeheartedly and uncritically nationalist-populist ideologies, or conspiracy theories favored by the far right). It remains an open-ended question whether an autocratic government can be durably established in Hungary; here I have strong doubts. Time’s arrow points forwards, in spite of the greatest Turul statues, or the most efficient shamanic ceremonies. As Chris Hann (2012) stated, the bitter postsocialist experiences which facilitated a historical perspective focused on the past and the politics of *resentment* (about Trianon, about state socialism, about postsocialism, etc.). Hann’s criticism has much in common with Szalai’s sharp critique of what she calls “new capitalism”.

...and if the Competition is Unequal? The Losers of Postsocialist Capitalism

The next important set of questions concerns the homogeneity of life chances, lifestyles and a common (political) consciousness.⁶ It is well known that the life chances and life quality of the lower classes are worse than those of the upper social strata and they have fewer social contacts. However, in postindustrial societies the real dividing line is not between workers and capitalists (since if we consider an information scientist or a foreman in an Audi subsidiary to be a wage worker, then we can conclude that wage workers live better lives than, for example, self-employed “capitalists” who own small shops) but rather between the employed and the unemployed. And here I am not speaking about the prospects of starvation but of perspectives about the future, since it makes an essential difference what career opportunities a profession offers (and what the consequences are of exclusion from the job market). The normative *Leistungsprinzip* turns essentially *against* workers and employees: after all, they got what they deserved! Under the postindustrial regime, capitalist control over employees significantly increases, precisely because of the abolishment of collective wage agreements. In the market sector the majority of employees are paid according to performance/output, and if (for example) an employee has a low output because of personal crisis, they can only count on the sympathy of the employer.⁷

In an article published in *Le Monde diplomatique*, Marie Bénilde gives a fully-fledged critique of the functioning of American techno-capitalism (the outsourcing of production to China which deprived millions of Americans of their jobs, the employment of a cheap and ruthlessly exploited workforce, cruel working conditions, the banning of trade unions [the former CEO of Apple, Steve Jobs, recommended to Obama that the government should weaken teachers’ trade unions in order to “revolutionize” education])⁸ and we can endlessly continue the list of inhuman and humiliating methods employed by American “corporate” culture (dismissed employees can no longer enter their offices and their personal belongings are sent to them in the post – the method shows frightening similarity to the view under Stalinism that the unmasked “enemy” should be removed from society because, as confirmed criminals, they would surely try to undermine socialism). This appraisal of techno-capitalism is not, however, limited to Steve Jobs and his biographers; as an example I mention here Manuel Castells, one of the first authors to criticize the expansion of the informal sector in advanced capitalist countries (Portes et al. 1989); however, he later devoted a trilogy of books to the Silicon-valley revolution which contains only few criticisms of techno-capitalism. Postindustrial capitalism

6 There is no opportunity here to discuss the anthropological literature in detail. See the impressive work of Ágnes Kapitány and Gábor Kapitány (2007) and Zigon (2009).

7 From the Hungarian literature see Somlai (2007) on the social and human consequences of postindustrialism/postfordism.

8 Marie Bénilde: Az Apple, Steve Jobs és az amerikai neokapitalizmus. <http://magyardiplo.hu/kezdlap/667-az-apple-steve-jobs-es-az-amerikai-neokapitalizmus>

was, however, very creative in how it dealt with the abolishment of collective wage agreements and maximally exploited *Leistungsprinzip* – even at the cost of the extreme exploitation of workers.⁹ After all, even in the case of so-called creative jobs there is a huge (fresh) graduate reserve army at the gates¹⁰...

What can we say about the life chances and the internal solidarity of the communities? I agree with Ákos Huszár that a class model based on occupational categories may be relevant here because the quality of life of a successful domestic entrepreneur does not differ much from that of a manager of a multinational company. However, it is important to call attention to a problematic point of contemporary class models and this is how they define the working class. Zsuzsa Ferge fully and Erzsébet Szalai partly outline a model of contemporary Hungarian social structure on the basis of the relationship between capital and labor. Both consider the working class to be an independent category (albeit they don't speak of class because of the lack of a common class consciousness). I think that both are right in the argument that the workers occupy an *ambiguous* position in the class hierarchy. Membership in the low- middle-and upper classes unambiguously indicates social status, while “workers” *can belong both to the low and middle classes* (Ferge 2010). And this is where I also see the ambiguous position of today's working class. After all, what does it mean to be a worker when traditional large industry has ceased to exist? Is a plumber who works as an entrepreneur a worker? Can we call the badly-paid, lowly-positioned white-collar workers in the service sector workers? And what is even more important: what shapes their consciousness, *the desire of the middle classes to migrate to the upper classes, or is a shared consciousness about those who are excluded rooted in this group?*

