

# BELVEDERE

MERIDIONALE

TÖRTÉNELEM ÉS TÁRSADALOMTUDOMÁNYOK XXVI. ÉVFOLYAM, 4. SZÁM

---

## *Viewpoints, Perspectives*



EDITOR OF THE THEMATIC ISSUE: PÁSZKA, IMRE

# BELVEDERE

MERIDIONALE

TÖRTÉNELEM ÉS TÁRSADALOMTUDOMÁNYOK

Főszerkesztő KISS GÁBOR FERENC

Szerkesztőbizottság SZEGFŰ LÁSZLÓ (elnök), JANCSÁK CSABA, KISS GÁBOR FERENC,  
MARJANUCZ LÁSZLÓ, NAGY TAMÁS, NÓTÁRI TAMÁS, PÁSZKA IMRE, RÁCZ LAJOS

Szerkesztők HALMÁGYI MIKLÓS, KOVÁCS ATTILA,  
MIKLÓS PÉTER, NAGY GÁBOR DÁNIEL

Munkatársak DARVAI TIBOR, GATTI BEÁTA, MALÉTH ÁGNES

Tanácsadó testület ANDAHÁZI SZEGHY VIKTOR, BANGÓ JENŐ, GARDA DEZSŐ,  
GEBEI SÁNDOR, KOSZTA LÁSZLÓ, KUBINSZKY MIHÁLY, SZAKÁLY SÁNDOR



Számunk az EIKKA Alapítvány, az EMKE Kft., a Dél-magyarországi Pedagógiai Alapítvány, a Magyar Történelmi Társulat Csongrád Megyei és Szegedi Csoportja, a Nemzeti Kulturális Alap, a Szegedi Tudományegyetem Polgáraiért Alapítvány, az SZTE Bölcsészettudományi Kar, az SZTE Juhász Gyula Pedagógusképző Kar, az SZTE Alkalmazott Humántudományi Intézet, az SZTE Történettudományi Intézet, az SZTE JGYPK HŐK és a SZEPA Alapítvány támogatásával készült.

A Belvedere Meridionale online elérhető itt:  
[www.belvedere.meridionale.hu](http://www.belvedere.meridionale.hu)

*A lap tanulmányokat, interjúkat, ismertetéseket és kritikákat közöl a történelem és a társadalomtudományok köréből. A közlésre benyújtott cikk még nem publikált és más folyóiratnál elbírálás alatt nem lévő, eredeti írásmű lehet. A benyújtott és a lap jellegének megfelelő írásokat két, a szerző számára ismeretlen szakmai lektor bírálja el. A két lektor véleményének figyelembevételével a szerkesztőség döntést hoz a megjelenetésről, melyet a szerzővel közöl.*

A folyóirat megjelenik évente négy alkalommal: tavasszal, nyáron, ősszel és télen.

Kiadja a BELVEDERE MERIDIONALE ALAPÍTVÁNY. Felelős kiadó: DR. SZEGFŰ LÁSZLÓ

Cím: 6725 Szeged, Hattyas sor 10. Tel.: +36 62/546-252

E-mail: [belvedere@jgytf.u-szeged.hu](mailto:belvedere@jgytf.u-szeged.hu), [szerk@belvedere.meridionale.hu](mailto:szerk@belvedere.meridionale.hu)

ISSN 1419-0222 (nyomtatott) ISSN 2064-5929 (online)

## Contents

PÁSZKA, IMRE: <i>Preface</i>	{5}
<b>Studies</b>	
SZELENYI, IVAN: <i>Pathways from and Crises after Communism: the Case of Central Eastern Europe</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.1	{7}
LOSONCZ, ALPAR: <i>Spirituality, Crisis, and Illusions</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.2	{24}
PÁSZKA, IMRE: <i>Outline of the Sociological Approach of Synergy Representations</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.3	{37}
SIK, DOMONKOS: <i>Critical Theory and Political Socialization</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.4	{56}
JANCSÁK, CSABA: <i>Student Self-governance in Hungary in the New Millennium: Advocacy, Organisation, Entrepreneurship in the Higher Education Supermarket</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.5	{64}
PÉTER, LÁSZLÓ: <i>The Genesis of Romanian Football Social Factors and Processes behind the Game</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.6	{81}
SZABÓ, ÉVA – KÉKESI, MÁRK: <i>Success Perception Embedded in the Experience of Adverse Social Selection of a Post-Communist Transition Society</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.7	{95}
TAMÁSKA, MÁTÉ: <i>The Torockó Myth Notions to the Sociographic Interpretation of Heritage Space</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.8	{110}
<b>Publications</b>	
BOROS, LAJOS – NAGY, GYULA: <i>The Long-term Socioeconomic Consequences of the Tisza Flood of 2001 in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Hungary</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.9	{122}
VARGA V. ATTILA: <i>Changes of Personal Network Composition and Inter-Group Ties from 1987 to 2005 in Hungary</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.10	{131}
<b>Eyewitness</b>	
VERDERY, KATHERINE: <i>An Anthropologist under Surveillance in Ceaușescu's Romania</i> DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.11	{138}

## Authors of the Current Issue

- BOROS, LAJOS PHD borosl@geo.u-szeged.hu senior lecturer  
(University of Szeged, Hungary)
- JANCSÁK, CSABA PHD jancsak@jgypk.u-szeged.hu college associate professor  
(University of Szeged, Hungary)
- KÉKESI, MÁRK markkekesi@gmail.com assistant lecturer  
(University of Szeged, Hungary)
- LOSONCZ, ALPAR PHD corna@eunet.sr professor (University of Novy Sad, Serbia)
- NAGY, GYULA gynagy@geo.u-szeged.hu assistant lecturer  
(University of Szeged, Hungary)
- PÁSZKA, IMRE DSC paszka.imre@gmail.com professor (University of Szeged, Hungary)
- PÉTER, LÁSZLÓ peterlaci@yahoo.com senior lecturer  
(BBU, Cluj, Romania/Jyvaskyla University, Finland)
- SIK, DOMONKOS PHD sikdom@gmail.com assistant lecturer (ELTE, Hungary)
- SZABÓ, ÉVA PHD szeva@edpsy.u-szeged.hu associate professor  
(University of Szeged, Hungary)
- SZELENYI, IVAN DSC ivan.szelenyi@yale.edu professor (Yale University, NYUAD, USA)
- TAMÁSKA, MÁTÉ PHD tamaskamate@gmail.com college associate professor  
(Apor Vilmos Catholic College, Hungary)
- VARGA V., ATTILA attilavarga@email.arizona.edu assistant lecturer  
(Arizona University, USA).
- VERDERY, KATHERINE PHD kverdery@gc.cuny.edu professor (City University of New York, USA)

**DEAR READER** | According to the editorial tradition of the past 25 years, our thematic issue on sociology this year strives to synthesize the works of internationally renowned researchers and professors, the ‘middle’ generation of sociologists and entrant young researchers. This approach is one of the basic principles of our journal that is held in high esteem by our editorial board.

The present issue has a versatile content, but as a consequence of the research interests and research sites of our authors, it is oriented primarily to Middle-Europe. As we try to promote inter- and multidisciplinary especially in the case of young researchers, we follow and publish the results of other social sciences as well. We believe that sciences will soon transcend the old narrow disciplinary frameworks, thus we encourage our authors to integrate the conclusions and methods of related sciences in their works and we support within our capabilities experimental research projects with similar conception.

I recommend this thematic issue to all our readers in this spirit.

*PÁSZKA, IMRE*

Editor of the thematic issue

— *On the cover* —

**Viewpoints, Perspectives** (Photo: Majzik, Andrea, 2012)

*The spiral staircase of the County Hall built in 1961. Before 1990, under the communist regime, the Csongrád County Council and the local unit of the communist party (MSZMP) functioned in this building. It was also the working place of the dreadful family of the region whose members were Mihály Komócsin (1895–1978), a founder of the Hungarian Communist Party and president of the County Council, Mihály Komócsin Jr. (1925–), president of the local then of the county communist party and Zoltán Komócsin (1923–1974), a leader of the national MSZMP. In the 1980s, Csongrád County was nicknamed ‘Pol Pot County’ by the opposition intellectuals because of the aggressive and ruthless rule of the Komócsin-clan. After the political transition in 1990, the civil organisations of the earlier political prisoners and the freely elected County Government were installed in this building. In 2012, university students who protested against the cutbacks in the higher education seized the building for one night and handed over their claims to the representatives of the actual government. (Jancsák, Csaba)*

**KEDVES OLVASÓ!** | Ez évi szociológia tematikus lapszámunk – a Belvedere Meridionale huszonöt éves hagyományainak és szerkesztési elveinek megfelelően – nemzetközi hatókörű kutatók-oktatók, a kutatói középgeneráció és a pályája elején járó fiatal kutatók által képviselt szinergiára törekszük.

Ez a szerkesztési szemléletmód lapunk alapvető értéke, melyet hangsúlyozottan fontosnak tartunk. A lapszám sokszínű tematikájú, ám a szerzők kutatási érdeklődésének, kutatási terének helyszíneiből következően elsődlegesen közép-európai orientációjú.

Fontosnak tartjuk az inter- és multidiszciplináris megközelítésmódok bátorítását a fiatal kutatók-oktatók körében. A korábban megfogalmazott törekvéseinkkel összhangban a rokon társadalomtudományok kutatóinak eredményeit is figyelemmel kísérjük és publikáljuk.

Úgy látjuk, hogy a jövő – akárcsak a tudományok egyéb területein – a társadalomtudományokban a szűk diszciplináris keretek meghaladásának irányba mutat, ezért lehetőségeinkhez mérten bátorítjuk a rokontudományok módszereinek, eredményeinek integrálását, illetve támogatjuk a kutatások tematikai kereteibe való szervesítésére törekvő kísérletezéseket.

Ebben szellemben ajánlom a tisztelt olvasók figyelmébe lapszámunkat.

**DR. PÁSZKA IMRE DSC**  
a tematikus lapszám szerkesztője

### — Címlapon —

**Nézőpontok, perspektívák** (Fotó: Majzik Andrea, 2012)

Az 1961-ben épült szegedi Megyeháza spirálszerű lépcsősora. Az 1990 előtti kommunista rezsim alatt az épületben volt a Csongrád Megyei Tanács és a kommunista párt (MSZMP) megyei hivatala. Az épületben munkálkodott a régió rettegett családja, melynek tagjai Komócsin Mihály (1895–1978) a Magyar Kommunista Párt alapító tagja, városi tanácselnök; ifj. Komócsin Mihály (1925–) városi majd megyei kommunista pártvezető, megyei tanácselnök és Komócsin Zoltán (1923–1974), az MSZMP egyik országos vezetője. Csongrád megyét a Komócsin-klán agresszív és kíméletlen irányítása miatt az 1980-as években az ellenzéki értelmiség "Pol Pot megye" gúnynévvel illette. Az 1990. évi rendszerváltás után ebben az épületben kaptak helyet a korábbi politikai foglyok civil szervezetei és az immár szabadon választott megyei önkormányzat. 2012-ben a felsőoktatási megszorítások ellen tüntető egyetemisták egy éjszakára elfoglalták az épületet, és a kormány képviselőjének követeléseket adtak át. (JCs)

SZELENYI, IVAN

ivan.szelenyi@yale.edu DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.1

# *Pathways from and Crises after Communism: the Case of Central Eastern Europe*

**Abstract** The transition from socialist redistributive economy to capitalist markets has proved to be a rockier road than anticipated. The degree and character of difficulties that the countries faced during the transition depended on the nature of the pathways taken.

In this paper I distinguish three major trajectories various countries followed: Central European neo-liberalism; post USSR neo-patrimonial regime and the East Asian (Chinese and Vietnamese) transformation from below. Rather than distinguishing the “right way” from the “wrong way” I explore what the different costs and benefits of the various pathways were at various stages of the transformation.

**KEYWORDS** regimes, neo-liberal transition, recession, recovery



## **Neo-liberal Regimes**

**The first trajectory** follows rather closely the **neo-liberal** economic prescriptions and was mainly adopted by the former non-Soviet European socialist countries. The neo-liberal model of transition implied (i) a market-consistent privatization of the corporate sector, (ii) far reaching deregulation of all aspects of economic life, (iii) the dismantling of the prematurely born welfare state and a (iv) western style, multi-party, competitive political system.

Each pathway I describe in this paper is an ideal type. There are substantial over-time and cross-country variations and there are historic and geographic differences even within each trajectory. So there are many shades and phases within neo-liberalism: Poland is quite different from Hungary, the Czech Republic from Slovakia. The most unusual case of neo-liberalism is Slovenia – it followed, at least initially, a more gradualist approach, especially in terms of privatization (PETERNELJ 2005; ŠUŠTERŠIČ 2004). It opened up to international capital much slower than the other Central European countries, while state owned enterprises were downsized which led to a sharp drop in employment, many firms remained in the possession of their management and workers. Nevertheless, the similarities among the East Central European countries in terms of their transformational trajectory are more pronounced than their differences, if we contrast them with alternative post-communist regimes<sup>1</sup>. If we used the criteria above, the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) would also qualify to be neo-liberal, but for historic reasons (their long incorporation into the USSR and short history of independence), their story is quite

<sup>1</sup> Usually 7 countries are labeled this way: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Romania. I present data from all of these countries.

different, so they are left out from this paper. I also exclude from the current analysis the Western Balkan countries torn by the war (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania). They seem to shift slowly, but steadily from the neo-patrimonial to a neo-liberal order, but are not quite there yet by the end of the second decade of transition.

On the neo-liberal trajectory, countries faced the challenges of five socio-economic crises: 1/ Due to the shocks of fast deregulation and privatization in the **first transitional crisis** the GDP dropped by some 20% and it took several years before it recovered between 1995 and 2000<sup>2</sup>; 2/ Mass privatization combined with **deindustrialization** led to a sharp decline in labour market participation, reducing it to 50-60%. Labour market participation did not recover even after economies began to grow by the second half of the 1990s; 3/ During the early 21<sup>st</sup> century the neo-liberal transitional countries faced the **second crisis of transition**: cutbacks and structural reforms of the welfare provisions met political resistance, austerity measures slowed growth, increased national debt and budget deficits; 4/ While these countries were still struggling with the second transitional crisis, they were already hit by the **global financial crisis**. This crisis hit the region particularly strongly, since it had become particularly dependent on international capital; 5/ Finally, as the world was digging itself out of the global financial crisis the former socialist countries of Europe became exposed to the **crisis of the European periphery**, the euro-crisis. I call the first and third crisis as “transitional”, since they are specifically related to the transformation from redistributive economies to markets, the other three crises are global phenomena from which the post-communist societies were not isolated, but could have been hit even harder than other economies.

The first two crises came during the early stages of the transition - the last three occurred close to each other by the mid or second half of the second decade.<sup>3</sup>

### ***The First Phase of Neo-liberal Transition (1989–1998): Recession and Recovery***

The first phase of neo-liberal transformation can be characterized by a sharp initial drop in the economic output which reached the pre-transition levels during the mid to the late 1990s. First I try to establish the common trends in the whole region and next I will comment briefly on the cross-national differences.

The Big Picture is pretty clear. While commentators anticipated that the transition from redistribution to market economy would have its costs, the costs in real life were far greater than predicted by theory. The drop in GDP was about 20 percent for the Central European neo-liberal regimes (it was even greater in the Baltic States – there it was close to 50 percent – Dragutinovic-Mitrovic and Ivancev, 2010, p.5; EBRD, 2010, p. 58). The economy started to drop in 1990. It bottomed out in 1994 and recovered to the 1989 levels by 2000. Ladányi is correct: this sharp downturn (its extent was similar to the Great Depression of 1929-1933) was driven by two forces: market transition/privatization and deindustrialization.