Erzsébet Szalai defines workers as being “those who live from the selling of their workforce but they don't fill managerial positions in any sense of the word. This definition thus relies on two factors: firstly, it considers the capital-labor relationship and secondly, occupational hierarchy” (Szalai 2011: 80). Within the working class Szalai distinguishes four groups: graduates who have job security, graduates who lack job security, non-graduates who have job security and non-graduates who lack job security (Szalai 2001: 81). It is important to note that in her analysis a degree only serves as a “ticket” to a better job and it offers no guarantee, while without a degree the “losers” can only hope for a miracle or emigrate if they want to improve their chances.

The above definitions, however, fail to answer the question of whether the lower classes and the working class think in terms of classes (with equal chances in life). On the basis of my labor research, the answer is a definite no. I argue that national-populist ideologies can be attractive “catchwords” *precisely because the notion of class is not widespread in the consciousness of the lower classes* (Bartha 2013b). This is

9 Burawoy (1985) argued very early on that postindustrial capitalism would develop towards hegemonic despotism.

10 See Bartha (2013a) for a more detailed analysis.

understandable and it can be explained precisely through the *Leistungsprinzip*: *who would identify themselves voluntarily as a loser?* Is it not normal that the wage workers in the service sector identify with the middle class and they consider themselves to be white-collar employees instead of wage workers? Ferge and Szalai call the working-class consciousness fragmented; it is, however, a valid question whether today there is class consciousness at all – at least in the lower classes. Traditional working-class communities (which indeed meant living and working communities of individuals) have been dissolved and the term “worker” in Eastern Europe is heavily burdened with the discredited legitimizing ideology of state socialism. And who would identify voluntarily with the losers or the relics of a discredited social(ist) era? It is worth comparing Szalai’s research on youth (2011) with Katherine S. Newman’s American life history interviews (Newman 1988, 1999).¹¹ Newman investigates how the American middle class that was socialized under capitalism experiences downward mobility, and how the habitus (using Bourdieu’s terminology) tries to adapt to the changing conditions and environment. In Newman’s studies, society does not change; the United States continues to regard downwardly mobile families as losers, a notion which is shared by their children who seek to escape from their family environments. Where then is the “revolution” here? Or rather: is it possible (or “profitable”) to rebel against the system in the semiperiphery when the center itself does not move? Instead of the world “revolution” that Trotsky advocated, the periphery has realized the program of “socialism in one country”: its lessons warn us that the opportunities of the periphery are at best constrained by developments at the center.

Of course, we can add that it was not only the state socialist past which created the fragmented working-class consciousness and the weakness of labor representation in Hungary. Foreign investors also preferred trade unions under the tutelage of management and cheap labor to the strong trade unions of the Western model (Tóth 2013). My own research confirms the conclusions of András Tóth: trade unions are generally held to be puppet organizations whose only advantages are the Christmas presents they provide and the holiday accommodation they offer at reduced prices (in enterprises which still have holiday camps or weekend houses...)

A closer look at the Hungarian underclass is even more depressing. When discussing the inequalities created by Hungary’s new capitalism, Zsuzsa Ferge stressed that one million jobs were lost and were not replaced (Ferge 2012). It is important to bear this data in mind when the government speaks of a “work-based” society. Ferge estimates the proportion of losers from the change of regime to be around 45–50%; the situation of about 30–35% remained unchanged and 20–25% won. Poverty is, however, durable in Hungary: on the basis of a panel survey of 3,000 people, from those who were poor in 1992, 60% remained poor after fifteen years, and

11 On Szalai’s book, see Bartha (2012) in more detail.

only 7% succeeded in improving their situations. These are very disappointing data and they support the notion that Hungarian society has become increasingly closed. This explains the ambiguous evaluation of the Kádár regime: a vision of greater social and material equality is confused with a longing for a strong state, order and an autocratic government, a preference that was evinced in many interviews. It is worth citing an empirical study which concluded that in 2000 Hungarians that perceived there were two basic insecurities: public order and income (Ferge 2012: 34). We can find likewise interesting relationships among the variables of gender, education, income and desire for security (also supported in my interviews): women and those with little education more desire security, and there is a marked difference between the poor and the non-poor: among the non-poor 12% were in favor of having more security, while among the poor this figure was 45% (Ferge 2012: 37). In Hungary the only group which ranked freedom highly and held security to be less important and thought that the new system was better than the old one consisted mainly of winners of the change of regime.

Ferge explains the great Hungarian inequalities by referring to history (the survival of quasi-feudal structures, economic backwardness, etc. which have led to the contemporary, sharp political division of the nation). She also points out the excessively great independence of self-governments, something which is also sharply criticized by János Ladányi (2012), who holds it to be one of the reasons for multiple deprivations (e.g. segregation at school). Ferge cites György Kecskeméti who in 1937 sharply criticized the Hungarian “third road” ideologies advocated by the peasant-populist movement:

Today just like in the second half of the 1930s, “*the right-wing political parties seek to win over the social strata, which according to their class and disposition sympathize with the political right, with essentially left-wing promises.*”¹² The left-wing promises are targeted at increasing general material welfare and sometimes they are directed against the rich with an emancipatory rhetoric, but *the right-wing social electoral camp is not enable to universalize these demands*. This is not possible because of the exclusive principle of categorization, which carries an emotional weight (Ferge 2012: 55; emphasis in the original).

If we link these statements with the empirical surveys which show how important the middle class, feeling its social status to be endangered, considers security to be (even at the cost of “limited” democracy), we can understand the social success of the rhetoric of the present right-wing political parties which promise order, security and a “work-based” society (with performance-based rewards).

Poverty is measured in Hungary using TÁRKI’s household panel surveys, the panel surveys of KSH HKF and the EU-SILC (Változó Életkörülmények) panel surveys conducted on large samples since 2005. Ferge gives the following cautious

12 György Kecskeméti [1937] (2002)

estimate: if we hold that the lowest-income social strata is poor (without including the retired), one-third of them (7-8% of the non-retired population) may be poor over many generations. This means 5-600,000 people. The situation of other families who can be considered poor deteriorated after 1989 (it is worth recalling that Ferge estimated the proportion of losers to be 45-50%). Ferge concludes that poverty is not temporary: true, second-hand shops are better than no shops, but second-hand clothes won't help families escape from poverty. Poverty can only be overcome through the help of an elaborate, extensive, targeted social program which would need to be wholeheartedly embraced by more than one government.

Poverty and "social ghettos" existed under state socialism even if the regime tactfully refused to give wide publicity to social problems. One of the outcomes of the change of regimes was the *accumulation of deprivation*. The significant loss of industrial jobs particularly badly affected unskilled workers, many of whom could find no new long-term employment. Ladányi (2012) gives a sadly expressive description of how through the help of a program of so-called rehabilitation of a living area the Roma population was effectively excluded from the city of Budapest and how flats, which were distributed according to social needs, were privatized. As a result, the Roma population concentrated in areas where housing was cheap. These are mainly small villages (*törpefalu*) where there is no public transport, no job opportunities, no schools, no training or public work, no doctors and, in general, no infrastructure which would provide the framework of a decent or at least normal life. These families are thus condemned to live under these primitive conditions and their children will also suffer from multiple deprivations as they rarely even finish primary school. I cite the most important conclusions of Ladányi's empirical study:

"Geographical segregation, the segregation of the poor, and primarily that of the Roma population, sharply increased after the change of regimes. If one looks at the maps of where the unemployed, the uneducated and the Romas are concentrated, these maps are easily interchangeable. The relationship is so strong among the processes of segregation that they show the same tendencies. In the North-eastern, Eastern and Southern and South-western regions of the country there is a concentration of small, poor, and multiply disadvantaged settlements (*törpefalu* or *aprófalu*), where there is a very high concentration of the excluded and multiply disadvantaged Roma population." (Ladányi 2012: 175)