As Kornai pointed out the socialist redistributive economy was an economy of shortage

<sup>2</sup> Again Slovenia is an exception, it was already on a growth trajectory by 2003 and its transformational recession was the most modest.

<sup>3</sup> I follow János Ladányi (2012) in distinguishing the various post-communist crises. János Kornai wrote for the first time about “transitional recession” (1994). Ladányi identified four crises after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe: the transitional recession was aggravated by the crisis of deindustrialization during the early 1990s. The third crisis took place as transitional economies tried to adapt their welfare system to the logic of the market economy which overlapped in part with the global financial crisis. In this paper I add a fifth crisis, namely the crisis of the European periphery.



(Kornai, 1980). In Central Europe, there was an economy of shortage also in terms of labour: the state owned firms with their soft budget constraint had an insatiable hunger for labour (the story in some parts of Russia and China was different – caused by geographic isolation and overpopulation). Hence, transition to markets, privatization of firms and hardening of budget constraints dramatically reduced the demand for labour. This was particularly dramatic in agriculture. As the collective farms were turned into privately owned (or at least privately managed) businesses, former coop members lost their jobs and income opportunities and the emergent (usually quite large) farms operated with a fraction of the labour the coops used. But the trend was similar in other sectors of the economy as well.

Nevertheless, the demand for labour was also reduced due to the restructuring of the composition of the economy by sectors. Socialism was a strategy of accelerated industrialization, which often followed the patterns of the 19<sup>th</sup> century economy. While the earlier excessive emphasis on heavy industry (until the 1960s the stated aim of socialism was to create “countries of steel and coal”) was moderated during the last decades of socialism, “Department I” – the production of the means of production: to use the Soviet Marxist terminology - was still overgrown, it survived only in a COMECON economy, but was not competitive in capitalist global markets. Deindustrialization what hit so badly Western – especially the US – economy during the 1950s and 1960s came with an even greater vengeance to Central Europe (and to the former USSR – but NOT to China, as I will argue later on).

The bottom line: 20-30 percent of the jobs disappeared in the neo-liberal trajectory to market economy. The unemployment rate is a poor measure of the problem, it peaks 4-19 percent in 1994, but the proportion of those who were employed before the fall of communism and were left out or forced out of work after communism had collapsed is certainly substantially higher. Some quit jobs “voluntarily” (higher class women for instance who needed employment for the second income during socialism, but had much better paid husbands in the market economy, may have decided not to seek employment in a market economy etc). “Excessive” employment in socialist economies – in all social classes- was indeed driven by low earnings and the necessity for most members of the households to earn an income. But many who lost their jobs involuntarily and had no realistic chance to obtain gainful employment again, hence stopped trying, took early retirement, collected disability pension, survive on the underground economy and therefore do not appear on unemployment statistics.

Several countries transferred the “post-communist labour surplus” into the retirement system<sup>4</sup>. The retirement system was already poorly constructed under socialism (it was not an endowed system, de facto it was a pay-as-you-go system) which in a rapidly ageing population - most of the late socialist countries had low fertility and an aging population - was already unsustainable. But post-communist policies with this “transfer of the labour surplus into retirement” scheme aggravated the already unfolding retirement crisis. Such an overloading of the pension system created the impression that post-communist economies inherited an overgrown, prematurely born welfare system and the task was to cut back the “excessive” welfare expenditures (and this created the “third” crisis of post-communist neo-liberalism which will be discussed later) when the social need was for an expansion of welfare provisions (already neglected under socialism). A better measure of the labour market condition is therefore the labour force par-

<sup>4</sup> This was particularly true in Hungary, less so in the Czech Republic or Poland, see Tryggvi Thor Herbertsson and Mike Orszag, 2003, p.11. Average cost of early retirement was about 9% of the potential GDP, in Hungary it was close to 20%

ticipation rate. In this paper I am using the World Bank labour force participation rate, which is the economically active proportion of the total population aged 15+ (OECD uses a different indicator: % of the economically active population aged 15-64). I present data from four out of the seven countries (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) where there was a substantial drop in labour force participation rate: 5-7 seven points in just ten years, 1989-1998. Slovenia is an outlier: labour force participation dropped sharply in this country during the early years of the transition to 53%, but by 1994 labour force participation stabilized around a respectable 58-60 percent. I could not find systematic comparative data on labour force participation rates in the socialist epoch in these countries, but those rates are likely to be 20-30% higher even as late as 1980.<sup>5</sup>

This sharp drop in labour force participation is to some extent attributable to the disappearance of industrial jobs (for instance in steel and construction industry, mining, agriculture). People, especially men in their late 40s or 50s not only lost their previously well-paid jobs, but became permanently unemployed, since they could not transfer or covert their earlier skills into useable ones in a post-industrial capitalist economy.

This dual crisis – market transition/privatization and deindustrialization – through the mechanism of job destruction - had devastating consequences for the health conditions of the population and for poverty rates. With the exception of the Czech Republic, life expectancy declined during the first years of the transition and mortality increased especially among middle aged men. Unlike in neo-patrimonial regimes where this proved to be one of the worst and lasting disaster in demographic history (STUCKLER, KING and McKee, 2009, p. 4) in neo-liberal regimes there was only a moderate mortality adjustment and the mortality trends already reversed by the second half of the 1990s, late 1990s.

The first decade of transition in these regimes was also accompanied by a jump in poverty rates. According to EBRD estimates, the proportion of the population under the poverty line increased almost tenfold in the region between 1989 and 1998 (from 1.4 to 12 percent, EBRD, 2000, p.16), though it was stabilized by the mid 1990s.

In 2000, I collected data with the only retrospective data on poverty going back to 1988 and my findings were similar. Only 1.8% of Bulgarians who were already at least 14 years old in 1988 remembered to have lived in extreme poverty, this jumped to 16.3 % by 2000. The same figures for the other countries: Hungary from 2.5 to 6.8; Poland from 3.1 to 6.2; Romania from 5.1 to 16.3; in Slovakia from 1.1 to 5.0 (KLIGMAN and SZELENYI, 2002)

The neo-liberal transition to capitalism also led to substantial increases in social inequalities (from the high 10s, low 20s to the mid/high 20s<sup>6</sup>, low 30s), though in comparison with other pathways from communism the increases in inequalities in general were modest and the Central European countries remained among the more egalitarian systems.

Although the social and economic performance of neo-liberal regimes were disappointing, the social and economic costs of the transition was far worse than predicted even by the more pessimistic economists; in comparison with the neo-patrimonial regimes, the first decade of neo-liberalism is an undisputable success story. The decline of the economy was less steep, the recovery faster (within a decade they reached the pre-transitional levels), poverty was not as

<sup>5</sup> This are the estimates of for Hungary by Maria Augusztinovics, 2005, pp.435-435 and these are consistent with data presented by Kolosi and Robert, 2004, p. 49 and data from the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, 1997, p. 17

<sup>6</sup> Poland is an outlier with GINI in the 30s

widespread and deep and most countries under this regime remained reasonably egalitarian. Neo-liberalism does not fare that well when compared with “transformation from below” - there the only advantage that Central European neo-liberalism has over China – and this advantage is not trivial – is political. The Central European countries by the end of their first decade were all liberal democracies, their system may not have been as liberal, as democratic and as stable as one would have hoped for during the glorious month of 1989.

Bulgaria <sup>7</sup>									
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
GDP annual growth									
1	-9	-12	-7	-2	2	3	-10	-6	4
Unemployment rate									
Na	2	10	15	16	19	14	13	15	16
Labor force participation rate <sup>8</sup>									
Na	59	58	58	57	56	55	55	54	54
Public debt(% of GDP)									
Na	Na	185	166	172	183	115	319	105	80
GINI <sup>9</sup>									
23.4	Na	Na	30.7	Na	24.3	31.0	Na	26.4	Na
Life expectancy at birth <sup>10</sup>									
71.7	71.6	71.6	71.5	71.4	71.2	71.1	70.9	70.4	71.1

Czech Republic <sup>11</sup>									
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
GDP annual growth									
1	-1	-12	-1	0	2	6	4	-1	-1
Unemployment rate									
Na	1	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	6
Labor force participation rate <sup>12</sup>									
Na	61	61	62	62	62	61	61	61	61
Public debt(% of GDP)									
Na	Na	Na	Na	19	18	14	12	12	13
GINI <sup>13</sup>									
19.4 <sup>14</sup>	Na	Na	Na	26.6	Na	Na	25.8	Na	Na
Life expectancy at birth <sup>15</sup>									
71.7	71.4	71.9	72.3	72.8	73.0	73.1	73.7	73.8	74.5

<sup>7</sup> Data from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>8</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>9</sup> Data from Index Mundi, CIA World Fact-book

<sup>10</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>11</sup> Data from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>12</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>13</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>14</sup> 1988

<sup>15</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

Hungary <sup>16</sup>									
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
GDP annual growth									
1	-4	-12	-3	-1	3	2	1	5	5
Unemployment rate									
1	1	8	9	12	11	10	10	9	8
Labor force participation rate <sup>17</sup>									
Na	55	54	55	52	51	49	49	48	48
Population below poverty line									
Na	Na	Na	Na	8.6	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na
Public debt (% of GDP)									
Na	Na	75	79	90	86	84	72	64	62
GINI <sup>18</sup>									
21.0 <sup>19</sup>	Na	Na	Na	27.9	Na	Na	Na	Na	24.9
Life expectancy at birth <sup>20</sup>									
69.5	69.3	69.4	69.1	69.1	69.5	69.8	70.3	70.7	70.6

Poland <sup>21</sup>									
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
GDP annual growth									
0	-12	-7	3	4	5	7	6	7	5
Unemployment rate									
Na	7	12	14	16	16	15	13	10	10
Labor force participation rate <sup>22</sup>									
Na	63	62	61	61	60	59	58	57	57
Population below poverty line									
Na	Na	Na	Na	23.8	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na
Public debt(% of GDP)									
Na	95	82	87	89	72	50	44	44	39
GINI <sup>23</sup>									
26.9	Na	Na	26.7	32.3	Na	Na	32.7	Na	32.9
Life expectancy at birth <sup>24</sup>									
71.0	70.9	70.6	71.1	71.6	71.7	71.9	72.3	72.7	73.0

Romania <sup>25</sup>									
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
GDP annual growth									
-6	-6	-13	-9	2	4	7	4	-6	-5
Unemployment rate									
Na	Na	3	8	10	11	10	7	6	
Labor force participation rate <sup>26</sup>									
Na	59	60	60	61	62	63	64	66	65
Population below poverty line <sup>27</sup>									
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	21.5	Na	Na	Na	Na
Public debt(% of GDP)									
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	21	28	16	18
GINI <sup>28</sup>									
23.2	Na	na	25.5	Na	28.2	Na	Na	Na	29.4
Life expectancy at birth <sup>29</sup>									
69.5	69.7	69.8	69.8	69.6	69.5	69.5	69.1	69.0	69.8

<sup>16</sup> Data from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>17</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>18</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>19</sup> 1987

<sup>20</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>21</sup> Data from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

Slovakia <sup>30</sup>									
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
GDP annual growth									
1	0	-16	-7	-4	6	6	6	5	4
Unemployment rate									
Na	1	10	10	14	14	13	11	12	13
Labor force participation rate <sup>31</sup>									
Na	66	66	65	63	60	60	60	60	60
Public debt(% of GDP)									
Na	Na	Na	Na	28	25	22	32	34	35
GINI <sup>32</sup>									
19.5 <sup>33</sup>	Na	Na	19.5	Na	Na	Na	25.8	Na	Na
Life expectancy at birth <sup>34</sup>									
1.0	70.9	70.9	71.8	72.5	72.3	72.3	72.7	72.7	72.6

Slovenia <sup>35</sup>									
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
GDP annual growth									
Na	na	-8.9	-5.5	2.9	5.3	3.6	3.6	4.9	3.5
Unemployment rate									
Na	na	7.1	na	8.7	8.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.6
Labor force participation rate <sup>36</sup>									
Na	53	53	53	53	58	59	58	58	59
Population below poverty line <sup>37</sup>									
Na	na	na	na	13.6	Na	na	14.9	na	na
Public debt(% of GDP)									
Na	na	na	Na	21.1	18.5	16.9	20.3	20.9	21.5
GINI <sup>38</sup>									
23.6 <sup>39</sup>	na	na	Na	29.2	Na	na	Na	na	28.4
Life expectancy at birth <sup>40</sup>									
72.7	73.2	73.4	73.3	73.3	73.4	74.0	74.5	74.7	74.8

The cross-national variations within the neo-liberal region are non-trivial, but mostly rather predictable and they have a lot to do with the initial conditions. Bulgaria and Romania

<sup>22</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>23</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>24</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>25</sup> Data from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>26</sup> % total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>27</sup> Data from Index Mundi, CIA World Fact-book

<sup>28</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>29</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>30</sup> Data from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>31</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>32</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>33</sup> 1988

<sup>34</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank)

<sup>35</sup> Data from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>36</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>36</sup> Data are from Andreja Kavar Vidmar. 2000. Social Exclusion and Poverty in Slovenia. Brussels: Observatoire Social Europeen.

<sup>37</sup> Data from Index Mundi, CIA World Fact-book.

<sup>38</sup> 1987

<sup>39</sup> Data from [www.google.com/publicdata](http://www.google.com/publicdata) (from World Bank).

<sup>40</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

were significantly poorer, Romania had the most repressive political system and as a result during the early years they resembled more Russia than the Czech Republic or Poland did both in social, economic and political terms. Slovenia and the Czech Republic were far the most affluent nations. Slovenia had a double advantage: it was rather affluent during socialism and had a great deal of experiences with reforms and this may account for its initial success as much as for its cautious gradualism. The Czech Republic on the other hand did not have the reform traditions of Hungary and Poland, but it had a better pre-communist record in democratic governance, so after all the better performance of the Czech Republic was no surprise. The only slight surprise is the Czech “double dip” by the end of the decade, when Hungary, Poland and Slovakia are already on the recovery the Czech Republic slid back into a mild recession.

The differences between Hungary and Poland deserve more attention, These differences were not that striking during the first decade, but became more pronounced in the second phase of the transformation (which was the cause of so much Angst among Hungarian intellectuals during the past few years), but already by the late 1990s it seemed that Poland was doing something better than Hungary.

One should have anticipated Hungary to lead the pack. Hungary was the most consistently on reform trajectory since the 1960s (it was the “merriest barrack in the socialist camp”, it implemented “goulash socialism” and more importantly was ahead of the rest in joining WTO, IMF, introducing monetary reforms and creating legal framework for a market economy); Jaruzelski tried to imitate the reforms of János Kádár<sup>41</sup> during the 1980s with limited success in Poland. And in some respects Hungary remained on the cutting edges during the early years of post-communism. By EBRD measures Hungary was among the most aggressively liberalizing countries and having followed closely the Chicago School cook-book, it was rewarded for its eminent behaviour by being far the most attractive country for foreign investors. So in 1989-1999 the per capita cumulative FDI-inflow into Hungary was 45% higher than in the Czech Republic and 3.5 times higher than in Poland (EBRD, 2000, p.74).

Nevertheless the recession in Poland lasted only for two years, in Hungary it did drag on for four. The recovery was also much more robust in Poland, the growth of GDP in Poland was 5+% after 1994 for five consecutive years, Hungary experienced only one year with 5% growth during the whole period under consideration. According to the scarce data available to us, inequality and poverty grew faster in Poland than in Hungary – a big puzzle: did this happen despite the healthier condition of the economy or was it the reason why the Polish economy performed better? Most likely there are numerous reasons – not only economic, but also social, demographic and political - why the two countries began to diverge despite their similarities and are on sharply different economic growth trajectories by the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Those who like to blame political parties or governments for poor economic performance might be troubled: they may find a lot of similarities in Hungary and Poland and a big difference from the Czech Republic. While in the Czech Republic the democratic system was reasonably consolidated and the former communist parties never regained power, the far right extremist forces were negligible, politics in Hungary and Poland fluctuated wildly between successor parties and right-wing or even extremely right-wing parties in government, each blaming the other for the economic problems.

So I almost randomly picked one “independent variable” to explain the differences between

---

<sup>41</sup> János Kádár was the leader of Hungary 1956-1988 and implemented the most radical and consistent reforms under socialism – with the exceptions of the post 1978 Chinese reforms.

Poland and Hungary. In Poland in 1989–1991, the finance minister Balcerowicz introduced what was at that time seen as brutal monetary liberalization strategy which almost instantly liberalized the banking sector, implemented a new tax system and a currency reform. As a result, the Polish economy was in free fall, unemployment exploded by 1991, but the economy bottomed out within a year. On the other hand, the Poles moved with the privatization of the corporate sector much more cautiously, hence monetary liberalization preceded property reform.

In Hungary, the sequence of reforms was different. The Hungarian government moved more carefully with the monetary reform, but pushed ahead with privatization of the corporate sector, opening up the country to multi-national capital. The “success” of Hungary (being so attractive to multinational capital and “fixing” the property right problem so early) may be the reason for its later “failure”. Slovenia is usually cited as the strongest case for against mass privatization and gradualism in the transformation of property relations – and it did indeed rather well during the first decade of the transformation (and started to have some problems during the last years of the second decade).

The second unanticipated cross-national difference in the neo-liberal region is the better performance of Slovakia than the Czech Republic. When Czechoslovakia was breaking up, commentators anticipated the Czech Republic to be the winner and Slovakia to join the “East”. Already during the first decade, the received wisdom proved to be wrong. While the economic recession was indeed even more severe in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic, and especially the Slovaks did much worse in terms of unemployment than the Czechs by the second half of the decade, the Czech Republic slid into its second recession, but the Slovak economy took off (and it happened under a political regime – of Vladimir Meciar, prime minister 1994–98 – which in its ideology was rather neo-patrimonial). Hence, there are no easy answers what the sources of success or failure are. The Slovak “miracle” is certainly one of the most puzzling ones.

### ***The Second Phase of Neo-liberal Transition (1999–2010): Take-off and Stagnation***<sup>42</sup>

The second decade of neo-liberal transformation is entirely a success story: a basically uninterrupted and rather impressive growth until the Global Financial Crisis, which hit the region rather bad (with the exception of Poland, the only country which sustained positive growth in every year during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century).

At least one qualification is needed to this rather excessively optimistic statement. During the first years of the second decade – well before the Global Financial Crisis hit – economic growth tended to be moderated, the previously prominent reduction of sovereign debt at least in some countries was reversed. The Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary began to struggle with their “welfare problem”. The regimes were under pressure to implement austerity measures, cut back the expenses on their “prematurely born welfare state”. This met political resistance, political mobilization, such as strikes or votes for right-wing populist parties.

During the first half of the second decade, the CEE countries constituted two different “camps”: countries which had stronger civil societies (and better social safety nets) - the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland - began to struggle to implement austerity measures and cut-backs in welfare provisions – hence their growth slowed and their sovereign debt started to climb again. They slid into the “second transitional crisis”. While the first transitional crisis was the result of adjustment of the economy to market imperatives, now the second emerges as a

<sup>42</sup> Data in this section are from Index Mundi (World Bank) unless indicated otherwise.

welfare regime consistent with the logic of a market economy had to be invented. In the other three CEE countries either the civil society was too weak to cope with a serious challenge against austerity and/or the welfare provisions of the socialist epoch were too inadequate, so there was no particular reason to defend them.

This “second transitional crisis” was quite forceful only in Hungary (with a rather strong civil society with arguably the greatest stakes in exiting welfare provisions, hence the especially violent resistance of any cutbacks in entitlements) to produce a recession and sustained growth of sovereign debt already before the Global Financial Crisis. The Czechs and the Poles managed to dig themselves out from the downward spiral of the early years, to regain better growth rates and limit budget deficits. The Bulgarians, Romanians and Slovaks had a ball until the Global Crisis came; they were swallowing the capital which found the Czech, Hungarian and Polish economies as becoming far too expensive and they managed to implement cutbacks and keep budget deficits and sovereign debt under control.

The Global Financial Crisis hit almost all neo-liberal regimes hard (only Poland managed to remain in positive fields even in 2009), Romania and Hungary fared the worst, but there was a drop in GDP output and increase of unemployment similar to the rest of EU or the advanced economies of the world in the other CEE countries. Although a recovery was generally under way soon again in 2010-11, the region was hit by the euro-crisis, which is anticipated to slow the growth below 3 percent. According to EBRD estimates,<sup>43</sup> Hungary was already in recession again by the middle of 2012, the Czech Republic may slide into recession and only Poland and Slovakia may grow for more than 2 percent.

Bulgaria											
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
GDP annual growth											
2.5	5.0	Na	4.8	4.3	5.3	5.5	6.3	6.2	6.0	-5.0	.2
Unemployment rate											
15	17.7	Na	18	14.3	12.7	11.5	9.6	7.7	6.3	9.1	9.2
Labor force participation rate <sup>44</sup>											
53	52	52	51	50	51	51	53	54	56	55	54
Population below poverty line											
Na	35	12.6	13.4	14.1	Na	Na	Na	Na	21.8	Na	Na
Public debts (% of GDP) <sup>45</sup>											
79	74	66	54	46	41.9	31.9	25.6	10.5	15.2	14,8	16.2
GINI											
Na	Na	34.3	Na	29.2	Na	Na	Na	28.2	Na	Na	Na
Life expectancy at birth											
Na	70.9	71.2	71.5	71.8	71.6	72.0	72.3	72.6	72.8	73.1	73.4

<sup>43</sup> Regional Economic Prospects in EBRD Countries of Operation: May 2012. [www.ebrd.com](http://www.ebrd.com)

<sup>44</sup> Data 1999-2003 are from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>45</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)



Czech Republic											
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
GDP annual growth											
-5	2.5	Na	1.5	2.9	3.7	6.1	6.1	6.6	6.0	-4.1	2.3
Unemployment rate											
9	8.7	Na	9.8	9.9	10.6	8.9	8.4	6.6	5.4	8.1	7.1
Labor force participation rate <sup>46</sup>											
61	60	60	60	60	59	59	59	59	59	59	59
Population below poverty line											
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na
Public debts (%of GDP) <sup>47</sup>											
13	18	26	29	30	33.5	25.9	29.1	26.0	26.8	34.0	40.0
GINI											
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	26.0	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na
Life expectancy at birth											
Na	70.9	71.2	71.5	71.8	71.6	72.0	72.3	72.6	72.8	73.1	73.4

Hungary											
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
GDP annual growth											
4.0	5.5	Na	3.2	2.9	3.9	4.1	3.9	1.3	.6	-6.3	1.2
Unemployment rate											
10	9.4	Na	5.8	5.9	5.9	7.2	7.4	7.3	7.8	10.0	10.7
Labor force participation rate <sup>48</sup>											
49	49	49	49	50	50	50	51	50	50	50	51
Population below poverty line											
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	13.9
Public debts (%of GDP) <sup>49</sup>											
61	54	51	54	58	58.3	58.9	68.6	67.0	68.6	78.0	79.6
GINI											
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	24.7	Na
Life expectancy at birth											
Na	71.4	71.6	71.9	72.2	72.3	72.4	72.7	72.9	73.2	73.4	74.6

Poland											
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
GDP annual growth											
3.8	4.8	Na	1.3	3.7	5.6	3.4	5.8	6.6	4.8	1.7	3.8
Unemployment rate											
12.0	Na	Na	18.1	20.0	19.5	18.2	14.9	12.8	9.8	Na	11.8
Labor force participation rate <sup>50</sup>											
56	56	56	55	55	55	55	54	54	55	55	56
Population below poverty line											
Na	18.4	Na	Na	17.0	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na
Public debts (%of GDP) <sup>51</sup>											
40	37	38	42	47	49.9	47.7	49.0	43.1	45.2	46.4	53.6
GINI											
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	34.2	Na	Na
Life expectancy at birth											
Na	73.2	73.4	73.7	73.9	74.2	74.7	75.0	75.2	75.4	75.6	75.9

<sup>46</sup> Data 1999-2003 are from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>47</sup> % total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>48</sup> Data 1999-2003 are from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>49</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>50</sup> Data 1999-2003 are from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>51</sup> % of total population ages 15+ , see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

Romania											
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
GDP annual growth											
-4.8	2.2	4.8	4.5	4.9	8.1	4.1	7.7	6.0	7.1	-7.1	-1.3
Unemployment rate											
11.5	Na	9.1	8.3	7.2	6.3	5.9	6.1	4.1	4.4	7.8	8.2
Labor force participation rate <sup>52</sup>											
65	65	63	58	57	57	55	56	56	56	56	56
Population below poverty line											
Na	44.5	Na	28.9	Na	Na	25.0	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na
Public debt (% of GDP) <sup>53</sup>											
24	23	23	24	22	23.6	20.3	21.4	13.0	14.7	24.0	34.8
GINI											
Na	Na	Na	Na	28.8	Na	Na	Na	Na	31.2	Na	Na
Life expectancy at birth											
Na	64.0	70.2	70.4	70.6	71.1	71.4	71.6	71.9	72.2	72.5	73.7

Slovakia											
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
GDP annual growth											
1.9	2.2	Na	4.0	3.9	5.3	6.1	8.3	10.4	6.4	-4.7	4.0
Unemployment rate											
20.0	17.0	Na	17.2	15.2	13.1	11.7	10.2	8.4	7.7	11.4	13.5
Labor force participation rate <sup>54</sup>											
60	60	61	60	61	60	60	59	59	59	59	59
Population below poverty line											
Na	Na	Na	21.0	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na
Public debt (% of GDP) <sup>55</sup>											
47	50	49	48	43	46.6	36.9	36.1	35.9	28.7	35.7	41.0
GINI											
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	26.0	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na
Life expectancy at birth											
Na	73.7	74.0	74.2	74.4	74.2	74.5	74.7	75.0	75.2	75.4	75.6

Slovenia											
1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
GDP annual growth											
5.3	4.2	2.9	3.8	2.9	4.4	4.0	5.9	6.9	3.6	-8.0	1.4
Unemployment rate											
7.4	7.2	5.7	6.3	6.7	6.3	6.5	6.0	4.8	4.4	5.9	7.3
Labor force participation rate <sup>56</sup>											
58	58	58	58	57	59	59	59	60	59	59	59
Population below poverty line <sup>57</sup>											
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	12.9	Na	na	na	12.3	na	na
Public debts (% of GDP) <sup>58</sup>											
22.0	26.3	26.5	27.8	27.2	27.3	26.7	26.4	23.1	21.9	35.3	38.8 <sup>50</sup>
GINI											
Na	Na	na	29.2	30.8	31.2	na	na	na	na	na	na
Life expectancy at birth											
75.1	75.4	75.8	76.0	76.9	77.2	77.6	78.1	78.6	78.8	79.0	79.4

<sup>52</sup> Data 1999–2003 are from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>53</sup> % of total population ages 15+, see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>54</sup> Data 1999–2003 are from [www.ebrd/economicstatistics](http://www.ebrd/economicstatistics)

<sup>55</sup> % of total population ages 15+, see [www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS](http://www.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TFL.CACT.ZS)

<sup>56</sup> Data are from Index Mundi, CIA Factbook

<sup>57</sup> Data 2000–2001 are from General government debt, Slovenia. Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, [www.stat.si/eng/indikatorji.asp?ID=28](http://www.stat.si/eng/indikatorji.asp?ID=28)

<sup>58</sup> Public debt was 47.6% of the DGP on 2011, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia

The cross-national comparison has two important implications: 1/ Bulgaria and Romania, despite being late bloomers (did experience a sharper downturn than the rest during the first decade and their recovery also started later) during the second decade of the transition, did catch up at least until the Global financial Crisis and the euro-crisis, which hit these countries particularly hard; 2/ Hungary is the worst performer in all indicators during the second decade. We may call the first ten years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century a “lost decade” for Hungary, it did not only lag behind other neo-liberal countries in economic dynamism, but it has the most severe fiscal problems (far the largest sovereign debt) and high unemployment. Hungary and Slovenia seem to be the only neo-liberal countries in a double dip recession (unless the Czech Republic will follow suite) in response to the euro-crisis. Slovenia did extremely well during the first years of the second decade, but it was hit hard by the Global Financial Crisis and the euro-crisis. And while its sovereign debt is just half of the Hungarian debt, it jumped as the euro-crisis unfolded, so Slovenia surprisingly resembles Hungary the most in 2009–12.

The catch up of Bulgaria and Romania may not be that puzzling. When in 2000 I discussed the Bulgarian drawn out recession with my distinguished Bulgarian colleague, Petar Mitev, he insightfully remarked: “Just wait a little longer. Once Germany bought up the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland, they will buy up Romania and Bulgaria”. There was certainly a kernel of truth in this comment. Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU and that arguably boosted their economies during the second decade, although too rapid integration in the EU and increasing dependence on foreign capital might be the reasons why they proved to be the most vulnerable next to Hungary to the Global Fiscal Crisis and the euro-crisis. In addition, both Bulgaria and Romania hesitated between the neo-patrimonial and neo-liberal trajectories during the first decade of the transformation, but they were striving to join EU and had to adjust their legal and political system to meet EU admission criteria during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Hungarian exceptionalism is a more complicated puzzle. How did Hungary turn into the laggard during the second decade when during the first one only Poland performed better? Hungary was ahead not only of Bulgaria and Romania but also the Czech Republic by the most indicators and broke even with Slovakia. What happened between 1999–2010 and why is Hungary shifting to the Southern periphery of the EU and could be the next in line for sovereign bankruptcy after Greece (or Spain)?

Political parties blame each other: the right-wing government which came to power in 2010 blames its socialist-liberal predecessor for eight years of mismanagement and excessive growth of sovereign debts.<sup>59</sup> The socialist-liberal opposition blames the right-wingers for beginning the “overspending” before the 2002 electoral campaign and for not building on fiscal consolidation achieved during the last year of the socialist-liberal government in 2009. Government policies obviously matter. The miserable performance of the Hungarian economy before the Global Financial Crisis, 2007 and 2008 could be explained at least in part by policy mistakes of the socialist-liberal government. During those years, GDP stagnated in Hungary (grew by 1.3 and .6 percent), while growth rates in the rest of the region for both years were between 6 and 10 percent. But if the socialist government has to take some responsibility for a slow decline and for those two miserable years, the centre-right government which came to power in 2010 cannot be particularly proud of the poor recovery from the Global Fiscal Crisis and the worst

<sup>59</sup> In 2002 the Socialist Party formed a coalition government with the Liberal Party (SZDSZ); 2010 the centre right FIDESZ won two third majority in parliament and faces new elections only in 2014.

response to the euro-crisis in the whole post-communist world (the other neo-liberal countries only slowed down – the Czech Republic stumbling at the borders of recession – and as we will see neo-patrimonial regimes were not affected at all – as least so far, October 2012 when this paper is written).