This diagnosis and the data that one-fifth of the population of the country lives in segregation – the facts are similar to those contained in Ferge's book (Ferge 2012) – give a sad picture of contemporary Hungary. Ladányi sharply criticizes Roma self-governments which have failed to represent the interests of poor Romas and (very often) even those of the Roma in general. He also criticizes educational segregation which enables the "good" schools (e.g. church schools) to effectively exclude Roma

children who are considered to be “problematic”. Educational segregation reproduces multiple deprivations since Roma children who attend “special” schools (often schools for mentally retarded children, or for children with behavioral problems) see no positive examples or role models and only experience exclusion. No wonder that many fail to even finish primary school which outright excludes them from the job market. A contemporary Hungarian class model should pay sufficient attention to the problem of a large underclass.

And here we are back to the criterion which significantly determines the life chances of the classes and this is *perspective*. It is not only living standards that are low in the social ghettos but also perspective. After all, what can one do with a primary school (or even with a secondary-school) leaving certificate,¹³ which would be a great step forward for the poor Roma youth? What perspective can a poor young man who lives in a *törpefalu* where there is no employment, and who can't afford to pay rent in Budapest have? I stress my conclusion that Hungarian society is becoming closed – at least for the lower strata. I return to my original question: how are vacant positions filled in contemporary Hungary? Is it fair competition (whatever that means) that determines how (good) positions are filled? After all, many young Hungarians don't even get a chance to participate in higher education – and there are large differences among the market values of the different degrees. Surely a Cambridge or Oxford graduate has different chances than a young man who has gained a degree from a college school in the Hungarian countryside – even if the latter is equally able (perhaps his family could not afford a better university). Where then are the equal chances in contemporary Hungary?

Conclusion: A Critique of Normative Capitalism

A contemporary valid class model should take into consideration the structural position of a country embedded in the global capitalist economy (and its unequal structural relations) and the social consequences for the (semi)periphery. One of these consequences is migration. What will happen to the youth who choose to migrate; how is the government prepared to help them return to their home country, *how can they be re-integrated* and how does having foreign job experience facilitate social mobility? While in the East it is customary to view the West as a “paradise”, many forget that in the West there is also ruthless competition for better jobs and only a few succeed in fully integrating into foreign societies. Thus a *responsible* social policy should effectively facilitate the return of foreign workers if they accumulate enough capital and decide to return home.

Above I sought to outline some critical thoughts about the validity of Western models to Hungarian society. One of the most important features of Eastern

¹³ Abitur.

European societies is that they are not yet crystallized (at least in the middle and upper strata)¹⁴ (Kalb 2012, Swain 2011). It can happen that today's successful entrepreneur will end up in prison tomorrow or won't be able to repay their loans, their degrees in economics and law, which promised a good career at the beginning of the 1990s, may have lost their value by the millennium (let alone degrees in communication or political studies...). The weakening of class consciousness (or its historical weakness) facilitates the strengthening of nationalist-populist ideologies and renders politics unpredictable.

I would like to formulate one more criticism of normative theories. While it is true that economics functions *embedded* in social norms, we can't deny the right of sociologists to criticize these norms – even if they are (deeply) rooted in society. Let's take a well known historical example: in the Germany of the 1930s Nazis sought to win over the masses with the promise of (greater) social justice – after all, they wanted to exclude the Jewish 'profiteers' from society in the name of this ideology! In the 1930s the contemporary Hungarian elite likewise sought to solve the social question through the appropriation of Jewish property (Aly – Gerlach, 2005). Many people were convinced that this ideology was correct, even if many war prisoners were worked to death and major German capitalists profited from the war (Bartha – Krausz 2011). These norms cannot be considered normative.