Thus, it may be necessary to look deeper than policy errors committed by governments. The only question how “deep” we want to look? János Ladányi (2012) offers an interesting long durée explanation for the unexpected failure of Hungary. While it is usually assumed that the reforms under the Kádár regime were an advantage for the transition epoch, Ladányi takes the opposite view. The Kádár reforms were dead-end streets, they only created what one would call a “homo Kadariensis”, which are even less able to adapt to the market conditions (having been socialized in the second economy in agriculture and in other sectors of the economy). Intriguing idea, but 1/ it does not fit well the data from the first decade of the transition, when Hungary benefitted from earlier reforms and Poland did so even more, but the absence of reforms punished Bulgaria and Romania (and to some extent the Czech Republic); 2/ Even the Socialist Party (MSZP) rejects the legacy of Kádár; the centre right party (FIDESZ) which formed government the second time in 2010 seeks political identity with the pre-communist Horthy regime (and arguably implements similar social and economic policies). Can these political forces be “objectively” kadarist, though they reject “subjectively” the Kádár regime as “dictatorship”? I do not find this persuasive.

Nevertheless, I concede that ironically while Hungary might have benefitted from the kadarist reforms during the first decade of the transformation, these advantages – namely the arguably excessively open door to FDI, relatively reasonable social benefits and living standards - backfired during the second decade of post-communism. What are the possible reasons for Hungary’s exceptionally poor performance after 2006? 1/The exceptionally low labour force participation rate (jobs were arguably eliminated due to the Hungarian privatization practice and heavy dependency on FDI – see EEAG 2012. 120.); 2/ strong disappointment and even harsher political resistance against attacks on welfare provisions, which fuelled budget deficit and sovereign debt (living standards were somewhat better in the “merriest barrack”, so as the fire after liberalization and privatization turns against the “welfare system”, people have more to lose, hence their greater resistance to austerity than in the neighbouring countries); 3/ greater dependence on foreign trade and high levels of foreign currency loans (Hungary was initially more attractive to FDI, since it had a long history of reforms), which made Hungary more vulnerable than most neo-liberal countries to the Global Financial Crisis and the euro-crisis (see EEAG 2012. 115., 125).

Let me conclude with a slight digression. Hungary found itself in a debt-trap by the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its sovereign debt reached 80 % of the GDP. It is close to EU average and better than the sovereign debt of Southern European countries, but given the poor labour force participation, low productivity and poor prospects for economic growth, even this level of debt brings Hungary close to a danger of sovereign default. In 2002 the Socialist Party won the elections by campaigning for a “regime change for wellbeing” (jóléti rendszerváltás). Those who believe that socialism had a “prematurely born welfare state” which needs to be reduced and which advocated austerity, can blame this program for the unfolding debt crisis. I disagree. After 13 years of declining living standards, the Hungarian society was ready for more attention to “wellbeing” and aggressive state policies to generate jobs (yes Mr. Romney and Obama: state creates jobs!). And it was sensible to borrow during the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century when credit was easily available and interest rates were low. The socialist governments between 2002 and

2010 made serious errors, but not because they wanted to improve wellbeing, but because they went the wrong way about doing it. The borrowed resources were foolishly spent on increasing real income of civil servants and pensioners (it was spent on buying votes) rather than on job creation. While the economy was still growing until 2006, it was not growing as fast as it could have and worst of all it was a growth without jobs. The 80% of sovereign debts would not be a major reason why Hungary is the worst performer during the early years of the third decade of post-communist transition, if labour force participation rate and productivity were comparable to the core EU countries. Hence, the cure for the Hungarian disease (and the key for sustained economic growth in neo-liberal post-communist economies) is a simple one: no more austerity, no cuts in welfare benefits but jobs, jobs, jobs. \*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ASLUND, ANDERS (1995): *How Russia Became a Market Economy*. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution
- ASLUND, ANDERS (2007): *How Capitalism Was Built*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ASLUND, ANDERS – GURIEV, SERGEI – KUCHINS, ANDRES (eds) (2010): *Russia after the Global Economic Crisis*. Washington, DC., Peterson Institute for International Economics
- AUGUSZTINOVICS, MARIA. 2005. Népszerűség, foglalkoztatottság, nyugdíj (Population, labor force participation and pension), *Közgazdasági Szemle*, May, pp. 429-447
- BAUMOL, WILLIAM J., – LITAN, ROBERT E. – SCHRAM, CARL (2007): *Good Capitalism, Bad Capitalism*. New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press
- BEHLAMI, HAZEM – GIACOMO LUCSIANI (eds) (1987): *The Rentier State*. London, Croom Helms
- BEREND, IVAN T. (1998): *Central and Eastern Europe. Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press
- BRADSHAW, KEITH (2009): In Downturn China Sees Path to Growth. *The New York Times*, March 16.
- BUNCK, JULIE M. (1996): *Marxism and the Market: Vietnam and Cuba in Transition*. Proceedings of the Annual Meetings of the Association for the Study of Cuban Economy (ASCE)
- China from Poor Areas to Poor People* (2009): Report No. 47349-CN. Washington DC., The World Bank
- DAVIDSON, CHRISTOPHER (2005): *The United Arab Emirates – a Study of Survival*. London, Lynne Rienner.
- DAVIDSON, CHRISTOPHER (2009): *Abu Dhabi – Oil and Beyond*. New York, Columbia University Press.
- DRAGUTINOVIC-MITROVIC, RADMILA – IVANCEV, OLGICA (2010): Driving forces of economic growth in the second decade of transition. *Economic Annals* vol. 55. no. 185. 7–32.
- EEAD.2012. *The EEAG Report on the European Economy*, Munich: CESifo
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.2000. *Transition Report 1999. Ten Years of Transition*. London: EBRD
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. 2012. *Regional Economic Prospects in EBRD Countries of Operations: May 2012* www.ebrd.com
- EYAL, GIL – SZELENYI, IVAN – TOWSLEY, ELEANOR (1998): *Making Capitalism without Capitalists*. London, Verso
- GERSHENKRON, ALEXANDER (1962): *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*. Cambridge, MA., Harvard University Press.
- GUO, SUJIAN (2004): Economic Transition in China and Vietnam. *Asian Profile* vol. 32. no. 5. 393–411.
- HAMM, PATRICK – KING, LARRY – DAVID STUCKLER (2012): Mass Privatization, State Capacity, and Economic Growth in Post-Communist Societies. *American Sociological Review* vol. 77. no. 2. 295–324.
- HERBERTSSON, TRYGGVI THOR – ORSZAG, MIKE (2003): *The Early Retirement Burden*. Watson Wyatt Technical Reports, Report 2003-LS04
- HUANG, PHILIP (2012): Profit-Making State Firms and China's Development Experience – State Capitalism or Socialist Market Economy? Forthcoming in *Modern China*.

- HUANG, YASHENG (2008): *Capitalism with Chinese Characteristics*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Hungarian Central Statistical Office. 1997. *Mikrocenzus 1996*. Budapest: KSH
- KADOCHNIKOV, PAVEL (2006): An analysis of Import Substitution in Russia After the Crisis of 1998. *Problems of Economic Transition* vol. 49. no. 6. 5–103.
- KING, LAWRENCE (2003): Shock Privatization: The Effects of Rapid and Large Scale Privatization on Enterprise Restructuring. *Politics and Society* vol. 31. 1. 3–30.
- KING, LAWRENCE – IVAN SZELENYI (2005): Post-Communist Economic System. In Smelser, Neil – Swedberg, Richard (eds.): *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*. Princeton University Press. 205–229.
- KLEBNIKOV, PAUL (2000): *Godfather of the Kremlin*. New York, Harcourt.
- KLIGMAN, GAIL – SZELENYI, IVAN (in collaboration with Christy Glass and Janette Kawachi) (2002): *Poverty and Social Structure in Transitional Societies*. New Haven, Yale University, Center for Comparative Research. Unpublished book manuscripts.
- KOLOSÍ, TAMÁS – ROBERT, PÉTER (2004): A magyar társadalom szerkezeti átalakulásának és mobilitásának fő folyamatai a rendszerváltás óta. (Changes in Hungarian social stratification and mobility since the fall of communism) *Társadalmi Riport*. Budapest, TARKI. 48–74.
- KORNAI, JÁNOS (1980): *Economics of Shortage*. Amsterdam: North Holland.
- KORNAI, JÁNOS (1984): Bureaucratic and Market Coordination. *Osteurope-Wirtschaft* vol. 29 no. 4. 306–319.
- KORNAI, JÁNOS (1992): *The Socialist System*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.
- KORNAI, JÁNOS (2008): *From Socialism to Capitalism*. Budapest, Central European Press.
- KORNAI, JÁNOS – MASKIN, ERIC – ROLAND, GERARD (2003): Understanding Soft Budget Constraints. *Journal of Economic Literature* vol. 41. no.4. 1095–1136.
- KURU, AHMET (2002): The rentier state model and Central Asian Studies: the Turkmen Case. *Alternatives* vol. 1. no. 1. 51–71.
- LADÁNYI, JÁNOS (2012): *Leselejtettek*. Budapest, L'Harmattan Kiadó.
- MAHDAVY, HUSSEIN 1970: "The Patterns and Problems of Economic Development in Rentier States" in M.A. Cook (ed.): *Studies in Economic History of the Middle East*. London, Oxford University Press
- MCCARTY, ADAM (2000): *The Social Consequences of Economic Transition in Vietnam*. www.mekongecconomics.com
- NEE, VICTOR (1988): A Theory of Market Transition. *American Sociological Review* vol. 54. no. 5. 663–681.
- NEE, VICTOR – OPPER, SONJA (2012): *Capitalism From Below*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.
- OI, JEAN (1992): Fiscal Reform and the Economic Foundations of Local State Corporatism in China. *World Politics* vol. 45. no. 1. 99–126.
- OI, JEAN (1999): *Rural China Take Off. Institutional Foundation of Economic Reform*. Berkeley, University of California Press.
- PETERNELJ, MATEJA (2005): Slow is beautiful? Slovenia's approach to transition. *ECFIN Country Focus* vol. 2 no. 10.
- ROSS, MICHAEL L. (1999): The Political Economy of Resource Curse. *World Politics* vol. 51. no. 2. (January) 297–322.
- RUTLAND, PETER (No date): *Can Russia Escape the Oil Curse?* Wesleyan University (working paper) www.pratland.wesleyan.edu/documents/resource%20curse.pdf
- SACHS, JEFFREY 2005. *The End of Poverty*. New York, Penguin Press.
- SIDOSENKO, ALEXEI (2011): Avoiding the Resource Curse in Russia. Mission Impossible? *Future Challenges* BertelsmannStiftung, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011.
- STARK, DAVID (1996): Recombinant Property in East European Capitalism. *American Journal of Sociology* vol. 101. no. 4. 993–1027.
- STIGLITZ, JOSEPH (2003): *Globalization and Its Discontents*. New York, W.W. Norton.
- STUCKLER, DAVID – LAWRENCE KING – MARTIN MCKEE (2009): *Mass privatization and the post communist mortality crisis*. www.thelancet January 15, 2009.
- ŠUŠTERŠIČ, J. (2004): Political economy of Slovenia's transition. In Mrak, M. – Rojec, M. – Silva-Jáuregui, C. (eds): *Slovenia – From Yugoslavia to the European Union*. Washington D.C., The World Bank. 399–411

- SZELENYI, IVAN (1978): Social Inequalities in State Socialist Redistributive Economies. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* vol. 19. no. 1-2. 63–87.
- TREISMAN, DANIEL (2010): Rethinking Russia. Is Russia cursed by Oil? *Journal of International Affairs* vol. 63. no. 2. 85–102.
- VIDMAR, ANDREJA KAVAR (2000): *Social Exclusion and Poverty in Slovenia*. Brussels, Observatoire Social Europeen.
- YAMAOKA, KANAKO (2007): *Comparison of Two Remaining Socialist Countries – Cuba and Vietnam*. Harvard University, USJP Working paper 07-15.

LOSONCZ, ALPAR

corna@eunet.sr

DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.2

# *Spirituality, Crisis, and Illusions*

**Abstract** This article deals with the structural interpretations of the ongoing crisis. The author considers the approaches of Joseph Alois Schumpeter and Tibor Scitovsky that thematize the long-run destiny of capitalism. The viewpoint is constituted as the relation between the structural socio-economic tendencies and existential constellations. What is addressed by the crisis is capitalism as a dependent system. The author emphasizes that capitalism cannot survive without the outside sphere, reciprocal interactions, economics of community, eco-system and complex eco-social moments. This can be applied to the frequently mentioned embeddedness which is related to Polanyi and other researchers who are influenced by Polanyi's concepts. Embeddedness can be analyzed through the holon, from the inside perspective. Only comprehensive perspective enables to see the entire horizon, since capitalism cannot summarize the eco-system, not even with the most sophisticated techniques that recognize monetary expressions.

**KEYWORDS** crisis, capitalism, structural tendencies, socio-economic spheres, embeddedness



The ongoing crisis, with its still unforeseeable outcome, creates an immensely rich tradition of crisis interpretation. It is giving rise to interpretations which range from medical to theological and social-scientific theories of crisis. It is common in these interpretations is that they all present a critical diagnosis of the present and a dramatization of existing relationships between people. Crises create certain dangers and potentially serious losses; they are 'objective forces' which deprive social actors of the power to regulate their relations and to control their own environments. The actors in the discourse point to the fact that we all are being forced to make decisions in order to resolve the crisis. From the perspective of systems theory, the crisis represents a predicament which prevents the *integration* of systems. Traditionally, business has been examined through the lens of outputs-goals, but spirituality – if understood as an element of practical philosophy – requires that we consider *processuality*. This entails the examination of both the frame and the ethical component of business in common. In turn, this is related to the eco-social boundaries of communities.

We have no intention to thematize here a wide range of interpretations of the crisis. Considering the gravity and the degree of uncertainty in the current crisis, the most important task is to discuss the 'big' crisis which has evoked the old question 'can capitalism survive?'; a question asked by Schumpeter and reinterpreted by some economists such as Tibor SCITOVSKY (1980). Schumpeter gave the answer 'no' to this question, while Scitovsky took the opportunity to make corrections and claimed with conscious effort that even though capitalism has never been accepted enthusiastically, its flexible nature, market-based incentives, forms of creative destruction, institutions such as 'value-behavior structure', 'patterns of behavior' and elements of self-regulating systems are worth supporting. The crisis is, in the indicated sense, *structural*; naturally, the phenomenology of crisis has been described in detail and we are well aware of



how relevant the discussions about financialization, the changes in the relationship between the industrial and financial sphere and between material and non-material domains are. Finally, we have witnessed different forms of housing-price bubbles during the last decades and the creation of a type of man who has become sensitive to the notion of debt; in other words, of future servitude (GRAEBER 2011). This observation could be complemented by considering the contribution of economic ideology itself; economics *as* ideology (the 'economist fallacy') with its performative effects on the eruption of crises (STARR 2012).<sup>1</sup> We believe that viewing the crisis from this perspective is of primary importance, because:

*„there is no such thing as an economy, just as there is no such thing as a Homo oeconomicus, but there is indeed a progressive economization of relations. We do not find, at bottom, an economic infrastructure that the economists mentioned above would study: the economizers (in the broad sense of the term...) performed the collective by stabilizing relations between humans and nonhumans” (LATOURE 2004)*

However, structurality means that crisis cannot be explained by examining distortions in policy, or global imbalances, but rather by changes in forms of flexibility, incentives and 'patterns of behavior'. Forms of creative destruction have failed; they produce only destruction, at least in the long-term. For example, Frank and Cook (1996) investigated the 'winner-take all' phenomenon in modern capitalism by studying it in the light of systematic logic, they concluded that *structural, non-coincidental* forms of competition exist. More precisely, they claim that the economic system as it is experienced inevitably creates the competition regimes which make the 'winner-take all' strategy *rational* for many social actors. Thus, we return to the question of structural phenomenon.



Our aim is to consider the *spiritual-existential* aspects of the crisis, but selectively. Economizing, from this perspective, cannot be seen as the process of determining solutions by examining how to maximize the outcome of a set of opportunities which is the case in mainstream theory. 'Opportunity sets' are the result of complex evolutionary and co-evolutional processes, and their underlying features such as social values, mutual coercion, knowledge and psychic states emphasize the *processual* character of economizing (SAMUELS 1989). Credit, for instance, can be seen as the result of simple economic calculations, the experience of temporality and the potential of making future profits. From a spiritual perspective, however, credit is related to the fear and anxiety which are deeply ingrained in the exchanges which take place under capitalism: more precisely, capitalism exploits a variety of individual fears in order to achieve collective prosperity without hindrance.<sup>2</sup> Although different fears and forms of anxieties are discussed here, they all have in common that they focus on the avoidance of possible loss, poverty or unemployment (or, to put it more positively, the creation of market-based material wealth with the aim of providing *security*). Self-evaluation in this respect is impossible without considering the availability and distribution of market-generated resources with the *ex ante* goal of gaining security against the aleatory consequences of the market. The crisis represents a

<sup>1</sup> On the rhetoric of economics which determines economic courses, see CALLON 2007. and CALLON 2008.

<sup>2</sup> On fear and anxiety as economic phenomena, see ARNSPERGER 2010. See my article, LOSONCZ 2013.

set of phenomena that have intensified fear and brought it to the surface due to the weakening and destabilization of the formerly-existing pillars of security; this affects both the rich and the poor. The crisis intensifies the incentive structures in the context of fear and anxieties; it is the center of fear and anxiety-driven psychological energy: it is a situation marked by an abundance of fear. Following the analysis of Karl Polanyi, a researcher of capitalism pointed out that the effect of the impersonal forces of capitalism cannot be understood without consideration of the micro-motives, and incentives such as fear and greed (STREEK 2009). We should bear in mind that Polanyi is one of the most important interpreters of the concept of fear, so we can still refer to his theoretical definition of the 'satanic mill' phenomenon of a self-regulating market which systematically destroys the foundations of security, the referential points of the life-world and the stabilized paths of social actors, thus deepens insecurity and introduces the elements of disorientation which have been recognized in the current crisis. Polanyi explicitly claims that the 'satanic mill grinds men into masses' and by doing so uncovers the possible negative consequences of fear (POLANYI 1957).

According to Karl Polanyi, the market is a social construction, but from our viewpoint, it is also a set of *existential* constellations, self-reflective processes and affective and psychological structures. Market success as a form of wealth (a perspective which has been an extremely significant indicator in classic political economics) does not only refer to a sum of 'something' that can be quantitatively described, but rather a complex relationship between the regime of the utilization of things, of experience with sense and non-sense, horizons of pleasure and asceticism. Scitovsky introduced the expression 'joyless economy' for this purpose; in this way he evoked the old stoical differentiation between 'pleasure' and 'joy' which should be re-applied in the current crisis. Nevertheless, numerous studies about happiness warn that a linear relation between the accumulation of pleasure and the experience of joy ('joyfulness') does not exist. This fact, too, should be added to our previous statements. We have already developed the viewpoint that the present crisis must overcome the accumulated experience of 'non-sense' regarding the way things are controlled; that is, regarding the (im)possibility of using things, which particularly affects the point of economizing (JOSIFIDIS – LOSONC 2010).

The constant pressure for competition, psycho-economic stimulation, consumerism as an existential obligation, the constant mobilization of psychological energies with elements of aggression and the deformation of perceptive structures are all indicators of crisis. One researcher who claimed that the 'soul is a web of attachments and inclinations' and who distinguished 'soul' from 'spirit' and related it to 'vital breadth' established a diagnosis of the 'poisoned soul' in relation to our modern ways of economizing (BERARDI 2009). Every analysis which gives preference to spirituality must take this into consideration, because the *existential-spiritual aspects of productivism and consumerism have been affected*, and, it can be claimed with certainty that neither the pre-existing models of consumerism, nor the forms of consumption-driven existences can be continued. Thus it can be hardly accepted that the crisis will be overcome by techniques which 'restore profitability'; namely that "the best way to save consumption is through investment, that is, by restoring "profitability" which will in turn restore an entrepreneurial dynamism itself founded upon consumerism and its counterpart, market-driven productivism" (STIEGLER 2010). 'Big' and 'structural' crises cannot be solved by social-engineering and problem-solving mechanisms which operate with altering motivation systems. So the focus here should be put on the 'spiritual misery of capitalism', a condition in which the true 'spirit of capitalism

is lost' and the modernization-driven practice of 'disenchantment' with capitalism has come to a dead end.<sup>3</sup>

The revival of the 'spirit of capitalism', if it is possible, cannot happen by taking socio-technical control of the indicators of the crisis. Therefore,

*...the genuine object of debate raised by the [2008 financial] crisis ought to be how to overcome the short-termism to which we have been led by a consumerism intrinsically destructive of all genuine investment in the future, a short-termism which has systematically, and not accidentally, been translated into decomposition of investment into speculation."*  
(STIEGLER 2010)

The quote indicates that the speculation which has been discussed lately is not a simple phenomenon, but the symptom of more complex tendencies.

The imperative to economic growth that remains even after the rise of the global rhetoric about sustainable development, collective panic, speculation as a way of living and the kind of financialization that increases fiduciary credit (the risks of which were assessed by Aristotle who emphasized the phenomenon as *'chrematistike'*) lead to short-termism. From a spiritual-existential perspective we are not only interested in quantitative data analysis and increases in debt, but we must also consider the hypothesis that every crisis starts with *disorientation* and finishes with *reorientation* (LOSONCZ 2012). If big crises cast doubt on the nature of current forms of wealth, then the spiritual perspective seeks a 'different form' of wealth. This represents the *spiritual meaning of the crisis*: a man is confronted with disorientation in order to achieve reorientation. According to the spiritual approach, the crisis represents an *existential constellation*; however, spirituality is also evaluated through the relation between hope and fear.

Fear and anxiety are not the only emotions by which people are driven into a capitalist system; we do not intend to map all the affective reactions to crises. We would simply like to mention that the discussions which started in the 18<sup>th</sup> century need to be considered in any complex research about emotions that affect 'economizing'. We particularly emphasize the role of emotions such as 'compassion', 'pity' and 'sympathy', because they had an important role in the development of the theories of Adam Smith. They are of particular importance in the argumentation used in socio-ethnic discussions and for understanding the differentiation between various types of altruism (specific resource transfers that increase the net welfare of others (KOLM 2006)). Besides envy and greed, fear is the other 'social emotion' that has an intersubjective meaning (especially during a crisis) (KAHNEMAN 2011). However, besides fear, the relevance of hope as an emotion of anticipation/preintention should also be discussed here. Some thinkers claim that hope is *the* basic emotion. Although we disagree, we would not diminish its significance. There are numerous socio-psychological conditions in which hope is an unexpected emotion. However, there is indeterminacy between the emotions of fear and hope which makes it impossible to determine their priority precisely. Any spiritual-existential analysis should consider this relationship as well. The thematization of the relationship between hope and fear is of great importance to any analysis conducted outside the discussion on economics/economizing. It is difficult to expect fear-driven citizens to understand that economics is concerned about the world, or to understand entrepreneurship as a form of concern with spiritual-existential moments, or even to consider

<sup>3</sup> Indication 'The Spirit of Capitalism' is nothing more than a reference to Max Weber's well known syntagm.

participation in a decentralized market as a spiritual practice. The main characteristic of a fear-driven person is that he/she is more self-centered and isolated from the community, since he/she has been forced to remove him/herself through an impersonal imperative. The person whose incentive structures have been determined exclusively by fear cannot be expected to participate in any attempts to transform their relationships from appreciable to inappreciable, personal and impersonal aspects of existence. Furthermore, 'horizons of commonness' which lead to the phenomenon that institutional economics calls a 'negotiated economy' should be taken into consideration in democratic and deliberative practices. However, a fear-driven person may equate self-interest with egoism, or as Adam Smith might put it, self-interest is made equal to self-love.

Capitalism is a system of different beliefs which legitimizes a given system. The focus of our attention here is on social effects which include effects on self-understanding, self-evaluation and the opinions of social actors. If we examine all the indicated effects then we find that ideology is imperative in terms of orientation. We would like to emphasize the cognitive aspects of spiritual practice as a process; that is, to focus our attention on the cognitive effects of spirituality in the way we understand it. We have already signified the fact that cognitive elements are significant in modern capitalism and cognitive aspects are so deeply rooted in the dynamics of capitalism that 'cognitive capitalism' has become the subject of the discussion (BOUTANG 2007). Therefore, we are particularly interested in *cognitive illusions* in capitalism: we rely here on some elements of the research program (heuristics-and biases program) established by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky with its very important implications for economic behavior and decision-making. Standard economics (and its derivation — that is, business practice) consist of imaginary and transparent relationships in connection with the rational deliberation which is performed with the aim of optimization. In opposition to this, the *blind spot* that represents the integral part of economic thinking has been emphasized and has produced numerous doctrines which seem superior to be rejected. The idea of 'Homo oeconomicus' which has been both explicitly and (later) implicitly appreciated is losing its supporting *paradigm*: it is degrading slowly, "losing its IQ" in comparison to contextual considerations, etc. (THALER 2000). A heuristics-and biases program changes the *structure of the records* due to economizing. Therefore, spiritual engagement cannot ignore this factor, since the dynamics of capitalism can be explained from the perspective of distorted judgments and decisions influenced by illusions. The illusions discussed here are neither temporary nor too easily destroyed; the reason for this lies in their structural characteristics. It is not a coincidence that Kahneman talks about the 'engine of capitalism', about an impersonal ghost in the machine referred to in expressions such as 'entrepreneurial delusions', 'optimistic overconfidence' (which explains occasional optimism on the market), or 'cognitive biases'.

We have chosen only one phenomenon, 'endowment effects' which can be further interpreted by using our perspective. Generally, this effect indicates the discrepancy between 'willingness to accept' and 'willingness to pay', especially in situations with exchanges of goods that are not typically exchanged. Still, we consider the following conclusion to be more relevant: owning the goods appears to increase its value (KAHNEMAN 2011).<sup>4</sup> In other words, we perceive that things we own are more valuable than similar things which we do not. This effect prevails even when the norms of self-regulating markets would indicate the opposite outcome based on the logic of monetary compensation, or on the basis of cost-benefit calculations.

<sup>4</sup> For related discussions, see HERTWIG, R. – ORTMANN, A. (2005): The Cognitive Illusion Controversy: A Methodological Debate in Disguise that Matters to Economists. In Zwick, R. – Rapoport, A. (eds.): *Experimental Business Research* vol. 3. Springer. 113–130.

The endowment effect can be extended, if we consider the different contexts in which it appears, because the effect does not levitate in the air; the 'owning of the good' has different *institutional* expressions and distinguished *institutional* meanings. Now, it should be considered here that modern economics is heterogeneous and that different contexts have developed within it (such as the coexistent structures that vary in time and space). Relations from the off-market sphere can become part of the market, so it is legitimate to discuss the wide range of interactions between market and non-market actors. There is no single institutional context in which cognitive illusions are shaped and constituted. There is, therefore, *heterogeneity in the creation of endowment effects*. Besides, as far as 'cognitive illusions' are concerned, we can point to the fact that the behavior of economic actors that are involved in creating cognitive illusions is predetermined by the context they are in. This assertion has been confirmed by a research that indicates that participation in market structures shapes the ways how economic subjects behave (BOWLES 1998).

Thus, the following important distinctions can be made between 'owning of goods' and 'property appropriation'. 'Possession' and 'property' which represent different statuses on the scale of utilization of things should be distinguished from 'ownership'. On the one hand, there is: a) a 'possession' component of property that is made concrete in terms of "access, withdrawal, management, exclusion and transfer provided by property rights to their holder" (GRIETHUYSEN 2010, HEINSOHN – STEIGER 2006), but there is also b) a 'property' component of property which implies the realization of security based on a property-rights regime. The latter can be associated with our previous considerations about security where we stated that there is an incentive structure with regard to providing security based on the contingent results and outcomes of the market. Private property is viewed as a basis for security and as a mobilizing basis for investment and entrepreneurship. This happens in spite of that research which indicates the fragility of the idea that there is a causal relation between private property and readiness to invest (STEIGER 2006). Modern economic theory does not distinguish between 'possession' and 'property'. Thus, it reduces all forms of 'owning' to the notion of 'property' and claims based on property right titles; this can be partly attributed to the fact that people are blind to history and also to facts that are outside the scope of standard argumentation, because 'possession' (that is, access to things without rights of possession) refers to the *use* of things, to business in a historical context where reciprocal relations prevailed, and where 'homo reciprocans' was dominant — along with corresponding informal exchange regimes. However, this perspective entails the risk of: a) assuming that 'private property rights are more efficient than common property rights'; b) becoming insensitive to the type of 'possession' which connects us to the commons (this is discussed later); c) becoming indifferent to the existence of already identified forms of 'cognitive illusions'; and d) becoming insensitive to different forms of 'vicious circles' due to the existence of a 'competitive property economy' which determines ecological and social considerations.

Our thesis is that the illusions we have identified above may be explained with a determined *comprehensive* illusion. In other words, there is one fundamental, *constitutive illusion* that can be used to explain the other listed illusions. It is our belief that spiritual practitioners should be particularly interested in this phenomenon. We call upon the notion of *holons* for assistance (as used by Arthur KOESTLER (1967) in an interesting way). This involves the matter of illusions of perspective: every system is a *holon*. To those who see or perceive the system from the *inside*, it appears to be an absolute whole which does not need any external source, because it seems to be self regulating and self perpetuating, like a circle whose beginning and end are the same.

Koestler adds that the positions of the whole and the part can be understood in relative terms.

In our opinion, spiritual practice is the reverse perspective; it is a critique of the blindness which exists and requires the creation of a perspective from 'the other side' of the system. By forming the 'outside sphere' we may manage to understand that the system is not self-sufficient; is just a *part of some greater whole*. According to this logic, it can be assumed that a system is never *totally* immanent; it always owes its existence to inputs from an external sphere. Interestingly, Schumpeter had *mutatis mutandis* on his mind when he predicted that capitalism would fall; he emphasized that capitalism depends on its 'outside', the outside spheres; that is on *non-capitalistic* moral and habitualized norms which represent layers of tradition. From this perspective, capitalism must be destroyed, if it falls victim to the illusion that it can exist without outside sources (different norms). Schumpeter's pessimism was based on the fact that capitalism is systematically destroying its outside. The same problem occurs with ecological economics which relies on the principles of thermodynamics (we particularly refer here to the economic-business effects that are treated in the way that Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen approached them). It seems that an economics established on market imperatives fits into a larger whole which implies the existence of an energy field and requires a different rationality with respect to market-based norms and the monetary valuation of the benefits of the eco-system. It even suggests that it is *not enough*, if the imperatives of ('green') growth become rooted in development norms (as proposed through the 'concept' and 'program' of sustainable development), and that development itself should be analyzed as a part of some bigger whole; that is, as a part of some deep, global ecological structure. The notion of 'growth' with 'development' is useless unless the perspective is changed; this is how different, precious 'post-development' projects are created (GIBSON-GRAHAM 2010).

Our thesis is that *capitalism should be understood as well through using the concept of 'holons'*; i.e. be based on the changing relationship between the part and the whole (DE ANGELIS 2007).<sup>5</sup> In this way, even Schumpeter's diagnosis can be understood differently. A change in perspective shows that capitalism is just one part of a bigger whole and that its 'outside' exists. Of course, our aim is to show that the illusions about the interchangeability of the parts and the whole are not of a contingent but a structural character. From the perspective of the inside, the profit imperative is unquestionable, it is characterized by its absolute rationality and it appears that a competition-driven and property-based economy represents a fixed constellation without any alternatives. Capitalism will continue to manifest itself as 'everything' in 'boundless' functioning unless we consider the concept of holons, through which we can understand that capitalism is only a historically created sub-system and is not a comprehensive system which covers every global activity.