While the *Leistunsprinzip* may be an important driving mechanism of the economy, we should recognize the traps which the ruthless realization of this norm holds for society. The *Leistunsprinzip* should be counterbalanced with the essential principle of human solidarity – after all, even if there is equal competition (which rarely happens in reality!) this will inevitably lead to the exclusion of the less gifted and the creation of a large underclass. On the one hand we will observe the accumulation and transfer of advantages and all forms of capital (the transfer of cultural capital from one generation to the next is nicely documented in Hungary, see e.g. Szelényi 1992), while on the other hand some families will only be able to transfer a multiply disadvantaged position to their children. One of the most important characteristics of postsocialist capitalism is not that a starving army of proletariat is confronted with a little group of capitalists, but rather that differences are increased in relation to life chances. In Anglo-Saxon and Western societies it is very difficult to fall from grace if one starts from a good position, while there is an increasingly difficult path to travel from the bottom (or underclass) to the lower or middle strata. Disadvantages multiply precisely because many poor young people in the "ghettoes" see no future whatsoever apart from drugs, alcohol and crime, which at least make them forget the lack of other perspectives. On the other hand,

¹⁴ Here I would argue with Szalai who thinks that the mobility of Hungarian society was closed at the beginning of the millennium. There are signs that the *laissez faire* model has been replaced by an autocratic model but politics is likewise incalculable and therefore the social field can also change.

however, inequalities are increasing enormously: students from elite universities are “winners” even as undergraduates (as we can learn from movies such as *The Social Network*). In the underclass the formation of a common consciousness is hindered by the fact that many believe that their “value” is determined by their performance or that they get what they deserve. This is why they aspire to membership of the higher classes; everybody is afraid of social exclusion. Next to Nazi Germany I can cite another historical example: in Stalinist Russia many truly believed that the arrested Communists were indeed spies, enemies and saboteurs and of course, we see many careerists who seek to exploit the social atmosphere of general fear and mistrust. This process is depicted in *Children of the Arbat* by Anatoly Rybakov, where he shows how a young man (a committed Communist) becomes victim of a show trial and even his best friends believe that he betrayed the cause. I can also mention here the book *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China*, the autobiography of Jung Chang, in which she depicts how her father, a Communist officer, was persecuted by his deputy who aspired to occupy his position in the administrative hierarchy during the cultural revolution. These examples show us that we should be able to criticize social norms, even if they are not violated as spectacularly as they have been under postsocialist capitalism. The next generations will decide whether the ‘heretics’ or the normative scholars were right...

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New Lines of a Functional Analysis of Structure!?

Some Glosses on the Study by Ákos Huszár

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The last two years have witnessed a number of remarkable publications by Ákos Huszár in both the Hungarian and English versions of *Szociológiai Szemle* and *Statisztikai Szemle*. Considering some earlier disregard for the theme of social structure, not only on the terrain of Hungarian sociology but on a larger plane as well, the attention evoked by this new research initiative causes no wonder and is certainly to be welcomed. With a view to the fact that I have already expressed my opinion by commenting on one of the articles mentioned above (notably, in *Statisztikai Szemle*), I wish to keep my role in the present discussion somewhat low-profile – as suggested by the subtitle of this article. As for the title, and in particular the two punctuation marks at the end – taken from the game of chess – they are intended to manifest the promise of this “scientific move” which is no doubt worth of consideration on the one hand, although questionable in some respects on the other. To finish my introductory comments and turn to making substantive remarks, I will continue by offering a few points of support and making a few critiques on both sides. In contrast to my earlier comments which highlighted some alternative approaches according to distinct lines of literature, the following remarks will deploy just a minimal number of references.

1. Starting with the point touched on beforehand, the decrease in emphasis on structural aspects is not unrelated to the lesser role that occupation, work status, and, in general, economic inequalities have occupied on the agenda of social research. In the domestic field this results from a quite long-lasting natural backlash against the schematic class models derived from vulgar Marxist conceptions that were ideologically predominant in their respective periods (the surpassing of which was greatly helped by, among other things, the Hungarian sociology which emerged from the sixties onwards). To touch on some personal contributions as well (not without their paradoxical features), Róbert Angelusz and I expressed some disagreement with deterministic economic models when we outlined our research platform and, in particular, carried out our studies into cultural and interaction

stratification during the eighties (when we stressed the role of communication and aspects like social networks, styles of knowledge and milieus based on the former components). The individualization thesis of Beck, Schulze's 'experience society' and some prognostic statements in the larger field of social science about the "end of working society" were impulses which repeatedly pointed in this direction. After perceiving a kind of swinging of the pendulum to the other side, some time after the turn of the century we sought to re-emphasize the further significance of structural analysis and its array of traditional elements and apparatus. It is another matter that the impact of global rearrangements of technological and economic structures with their implications for increasing individualization should not be ignored. These trends have impressed the main currents of sociological practice in such a pervasive way that it may need a bit of courage even today to embark on the type of research programs that have now been undertaken by Ákos Huszár, who goes back to major domestic antecedents with their foci on occupation and work status, in some respects contrary to mainstream thought. As far as I can see, the antecedents in question have not lost their relevance for orienting research of either earlier or more recent periods. This statement may hold even more strongly if we think of the relatively simple construction of these approaches, and of their conceptual scheme which permits, at some points, a better differentiated outline than the models in current usage in the field of stratification do.