Capitalism cannot survive without the outside sphere (reciprocal interactions, the economics of community, the eco-system and complex eco-social moments). This perspective fits with the often-mentioned notion of 'embeddedness' (connected to Polanyi and other researchers whose speculations are influenced by Polanyi's concepts). 'Embeddedness' can be analyzed through the concept of the holon from the inside perspective. Capitalism is free from anything fixed; it is a 'machine' driven by impulses and governed according to impersonal laws. However, an opposite perspective reveals its relative whole; that is, its profound *non-whole*, which highlights

<sup>5</sup> We emphasize the importance of Herbert Simon who presented the evolution of complex systems based on the parable of two watchmakers (Hora and Tempus), SIMON, HERBERT A. (1969): *The Science of the Artificial*. 1969. Boston: MIT Press. See also, ACKERMAN 2009.

the relevant, practical-cognitive consequences of capitalism. Only a ‘panoramic’ view allows its wider horizons to be seen, since the eco-system cannot be — or become — a subsystem of the economy, for example, not even with the most sophisticated techniques that recognize nature’s monetary value (LATOUR 2005). The value of eco-system services is without measure. Different attempts (MARTINEZ-ALLIER 2009) to highlight the biophysical component of economics and even the old feminist ideas that GDP should not include contributions to reproduction which are outside the market can be interpreted from this perspective.



Garett Hardin’s article ‘The Tragedy of the Commons’ in 1968 is frequently-quoted and became the pioneer of a new era. We have already mentioned that theoretical rhetoric can become a self-fulfilling process. By focusing on the misuse and overuse of resources under the regime of the commons, the aforementioned article (about the destiny of the commons — i.e. on common grazing lands in rural England) noted the tendency for the phenomenon of the overcrowding of the commons to become widespread over the decades before the piece was written.

Since publication of the article, tough responses to Hardin’s approach, addressing a wide range of topics, have been forthcoming. Some responses have pointed out how Hardin’s indicators have been inaccurately and imprecisely interpreted (Cox 1989). The traditional interpretation of the commons was revived, but without any of the old context (meaning that the tendencies which affect today’s discussions are omitted from the debate).<sup>6</sup> With greater globalization, the global commons have had to be thematized with appropriate legal and economic dimensions and even the different ‘forms’ of commons have become the subject of various debates, especially in the sense of how local commons can be protected (BUCK 1998). Hardin’s approach also received a subtle response from Eleanor Ostrom who based her work on presenting successful commons-type coordination regimes (or ‘common-pool resources’), and on demonstrating the relevance of intrinsic preferences within collective activities (OSTROM 1999; DIETZ – OSTROM – STERN 2003). Different forms of participation create embeddedness, while repeated interactions create standards of cooperation and trust. Such an approach creates a whole new world, the purpose of which is to assess the chances of the effective governance of the commons, and to create a break with methodological individualism when interpreting collective activities. It should also be noted that new forms of commons have been created by the dynamics of technology (e.g. the digital commons) which undoubtedly create new perspectives. The development of forms of ‘non-material work’ which require collective social resources and ‘open social networks’ may be particularly emphasized in such ‘cognitive capitalism’.

In the meantime, another phenomenon has occurred: the tragedy of the ‘anti-commons’. Coordination fails when ‘multiple owners are endowed with the right to exclude others from a scarce resource, and no one has an effective privilege of use; when there are too many owners holding the rights of exclusion, the resource is prone to underuse: a tragedy of the anti-commons’ (HELLER 1998). Understandably, this phenomenon has raised interest and caused numerous debates.

<sup>6</sup> “Common has an extraordinary range of meaning in English, and several of its particular meanings are inseparable from a still active social history...The root word is “communis, Latin, derived alternatively, from com-, Latin – together and manis, Latin – under obligation, and from com- and unus, Latin – one. It thus points to either a specific group or to the generality of mankind”. LINEBAUGH 1998. 117; MEZZADRA 2010; HELLER 1998. See his research work in biomedicine.

In any case, the notion of the ‘commons’ is closely related to the processes of the crisis. The spiritual perspective cannot offer an explanation without considering the phenomenology of the commons. Also, we recall our earlier observations regarding ‘holons’: it has been mentioned that capitalism seems to be a self-generating system from the perspective of the part, while from the outside perspective (which we have referred to as a conversion), *capitalism is by all means dependent upon the production of commons*. If we claim that such a transformed perspective shows that capitalism is dependent upon community structures, we can also say that these structures depend on the commons.

However, we have to be cautious. Undoubtedly, the commons can be understood as an analogue of ‘embeddedness’ for business activities in capitalism. ‘Embeddedness’ is viewed from the perspective of natural goods: water, earth, territory and ecological dimensions. Polanyi used this approach as the basis of his concept of capitalism dynamics: on the one hand there is some self-regulating logic in the market, but on the other hand, the self-defense of society is activated. So, embeddedness is not positivity, but the subject/outcome of certain social constructions. In the same way, the commons are, although an indicator of natural goods (as well as information), the outcome of certain social creations and not the mere acceptance of some pre-existential natural constellations. We do not say that Polanyi’s work should be understood in the sense that embeddedness should be searched for somewhere ‘deeper’, like a lost treasure which should be returned, but rather that it is something that we should struggle for: i.e. embeddedness must be created through understanding the relation between nature and culture, economic and social goals. Commons develop as the outcome of the ‘translation’ of a tested relationship between nature and society, as ‘framing’ which implies that „their every aspect – property, merchandise, actors, contract, product quality – is not only described, defined and measured but constituted, nurtured, ‘performed’ and transformed by a multitude of practices of calculation and governmentality originating both in academia and ‘in the wild’ among economic agents at large”.<sup>7</sup> A ‘commons’ is created by the mutual practices of different elements of participation, and it is created through practice in order to create new forms of life and economizing. Normally, socio-economic variations are possible, which means that there are commons that are open access, and there are commons that are open only to particular groups. The most important thing here is to recognize the horizon of the commons as constitutive moment of mutual practice. The commons is not, in the given sense, the elimination of differences, but rather the state of being different in commonness.

Furthermore, the ‘commons’ cannot be interpreted as being equivalent to public goods (DARDOT – LAVAL 2010). Reflexivity related to the commons cannot be reduced to the binary relationships between private and public goods that the standard economy operates with. Public goods reflect the characteristics of private goods to great extent, and the theory of economics remains within the context of negative determination: based on this, public goods are formed when certain benefits of some services cannot be individualized enough due to their diverse nature. However, the commons is an *affirmative* concept of constitutive community: we insist on *not taking the intrinsic qualities of certain goods as our starting point*, but we want this point to be the community practice created by commons. This represents the outcome of numerous analyses conducted by E. Ostrom: the commons needs community involvement which takes into account eco-social considerations; however, it is not based on certain characteristics of goods but

<sup>7</sup> “Framing” explains how the meaning of ‘marketable emission reduction’ is created, see, CALLON 2005. 9. The sentence is quoted by LOHMANN 2009. 501.



on *being-in-common*, which she refers to as ‘richness of collective production’. Undoubtedly, one should be cautious here too: difficult questions about inclusion and exclusion are raised when examining the commons of some heterogeneous particular groups (or the interrelations between different groups of commons).<sup>8</sup> However, this is the sphere of politics.

Finally, the commons constellation cannot be explained through examining the *dichotomy* between individualism and communalism. Here, the *dyadic relation* between singular self and commons becomes clear. Singularity should not be mistaken for a level of individuality because even individuality is created based on identity, or to be more precise, self-identity. This is why individuality will always represent repetition, while singularity represents self-related differentiation. The common part provides a common separation of self-related differences and not the identities. The circularity of the common and singular part of identity creates new commonness whose meaning lies in the singular self.

Could this represent a utopia of commons? Is this an unrealistic vision blinded by an abundance of possibilities? We are not convinced. Different local regimes exist where the commons is articulated in the given way and these successes should not be underestimated. For example, “the Findhorn Community is one of the oldest, wisest and freshest examples of an eco-village. At Findhorn, people address sustainability not only as an environmental issue, but also in social, economic and spiritual terms” (ANDREW 2010) (the author also notes that Findhorn has ‘the lowest ecological footprint for any settlement ever measured in the industrialized world’). Then there is the Transitions Towns network that tries to address climate change by deconstructing the elements which cause the dichotomous split between local and global (HOSKINS 2008). There are also numerous and varied practices of community economics which have intensified over the last decade.<sup>9</sup> Those who are involved in these projects (e.g. the Community Economies Collective (GIBSON-GRAHAM 2008)) take into account different forms of participation, social innovation, ‘creative experimentalism’ and ‘ethical coordinates’ regarding the use, distribution and consumption of things, thus contributing to the possibility of practicing economizing differently. To relate the previous initiatives to our thesis, we may note that they contribute to changing the ‘framing’ of economizing. Economizing becomes a field of differentiation instead of a process of homogenization originating from the application of standard economic theory.

However, we should be cautious about the following: believing that these ways of economizing and the use of local commons regimes will provide the solution to climate change or the existence of transnational externalities (which are global in scale). We accept the criticism directed at the economizing practices of local regimes, especially as far as the vulnerability of local regimes and growth-induced dynamics are concerned (WILLIAMSON – IMBROSCIO – ALPEROVITZ 2003). The importance of such regimes should not be diminished, since they represent experiments which create collective learning. ‘Ethical coordinates’ and an ‘ethical rationale’ are not given precepts, but are the question of ‘becoming’ which implies ‘democratic experimentalism’ and the co-evolution of interactions and norms.

<sup>8</sup> The subject of discussion, MIES – BENNHOLDT-THOMSEN 1999.

<sup>9</sup> See GIBSON-GRAHAM 2006; ROELVINK 2009. See website, <http://www.communityeconomies.org/Publications/Articles-Chapters/rethinking-the-economy>

## Conclusions

The aim of this article was to address some of the spiritual dimensions of the crisis. We insist on the fact that the crisis is structural, big, and it can be analyzed through the consideration of its spiritual dimensions. Particular attention was paid to the examination of existential-affective aspects of the crisis with an overview of its effects (such as the creation of hope and fear). Furthermore, we analyzed some of the beliefs that underlie capitalism with the aim of pointing out certain cognitive illusions. Spirituality was presented as being a practical auto-referential activity that could serve as a mean for overcoming cognitive illusions. We took into consideration the endowment effect, related to the Noble prize winner Daniel Kahneman, which unites different forms of relationships between possession and property. We used his notions to show why capitalism has a growth-induced dynamic that has correspondingly negative effects. We framed the cognitive illusions in capitalism within one general illusion that is based on the concept of the holon (A. Koestler). This demonstrates the illusion of perspective (i.e. an illusion which intensifies the beliefs of endogenous actors who believe that capitalism is a self-sufficient economic machine). From the 'inside' perspective, capitalism is a whole, but from a 'panoramic' perspective it emerges as genuine non-whole. Finally, we commented on the phenomenon of the commons. The starting point for our analysis was not to address the intrinsic characteristics of goods, but to highlight the fact that the commons was created through mutual practice of co-evolutional procedures. We then presented some examples of local commons. In conclusion, it can be stated that we see spirituality as being a 'practical exercise', the aim of which is to: a) increase self-understanding; b) reveal cognitive illusions; and c) connect the self with community practices that create the commons. \*

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ACKERMAN, F. (2009): *Can We Afford the Future? The Economics of a Warming World*. London – New York, Zed Books.
- ANDREW, S. (2010): Inspiring Examples. Sustainable Living. In Steffen Böhm – SIDDHARTHA DABHI (eds): *Upsetting the Offset. The Political Economy of Carbon Markets*. London, Zed Books.
- ANGELIS, M. DE (2007): *The Beginning of History*. London, Pluto.
- ARNSPERGER, CH. (2010): Enjeux anthropologiques de la transition du capitalisme au post-capitalisme. Changer d'existence économique. *Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale*. 1. n°258.
- BERARDI, F. (2009): *The Soul at Work*. Cambridge, MITI Press.
- BOUTANG, Y. M. (2007): *Le capitalisme cognitif: La Nouvelle Grande Transformation*. Paris – Amsterdam.
- BOWLES, S. (1998): Endogenous Preferences: The Cultural Consequences of Markets and Other Economic Institutions. *Journal of Economic Literature* vol 36. no. 1. 75–111.
- BUCK, S. J. (1998): *The Global Commons. An Introduction*. Washington, Island Press.
- CALLON, M. (2005): Why Virtualism Paves the Way to Political Impotence. Callon replies to Miller. *Economic Sociology European Electronic Newsletter* vol. 6. no. 2. 3–20.
- CALLON, M. (2007): What Does it Mean to Say that Economics is Performative? In MacKenzie, D. – Muniesa, F. – Siu, L. (eds.): *How Economists Make Markets. The Performativity of Economics*. Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press.
- CALLON, M. (2008): An Essay on the Growing Contribution of Economic Markets to the Proliferation of the Social. *Theory, Culture & Society* vol. 24. 139–163.
- COX, S. – BUCK, J. (1985): No Tragedy on the Commons. *Environmental Ethics* vol 7. no. 1. 49–61.

- DARDOT, P. – LAVAL, C. (2010) : Du public au commun *Revue du MAUSS* vol 1. no 35. 111–122.
- DIETZ, T. – OSTROM, E. – STERN, P.C. (2003): The Struggle to Govern the Commons. *Science* vol. 302. no. 5652. 1907–1911. DOI: 10.1126/science.1091015
- GIBSON-GRAHAM, J. K. (2010): Post-Development Possibilities for Local and Regional Development. In Pike, A. – Rodriguez-Pose, A. – Tomaney, J. (eds): *Handbook of Local and Regional Development*. London, Routledge.
- GIBSON-GRAHAM, J.K. (2006): *The End of Capitalism (as We Knew it). A Feminist Critique of Political Economy*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.
- GIBSON-GRAHAM, J.K. (2008): Diverse Economies: Performative Practices for ‘Other Worlds’. *Progress in Human Geography* vol. 32. no. 5. 1–20.
- GRAEBER, D. (2011): *Debt: the First 5,000 Years*. Melville House Printing.
- GRIETHUYSEN, P. VAN (2010): Why Are We Growth-Addicted? The Hard Way Towards the Growth in the Evolutionary Western Development Path. *Journal of Cleaner Production* vol. 18. no. 6. 590–595.
- JOSIFIDIS, K. – LOSONCZ, A. (2010): Neoliberalism: Befall or Respite? *Panoeconomicus* no 1. 101–117
- HEINSOHN, G. – STEIGER, O. (2006): *Eigentum, Zins und Geld: ungelöste Rätsel der Wirtschaftswissenschaft*. Reinbek, Rowohlt.
- HEINSOHN, G. – STEIGER, O. (2007): *Eigentumsökonomik*. Marburg, Metropolis.
- HELLER, M. A. (1998): The Tragedy of the Anticommons: Property in the Transition from Marx to Markets. *Harvard Law Review* vol. 111. no. 3. 621–688.
- HERTWIG, R. – ORTMANN, A. (2005): The Cognitive Illusion Controversy. A Methodological Debate in Disguise that Matters to Economists. In Zwick, R. – Rapoport, A. (eds.): *Experimental Business Research*. vol. 3. 113–130. Springer.
- HOSKINS, R. (2008): *The Transition Handbook: From Oil Dependency to Local Resilience*. Green books.
- KAHNEMAN, D. (2011): *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. New York, Farrar, Straus, Giroux.
- KOESTLER, A. (1967): *The Ghost in the Machine*. London, Hutchinson.
- KOLM, S. C. (2006): Introduction to the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity. In Kolm, S. C. – Ythier, M. (eds): *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity*. Amsterdam, North Holland.
- LATOUR, B. (2004): *Politics of Nature: How To Bring the Sciences Into Democracy*. Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press.
- LATOUR, B. (2005): *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. New York, NY, Oxford University Press.
- LINEBAUGH, P. (1998): *The Magna Carta Manifesto. Liberties and Commons for All*. Los Angeles, University of California Press.
- LOHMANN, L. (2009): Toward a different debate in environmental accounting: The cases of carbon and cost–benefit. *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 34. 499–534.
- LOSONCZ, A. (2012): The Interpretation of Crisis from the Spiritual Perspective. In Stark, C.A. – Bonner, D.C. (eds.): *Handbook on Spirituality. Belief Systems, Societal Impact and Roles in Coping*. Maine, Nova Publishers.
- LOSONCZ, A. (2013): Fear, Transition and Democracy in the Balkans. *Southeastern Europe* vol. 37. 157–178.
- MARTINEZ-ALIER, J. (2009): Socially sustainable economic de-growth. *Development and Change* vol. 40. no. 6. 1099–1119.
- MEZZADRA, S. (2010): The gaze of autonomy. Capitalism, migration and social struggles. In Squire, V. (ed.): *The contested politics of mobility. Borderzones and irregularity*. London, Routledge.
- MIES, M. – BENNHOLDT-THOMSEN, V. (1999): *The Subsistence Perspective. Beyond the Globalised Economy*. London, Zed Books.
- OSTROM, E. (1999): Coping with Tragedies of the Commons. *Annual Review of Political Science* no. 2. 493–535.
- POLANYI, K. (1957): *The Great Transformation. The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston, Beacon Press.
- FRANK, R.H. – COOK, P.J. (1996): *Winner-Take All Society*. New York, Penguin Books.

- ROELVINK, G. (2009): Broadening the horizons of economy. *Journal of Cultural Economy* vol. 2. no. 3. 325–344.
- SAMUELS, W. J. (1989): Determinate Solutions and Valuational Processes. Overcoming the Foreclosure of Process. *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics* vol. 11. no. 4. 531–546.
- SCITOVSKY, T. (1980): Can Capitalism Survive? An Old Question in a New Setting. *The American Economic Review* vol. 70. no. 2. 1–9.
- SIMON, H. A. (1969): *The Science of the Artificial*. Boston, MIT Press.
- STARR, M. A. (2012): Contributions of Economists to the Housing-Price Bubble. *Journal of Economic Issues* March. 143–173.
- STEIGER, O. (2006): Property Economics versus New Institutional Economics. Alternative Foundations of How to Trigger Economic Development. *Journal of Economic Issues* March.
- STIEGLER, B. (2006): *Mécréance et discrédit*. Paris, Galilée.
- STIEGLER, B. (2010): *For a New Critique of Political Economy*, London, Polity Press.
- STRECK, W. (2009): *Re-Forming Capitalism. Institutional Change in the German, Political Economy*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- THALER, R. (2000): From Homo Economicus to Homo Sapiens. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* vol. 14. no. 1. 133–141.
- TOMANEY, J. (ed.) (2010): *Handbook of Local and Regional Development*. London, Routledge.
- WILLIAMSON, T. – IMBROSCIO, D. – ALPEROVITZ, G. (2003): *Making a Place for Community: Local Democracy in a Global Era*. London, Routledge.

PÁSZKA, IMRE

paszka.imre@gmail.com

DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.3

# *Outline of the Sociological Approach of Synergy Representations*

**Abstract** Since the beginning, sociology ceded the study of the interaction of society and its natural environment to the natural sciences, and preferred the perspectives inside the society itself. Depending on the research focus, one can complement this approach, if it is presupposed that the changes in the life-praxis of societies/communities/ individuals, the occasional diversions from trajectories are triggered not just by intra societal factors, but these can be affected by nonsocietal factors, or by factors in- and outside society. The elaboration of these assumptions required some boundary crossings which led to the explication of the similarities and differences between environmental history, climate history etc., and sociology. This also led to the introduction of data, concepts and theoretical considerations requiring the sociological perspective. Consequently, the followings can be the tasks of sociological inquiry: the inclusion of narrative historical sources into the research – in this case Transylvanian memoirs from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries – which report natural (climatic, biological) anomalies or extremities as well as their demographical and social consequences. The complementation of the dataset and the parallel inclusion of intentional and unintentional anthropogenic effects and events into the research justify the introduction of the notion of coeffect for the confluence of multiple factors. The introduction of the concept of coeffect was motivated by two considerations. Firstly, it was the principle for systemizing the narrative dataset (typology). Secondly, it enabled the portrayal of the perceptual perspective of the observers' environment (objects, events, and occurrences), the joint concern, immediate/intermediate experience, the position in social space, socialization, the role of knowledge patterns regarding events, occurrences and their consequences (representation). This experimental study aims to draw attention to the research opportunities in historical sociology and the sociology of knowledge that emerge from this new perspective.

**KEYWORDS** narrative story forms, coeffect, anthropogenic-natural, experience, knowledge-pattern, representation



The term 'approach' in the subtitle refers to the uncertainty that occurs whenever the researcher comes across a field where the path is visible, but not trodden. Thus, it is no coincidence that the issues below are rather ad hoc notes of some concerns arising in the course of a longer project, sometimes rather essay-like, uncompleted and not providing a clear summary of research results. There are numerous difficulties in the establishment of the referential, conceptual and theoretical frameworks of *anthropogenic* (due to human factors, caused by humans) and *natural-biological* (climatic, epidemics) issues, as well as in the analysis of local, regional,

etc. consequences of possible relations of different effects. In this paper, we highlight two of these questions that really test the researcher's limits. The first is caused by the laxity and diffuse diversity of the database on this topic. The second difficulty arises from the literature, as there have been many thorough studies and theoretical reflections published which focus on the different factors separately, but they do not consider the 'synergies' suggested by us. Therefore, even a limited and selective use of these synergies requires continuous interdisciplinary study. In order to solve this problem, we do not have to compile the knowledge and information of different fields on a European level, but we have to establish a conceptual and theoretical scheme that is suitable for unifying and leading the contextual diversity of the topic. However, such conceptual approach which can define our position should not skirt current discussions and discourses on climate change, and even in a wider sense, this is the issue that makes our project relevant and up-to-date.

1. As people become more aware of the climate change, more and more criticism has arisen simultaneously, from several aspects, towards the followers of the classics of sociology, who, according to the ideology of the early industrial revolution, still consider the conquest and subjugation of the natural environment as a criterion of socialization. It is not a coincidence that Niklas Luhmann talks about the *'abstinence of sociology'* when considering relations between the social system and the environment – it is due to the fact that sociology was not 'theoretically ready', it has "passed the topic to the natural sciences almost right from the beginning, and tried to get rid of it, in order to prefer the society and its parts, as well as perspectives within the society".<sup>1</sup> Thus, instead of sociology, it is mainly social communication that thematizes ecological problems.

Debates over the concepts and definitions of ecology and climate change within risk discourses and modernisation theories of reflexive sociology (Beck, Lash, Giddens) have drawn attention to the 'new' distribution of tasks among politics and economy, to cultural integration and to features of discourses on this topic construed according to 'inscenario'.

According to reflexive sociology, nature which is referred to on the basis of different 'cultural patterns' 'does not exist anymore'.<sup>2</sup> And "what still is, (...) those are different socialized forms of nature", formed by scientific views, where "everyday actions are determined by abstract models of climate change specialists" (BECK 2008. 108., 109). Comparative anthropology (*Science studies*)

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the remarks of N. Luhmann (see: LUHMANN 2010. 9., 10–17.), according to U. Beck: "This makes an end to a long period in the history of sociology, when, in the framework of early division of tasks (a strict border between social and natural sciences) sociologists could disregard 'nature', the other side, the environment or the world itself. Neglecting nature perfectly reflected this special relation towards it. This is clearly detectable in Comte's writings. (...) Disregarding nature thus presupposes domination over nature. This is how the 'consumption process' of natural (goods) was realised, as Marx understood the process of labour and production." (see: U. Beck, 2008:108/3.fn.). The provocative 'farewell' to the dualism of nature and society can be attributed to the founder of new anthropology (*Science studies*), B. Latour (see: Latour, Bruno, 1999. 2002.). Those who similarly emphasize the unity of nature and society are: ADAM, BARBARA – BECK, URLICH – VAN LOON, JOOST (eds.) (2000): However, when it comes to climate change, even if from different perspectives, there are more and more books, studies and conferences on the complexity of the ecosystem in the fields of sociology and anthropology. (see: SUSAN A. – MARK NUTTALL 2009.; GIDDENS 1990., 2000., 2008. www.policy-network.net., BECK 2003., 2008.; CASTELLS 2006. vol. II.)

<sup>2</sup> In their book, *Risk and Culture* (1982), Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky, conclude the following: "there is not very much difference between the dangers of ancient and modern civilizations." Such approach to the question "reveals such sociology (its failure), which reduces everything to social questions and neglects the immateriality and material character (physical change, destruction), i.e. the 'also-too' nature of risks (social inscenario)" (see: BECK 2008. 109–110).

has a more radical approach: “Aren’t you getting a bit tired of those sociologies that are solely built around the society, and which perhaps survive only due to repeating the words ‘power’ and ‘legitimacy’, *as sociologists are neither able to cope with the content of objects nor with the world of languages, however, still these are the ones that create society*” (LATOUR 1999. 155. the citation selected by I.P.). The contents of objects and the world of languages in this aspect calls for getting beyond the dual view of the world, i.e. for understanding that nature and society are not two antagonistic transcendences but one and the same, and by the intermediation between the two “there is a certain status of nature that corresponds to each status of the society” (LATOUR 1999. 151.).

It is reasonable to ask how long we should maintain such sociological approach and attitude which “*reduces everything to a social issue*” and neglects the ‘also-too character’ of the interaction between nature and society (BECK 2008. 110.). Such and similar considerations arise from an actual perspective that is trying to understand the human world not only within the relations of cultural effects. The approach based on the ‘also-too character’ of the interaction between nature and society seems to create a new generalizing scheme which emphasizes the equalisation of effects, while it hides the difference between the continuous and the episodic. However, such and similar efforts to equalise effects/consequences break on those orientations (belonging to the main stream) which place sole emphasis on meanings related to ‘nature’ and ‘nature destruction’. U. Beck criticises the reality-construction of Anglo-Saxon discourses and cultural theories, which by emphasizing the knowledge of non-professionals, attribute priority to actor-like and institutional factors. In these, the “material and symbolic substance of nature destruction” has turned to be ‘action-centred’ which manifests in a ‘discursive change of structure’: “cognitive structures, narration models and taboos” are “created, formed and changed”, thus “reality becomes the purpose and the product of action” as a result of which a kind of ‘ambiguity’ will become dominant in building up ‘reality’. On one hand, it is the ‘transformation of the world’ as the purpose of action (theory of actors and institutions); on the other hand it is the ‘creation of reality’ (cognitive construction of knowledge). Both formulate the same question: how to “(re)produce the reality itself by discursive means”. Answers differ according to the amount of ‘reality’ we dispose of (i.e. whether we have more or less of it). The more they are connected to decision-making bodies, orienting action, the more ‘realistic’ they are, or at least “seem to be realistic” (BECK 2008. 116.). It seems that the constructivist tendency of the ecologic discourse has anchored itself at ‘save the world-like’ knowledge constructions, arising along the destruction of nature. Its image of reality is constructed, thus Beck neutralizes the ‘also-too’ relation, aimed at going beyond the dualistic world vision, by a new term of ‘reality’: the reality ‘itself’, as he puts it, is a network of people’s actions, action structures, action routines, patterns of perceiving, etc., which are realised and changed. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine reality beyond human action, both on material and symbolic levels. If it is true, reality does not exist in ‘itself’, but exists only if people create it, make it and represent it in some material or immaterial form. In other words, even the discursive change of the system must create a reality from something and for some purpose. Beck identifies reality with the social world, and the reality ‘itself’ is created and constructed from this. His term of reality considers nature and the physical-objective conditions of the social reality only an object of (nature) destruction. Difficulties arise when we stick to such approach of reality, where reality itself is a reality considered as actions, constructed within the society, and nature is only considered as a given reality, as in this case we get far from admitting that nature, as well as the action-oriented organisation of humans, is an active part

of the ecosystem. The question is whether the terms of social action, social interaction, goal-rational action, etc. will be still suitable for understanding human and non-human relations, if we eliminate the dualism of nature and society and admit their interaction.

The fact according to which there is a reality which was not constructed by humans, seems to be neglected, however this reality is nature, received by people *in situ nascendi*, as a kind of facility. Nature is a facility not passive but dynamic, changing, disposing of history, which might not be in accordance with the 'save the world' visions of discursive action orientations. Human action, both in general and concrete terms, is adaptation, which assumes that what we need to adapt to. However, the living world, including humans, does not easily adapt to the changing environment, and the changing natural environment also regulates somewhat the ways of adaptation, by providing variable conditions for the creation, life and survival of living forms known by us (and not others), such as physical forms, geographical distribution, nourishment, etc. The relative continuity and discontinuity of these may be learnt through history. All these refer to the well-known fact that geological and climatic changes actively intervene, change the living world, pose new challenges to it and force it to adapt. Natural environment is not only shaped by the social world of humans, but the natural environment itself limits the scope and forms of people's 'furnishing' actions, even if humans' vision of future is unlimited. The fact that anatomic conformation of the speaking and acting human (known as today) in the living world is such as it is (four limbs, torso and head), determined/determines the technical/cognitive ways of his adaptation to the physical environment. Thus, humans possess such physical/mental features and skills that must be harmonized with the natural environment (which provides them with the required conditions for their existence), i.e. humans must adapt to a changing, active natural environment which influences their conditions of life and which does not work according to the rules and regulations set up in their social world. However, there are strategists of modernism, boasting with unlimited self-confidence, aimed at shaping the environmental conditions for existence suitable for humans (and sciences were following this idea as well). This approach proved to be fragile and unsuitable as beyond certain limits, nature may not be regulated and subjugated to rules created by humans. Current discourses on ecological crisis, accordingly with the halt of our hope in steady progress, mark it as the destruction of nature. And they are not mistaken, as this will be maintained until we follow the current model of civilisation. Participants of ecological discourses, even if they are not aware of, sense that a new pattern of our relation to nature will imply certain changes in the organisational-institutional framework of the existing society. They have more or less become aware of the fact that different ideas about the creation of man-made social worlds, built upon the theory of evolution, might not be applied to nature. Changes (geological, climatic) in nature follow cyclic rules which might not be integrated in the historical-cultural schemes of evolutionary irreversibility, theological history, neo-evolution and unintended consequences. Attempts that try to explain the improvement of man-made technical and technological means aimed at the exploitation of nature both theoretically and empirically, should also be included in the aforementioned scheme. Improvements of different evolutionisms and attempts to adapt bio-cybernetic models (genetic algorithms) have been trying to explain adaptation according to selection, while they doubt the appropriateness of making difference between nature, society and culture (see: neo-evolutionists). By adapting cybernetic-biological models, emphasis was placed on the unintended consequences of human decisions (see: neo-evolutionists). This has led to the hypothesis of Luhmann's system theory which highlights increasing contingencies and which understood the history of humankind as an 'increasing



improbability' (SÁRKÁNY–SOMLAI 2012.; LUHMANN 1992. 283.). Differentiation and complexity, which have been earlier described as a quality scheme of evolution/progress, finally ended up in the realm of contingency and incidence, making the terms of evolution and progress, as well as their related theories even more relative and discredited within the social world. There was just a small step missing to eliminate the dualism of nature and society in social sciences, too – mainly due to naïve (movements, group-forming) and scientific motivations of current ecological sensitivity. This suggests somewhat that there might be some correlation between the limits set by nature and the defeated hopes in progress. Paradoxically, social sciences, which have been constructed according to schemes applied by natural sciences, after long wrong turnings, will fall again into nature's lap, to gain fresh strength for new, existence-transcendent (alien to life) visions of social change.