2. Beyond the theoretical origins that certainly dominate the whole endeavor, the chosen approach also contains some practical elements which appear to be reasonable on their own. Even if basically changed in the way it is institutionally embedded, the domestic practice of social statistics in the last half century or so has maintained important elements of continuity (those in accordance with the basic setup outlined by Zsuzsa Ferge and Rudolf Andorka not the least), with its apt interface with the international streams of stratification and mobility research. It is not without justification that the author refers in his work to the statement by Esping-Anderson concerning the certain similarity between most occupational class models in practice, which somewhat contrasts with the dissimilarity between their theoretical frames. Beyond its host of functions in the field of social statistics we have to contend with the existence of a research database of many decades that it would be unwise to ignore, even in the case of a radical change in the conceptual frame. Some significant series of comparative or national survey programs that enable some variation with regard to various theoretical intentions have been built on related modules (a former part of these studies presented a pertinent illustration concerning the occupational block of the European Social Survey that permits the construction of all the current model variants in international research practice). Even if the theoretical objectives of Ákos Huszár may in some respects differ from the domestic antecedents mentioned before, the practical solutions that are proposed

could, as far as I can see, be easily adaptable so they conform to the comparative requirements of time trends and regional analyses.

3. It goes beyond these frames to dwell on how functionalism and (not only) one of its leading figures, Talcott Parsons, came into “disrepute” as far as the tendencies of the last three or four decades of international sociology are concerned. In admitting that there is some justification for aversion toward the theoretical construction that at some period maintained a hegemonic position, stereotypical portrayals had a lot to do, at least as much as I can assess, with the formation of attitudes in this regard as well. The fact that Ákos Huszár (presumably also influenced by some ideas of Axel Honneth) looked for some theoretical backing in this direction may be seen by itself as proof of a novel vision; of a certain sovereignty of thinking. This line entails, in fact, broad terms of interpretation: the foundations of occupational differentiation as framed by Durkheim may be involved, just as may achievement-based, meritocratic conceptions based on later sociological developments. Although its normative pillars have from time to time been undermined by departures from reality, one may still state that, if we do not relinquish our grip on the notion of public good and related integrative objectives, we shall be not far away from being able to assess the extent of inequalities and their mutual interdependencies (or, to put it as Blau does, their consolidation), on the basis of criteria that can be derived from them. Also, if we discover some differences between social formations that function for better or worse and also the respective patterns of reward for specific performances, we may also be inclined to look for relationships between these patterns and the working efficiency of those larger systemic units. Are the structural components of given societies “in place” to provide talent, thrift and skills with opportunities to find their “destinations” (or even just to remain in the frames of the given system), and do these merits really have a decisive role when contrasted with resources of inheritance or bestowed endowments? Such functional problems (and their like) have informed investigations by Blau, Duncan and a number of other sociologists. We need not accept all the Parsonian conceptions about systemic control or the existence of a concert of values and norms to also create fruitful research from such starting points.

4. To turn to my critiques, the interpretation of the concept of structure itself is the first thing that should be addressed with a view to some reduction of its frames. Let us add that, when treating functional theories in the manner of Parsons, one may have to deal with substantially different conceptions of structure than is the case with typical versions of class theories. Ákos Huszár starts out with an immediate declaration of divergence from the focus on exploitation taken by neo-Marxist models (and let us note here in reference to the works of one of the front-line figures, the increasingly differentiated model by Erik Wright based on several

types of resources has in fact come quite close to neo-Weberian conceptions) and also from the interpretation of capital(s) by Bourdieu, while categorical distinctions, formations of symbolic boundaries or the nature of linkages between various types of inequalities are only indistinctly (or are not at all) present among the given theoretical frames, not to speak about the social network backgrounds of all of these. In contrast to these approaches it is the integration foci of Parsons that serve as yardsticks of orientation. This option does not lack coherence in the research program as a whole. It may be added that this emphasis on integration does not by itself define the main research perspectives, which are principally open toward several lines of interpretation (if a conceptual distinction between types of social and system integration were applied in the wake of Lockwood and others the above approaches would predominantly figure among the former, while models like those created by Parsons would be placed among the latter). As for the author's ideas regarding structure, it is a focus on employment status and earning activity that may shed light on the sources of inequalities and their generative mechanisms, although their weight is somewhat diminished by their display among horizontal aspects in the conceptual frame. While state versus market employment and the related institutions of redistribution are further elements which indicate the relevance of the theoretical setup, these elements just like the sector dimension as a whole (whether based on conceptions similar to those of Esping-Andersen's or those of other authors), turn out to have a lesser role through the process of operationalization. To make a last remark about structure, though Ákos Huszár distinguishes his approach from those that are closer to stratification (and perhaps even further from those newer types of approaches that focus on milieus), it can not be maintained that his explicitly structural aspects significantly outweigh the characteristics of the former ones, or that they exhaust, as a study of structure "writ large", the potentialities of such investigations (let us add here that the author himself, very rightly, does not present such a claim).

5. As referred to above, the functional approach may allow for an array of structural ideas that extends to dynamics as well, an outcome which is not far from the theoretical ambitions of the research program. Parsons, for example, pointed out some (second-order) political or integrative roles typically affiliated with specific occupational groupings (as representatives of the economic subsystem) as a particular implication of horizontal differentiation. The Merton-like version of functionalism, however, treated the potential tension between normative-integrative structures more emphatically (among these tensions being the systemic contradictions between ends and means, the existence of dysfunctions alongside positive aspects and the presence of latent functions alongside manifest ones). But even the later stream of the Luhmann-type of functionalism came up with a significant contribution in this regard by raising the problem of 'total exclusion' alongside the whole set of

subsystems, potentially even extending the given development to the situation of large social segments. This contributed to a shift of emphasis from the idea of general upgrading, a kind of universal inclusion in the frames of systemic modernization, as Parsons conceived it.

6. As to the expected results of this research program, much depends on the operationalization and technical implementation of basic outlines – with many options left open as yet. Substantively also belonging to the conceptual frame, the parallel role of vertical and horizontal aspects among elements of the basic setup deserves attention, too. The interpretation of these dimensions and their actual representation among the specific structural components is again a further question. As referred to above, the treatment of employment status and earning activity and the existence of some negligence (or provision of just a vague outline among conceptual frames) of sector type among the potential foci of the horizontal aspect may be disputed. Let me remind readers here of the particularly subtle dimensional elaborations by Róbert Angelusz (that started out by using the salience of the distinction between categories of identities and the respective conditions of visibility as key issues of structural analyses), with a typology based on vertical and horizontal aspects as two distinct axes, and thus able to discern non-typical elements in terms of Blau-like structural parameters (such as hierarchical ones with sharp lines of cleavage, and categorical ones with an ordered character). Should this sound too abstract, let me also call attention to the problems likely to emerge during the process of categorization implied by the parallel inclusion of occupational and working status elements in the basic model. To gain insight into the possible complications it seems worth just going through some survey data records and having a look at concrete occurrences in a random manner; the socio-demographic, and in particular, occupational blocks, may contain much information of interest. How would one categorize, just to take some examples, a registered self-employed (free-lance) intellectual, a taxi-driver (somewhat similarly forced to gain entrepreneurial status), or, taking a glimpse at another segment, a retired CEO from a multinational corporation? Further experimentation with other possible systems of classification may be underway, and would be timely. Grusky and others increasingly urge that the field of structural research gets down to empirically comparing rival models and assessing their relative power to discriminate various measures of inequality or other types of dependent variables. As one of his first pieces from the current series of articles demonstrated, Ákos Huszár is not far from the practice of such – empirical or theoretical – evaluations. It might be worthwhile testing the present model (or model versions) in a similar way, with the goal of potentially highlighting where it proves to be more or less efficient at this task. However, maybe this recommendation is pushing at an open door since such elaborations already seem quite plausible considering the systematic way the research program has been built up so far.