Climatic change of our days is neither a new phenomenon, it has always existed and will exist as well. Actually, we speak about a very obvious fact, which means that we should recognize that nature is an active agent. Its reality should not be doubted by any preference of 'cultural patterns' related to the concept and definition of nature (norms, utopia, counter-plan). There were some leading concepts in the phenomenological school of sociology (Schütz, A.) at the beginning of the last century that showed enhanced sensitivity towards the relations of everyday life and considered nature and society as a common world of life which is a given facility, and did not doubt their unity. However, this made their relation somewhat neutral and passive, thus their interaction became hidden. The unity of the world of life may form a unit, only if we assume interrelated relations of effects between the components, which, due to the relation between the components, have impact on nature and society as well. This facility should not be ignored, as conditions for social organisational forms, individual life practices, and the reproduction and continuity of life (in the narrower and broader sense as well) are provided by nature as a physical environment – without this community and the formations of societies become unreal. According to the Biblical tradition, God created man on the sixth day, just after the conditions for life, i.e. nature had been formed. Evolutionist sciences also suggest something similar, i.e. the time of anthroposociogenesis does not correspond to the time of the genesis of nature. This refers to the fact that their principles of operation should also be different. Man has to willy-nilly continuously adapt to the resources provided by nature in order to stabilise his existence and the continuous reproduction of his existence. Adaptation also refers to quality levels of interactions between nature and society. Therefore, short- and long-term consequences of interactions should not only be involved in naturalistic narratives or discourses about the ecological crisis, as the combination of before/after perspective will become hidden from us, as well as inscenarios also visualise the future after the present, although the present also has a past, nature has history which is very much variable in time and space. There might appear also some optical illusions when the anthropogenic-like globalisation processes are applied to nature, and people talk about global climatic change. The paradox is that economic globalisation itself is nor a new, neither a permanent process. It has had many upward and downward trends in the past. Late modernity and/or the ecological sensitivity of postmodern should not forget that *it is not only human organisational forms that destroy the environment and nature, but environmental changes and disasters have similar destructive effects, and break individual and communal life practices, force us to restart or even make the environmental conditions for restarting impossible.*

The world of life, the world of nature's and society's unity may not be generalised by the balance implied by the 'also-too' character, and is not the world of utopic harmony, neither

characterised by the predominance of either component. After all, doubts of our days may rightfully arise against people who arrive later – it is their deliberate or unintended actions which are the dominant destructive power. Besides the aforementioned society-centred perspective, it is due to the fact that people's environment-shaping and 'furnishing' actions seem to be exploitative, consuming, visible and fast-paced, while changes in nature are slow and take a long time, however, nature might have some unexpected, sudden and destructive outbreaks, which might interrupt or even eliminate accumulated artefacts, institutional frameworks of a given ecological community, as well as their creators, i.e. human population, and the continuity of the social world at a certain point of time, within a certain space. Thus the natural factor includes both episodic and cyclic phenomena that follow/interrupt long processes. The human world is not free of any of these. Being charmed by our current perception of speed, we tend to forget the fact that some segments of economy, such as capitalism or the formation and stabilisation of organisational-institutional frameworks of modern societies reached their current shape just in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, following their start in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and having gone through different local transmissions. Moreover, this process is still not completed, not to mention the breaks/interruptions of its application, which have resulted in different local versions. We also know numerous examples in history of the consequences of interactions between anthropogenic and natural factors. In some cases, even with our scientific knowledge, it is difficult to define what caused the disappearance of some human social organisations in different regions of the world throughout history: was it humans, changes of the environment or the interaction of the two. However, it is a fact that our complex social world, as it is known today, and which has been, with smaller and larger interruptions, continuously climbing the stairs of culture and civilisation, regardless of favourable or poor environmental conditions, is mostly found in the same physical space where it was at the beginning of our history, despite the fact that there have been significant changes of populations and cultures, as well as syncretism. Newer sociological theories which observe worlds of life (worlds of nature and society) in their interactions and unity, should not neglect the fact (that is well-known from history) that they are not only human social organisations that harm nature, but with its unpredictable destructive powers, nature may also cause changes of the physical space which will result in changes of the living conditions of the social world.

Actions motivating the protective behaviour of humans which aimed at ensuring the continuity of their living conditions have had of course, still have and even will have numerous unintended consequences for nature.

Human intervention, however might change, decrease or even increase this destruction, while nature – as far as we know it today – is not motivated by such considerations. Today, by our scientific knowledge and equipment we are able to predict several possible 'intentions' of nature, to assess biological and public safety risks, however we are still unable to move forward from our defensive position which requires constant change and renewal of the framework of our living conditions. It is not enough that different forms of confrontation, with their intended and unintended consequences, are continuously present in our social world, there is always the unpredictable natural environment with its surprises. These two, i.e. the anthropogenic and the natural, even if not to the same extent, have effect on the worlds of nature and society as well. So far these effects have been scattered and disperse, both in time and space, have been regional and local, and still they are, although their consequences might go beyond their local scope, so they might result in a kind of global impact. The world of humans suffered numerous local

and regional anomalies (weather, epidemics, war) in the past centuries; their impact emerged to continental and intercontinental levels, of which contemporary people were more or less aware: they passed oral or written tradition to us, to commemorate and make us learn from these lessons. Still, they were not characterised by the phenomenon of inscenario, which envisions nowadays not the real but the expected, possible consequences of effects imposed by human and natural forces. It does not mean that past events were not dramatised and possible future events were not characterised by apocalyptic visions. The situation has changed only slightly: mediated communicative spaces of those that happened and of those that might happen have been compressed, and they get to each and every part of our world in a mere fraction of a second.

2. Ecologic discourses of our days are formulated from the perspective of present concerns, among the consequences of which are attempts to get beyond the dual vision of the world. However, it is still the schemes of earlier universalist orthodoxies that have inspirational power, which are involved in the construction of a global social change – as a result of the climatic change which they consider/suppose to be global. Universal schemes of discursive reality constructions, by following the ideological pattern of globalising economy, do not count with the diverse local societies, with the fact that economy is integrated in the society, and with the alternative nature of economic changes, integration and disintegration. The cause for concern is whether climatic change presupposes social changes or not.

Without doubt, there is a correlation between the two, climatic change might generate changes in lifestyles which might have some effects on the organisational-institutional structure of society. Neither the dual and ambiguous attempt of science that searches the secrets of nature in laboratories, nor attempts to protect humans and nature are without risks, nevertheless, their sets of instruments, construed from their observations, may soften the consequences of anthropogenic effects. To stay within our field of study, we can conclude: *if we examine the consequences of social effects of climate in the framework of its history – which is the aim of our project – we should be aware of numerous direct/indirect implications which are part of our past, but have not yet lost their actuality.*

Under the present conditions of climate change, we will see its related implications better, while some concrete manifestations of climate were also seen in the past, such as the correlations between effects of meteorological and hydrometeorological phenomena.

The difference between the past and present is not characterised by the lack of climate events, but by the transcendental and scientific ways of understanding experiences which will influence our knowledge when applied in defensive strategies. However, there are some common features of the past and the present, which seem to be involved in anthropological constants, and which may be detected in human action and behaviour patterns, evoked by different crises.

Structural changes in a given society might be affected by the climate, but in some cases, there might be some changes of forced adaptation triggered by some biological (epidemic/pandemic) and public safety drivers, not independent from the climate. These changes of the social structure are only latent, hardly sensible at present. A great example of this is the Black Death (1347–1350) which killed almost half of Europe's population. After the devastating pandemics, England experienced a change in its economical structure, due to the lack of workforce, people changed from agriculture to sheep farming, which had long-term effects on the English society. It is often forgotten that social sciences, such as sociology, are able to document events of the past and present, and might only guess what might happen next – thus it seems to be a legitimate question whether the variable formal/conceptual organisations of societies (in different

time and space) are able to give universal answers for the challenges of natural-biological and anthropogenic events, or their protective strategies are limited by their cultural knowledge, adapted to their natural and historical environment. Any scientific study shall conceptualise the narratives of weather, epidemics, public safety and past suffering, its hypotheses – according to the available database – shall be integrated in a conceptual-theoretical framework which will outline the intended procedure of processing certain topics. However, this does not mean that we force the facts into universal schemes of well-known and accepted conventional paradigms. We do not state that these schemes are useless, we only intend to say that when we involve some factors, which vary according to time and space, in the interrelation of effects, it is the variability of these factors that determines those issues that follow conventional schemes and open up to generalisations, and those issues that are ecologically and culturally local, particular, unique and cannot be generalised. The world of life is the unity of the worlds of nature and society, and as we have mentioned, it is universal as it is the framework/basis for all living conditions for all existing human organisations. Human existence and action are basically oriented towards adaptation, their organisational forms and their concepts represent different ways of adaptation, both in the narrower and the broader sense. It is not a coincidence that unlike in the present answers given for the challenges imposed by the environment in the past were also different. The natural environment itself is variable/changing and affects the ecological and living conditions of a particular human organisation in different ways according to time and space – as well as it affects adaptation to these variable/changing ecological conditions. Meteorological and hydrometeorological climate events are triggers for the change/variability of ecological time/space whose distribution/impact is experienced through unequal, episodic, local and regional events, even nowadays. Historically, the impact of natural-anthropogenic factors (which evoke climate change) also varies according to different ages; but any processes that lead to climate change are/were determined by natural factors. Processes of climate change in our days thus may be identified neither with any similar consequences in former historical ages nor with any consequences that will occur in the future, as the nature of effects-consequences will be determined by the knowledge of a particular social organisation. In the past, information originating from ages before instrument measurements were applied, was conveyed through different channels and was of descriptive character, conceived within the perspective of heard/saw, while adaptation of human organisational forms had much less impact on the climatic conditions of the ecological environment than it has today. Still, deforestation, river channelling, building of irrigation systems, etc. (which served to maintain and preserve particular communities and societies) evoked/may have evoked climatic changes in the local environment. It is no coincidence that we lay stress on the historical aspect of climate: *climate, as a definitely natural process, has much more impact on the intensity and level of anthropogenic and biological events both in time and space, which is not true vice versa*. We are not able to find any examples in the database of the history of human adaptation which indicate that epidemics, phenological, paraphenological events or issues of public safety or war would have any impact on the progress of meteorological and hydrometeorological circumstances of the climate. On the other side, huge agricultural works, involving river channelling and the building of irrigation systems, which were already implemented by some ancient empires (such as China), had unquestionable impact on the microclimate, yet we are not fully aware of their continental effects. While observing climatic changes in our continent, climate change specialists of the Carpathian Basin and Europe (E. Le Roy Ladurie, C. Pfister, L. Rác) draw attention to the action of Alpine glaciers and the effects

of Atlantic Ocean currents, and not to the consequences of anthropogenic events. This refers to the fact that in the past it was not usual to expect such level of human intervention that might have caused radical climate changes in our closer and more distant ecological environment. Still, studies of historical sociology should consider such anthropogenic-like economical and demographical forces as deforestation and river channelling (river Tisza) that require adaptation, and whose meteorological and hydrometeorological consequences are sensible even today. Unlike in our age, before the age of the industrial revolution there were no such drivers in the economic life, lifestyle, habits and the operation of organisational-institutional mechanisms, neither in the Carpathian Basin nor in Europe, which would have resulted in any significant climatic change. Not to mention the fact that any potential climatic effects of the western industrial revolution (based on coal mining) affected the Carpathian Basin only indirectly before the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During the small European ice age (1300–1860), Alpine glaciers and currents of the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea and the Siberian cold had much more influence on the weather in the Carpathian Basin, and their cycles had more serious impacts on the agriculture, on the safety of food management, on human and veterinary medicine and on the demographic conditions of the communities of our region, and as a consequence, on the population's vision of the world. Even this ad hoc listing is able to present the complexity of the question to researchers, and draws attention to local and regional differences, to the special nature of approaches, to the ambiguities of different topics and to the necessity of finding new solutions. When we highlight our topic, i.e. the correlation of anthropogenic and natural factors, we must face the question whether they form a system or not. We have already referred to the fact that climate has an impact on the intensity of biological and anthropogenic factors both in time and space. If it is true, climate, as an active agent of the complex ecosystem, will not form a system in the strict sense of the word, even if we have assigned anthropogenic-biological factors to it. The spatial and temporal distribution, the variability of involved factors, the local and regional variability and the temporary, episodic nature of their relations, as well as the unstructured knowledge about affected statuses, groups and protective strategies will contradict to the systems approach.

By somewhat simplifying these difficulties, arising from the aforementioned circumstances, it is no coincidence that we have given preference to the theories of social sciences on the present climate change, as this made us able to conclude our thesis on this topic: *according to this thesis, it is the meteorological and hydrometeorological climatic events that are crucial among the different factors that affect representations of synergies*. It is the variability of climate whose consequence-related effects are present during affecting/regulating the nature, intensity and spatial-temporal scopes of events/issues of anthropogenic nature. As a consequence, *by introducing the term of synergy, we will be able to see the social consequences of consecutive and overlapping effects of the natural (weather, climate), biological factor and the anthropogenic, human action and behaviour*.

There is a narrower, more traditional approach that highlights consequences of the combination of *epidemics – famine – war*, but this approach would leave the meteorological and hydrometeorological dimensions of the climate, the nature and the scope of the intensity of effects/consequences hidden. Archive documents<sup>3</sup> which form the basis of our database are mostly

<sup>3</sup> I did research in Transylvanian archives (Csíkszereda, Marosvásárhely Sepsiszentgyörgy, State Archives; Gyergyószentmiklós, Székelyudvarhely- ecclesiastical archives and archives of parishes in villages and municipalities) between May-July of 2013, thanks to the nine-week long research grant offered by Campus Hungary. I could purchase foreign literature from financial assistance offered for research professors by the University of Szeged, for which I hereby express gratitude to our university. I am also grateful for the support provided by the local government of Algyő Nagyközség.

narrative, and tell about environmental issues (heard and seen, dependent on and independent from human action) through stories. We have discussed the nature of such and similar documents earlier,<sup>4</sup> so we only refer to the fact that any stories communicated by people in oral or written form (action for Weber), are subjective, intended and motivated, i.e. they are a reflected articulation of reality, and not the reality itself, but the reality that is reflected by the storyteller (observer) – as it had been seen by him and as he wanted others to see it. It is well-known from quantum theory that the relationship between the observer and the observed object is not neutral. Before Heisenberg and Born, Dilthey discussed the hermeneutical problem which tried to determine how many factors influence the relationship between the observer and the observed object. Recently, it has been Luhmann who reviewed Karl Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, and considered the observation of the observer to be important. These observations seem to refer to scientific research, and they are also characteristic of a non-professional, everyday observer. They are not free of such observation. The problem is without doubt not too simple, nevertheless, we must be aware of the fact that we are talking about human issues, and thus we should not forget to consider these aspects of difficulties about the so-called objectivity more carefully.

Our field of study, i.e. the synergy of anthropogenic and natural factors, may also be included in the relative validity of the aforementioned human issues. It has several reasons: our database from the archive mainly originates from those ages when instrumental measurement was unavailable. Despite several trials, the development of modern medicine, health care, bureaucracy, public safety, food management, etc. is still somewhat traditional, thus observers of the present are only provided with past descriptions that convey pure empirical knowledge. Reports originate from the literate elite. In the observed period (16–19<sup>th</sup> centuries), the majority of people from East to West conveyed everything what they saw/heard/experienced through oral information channels. Anthropogenic-natural events that happened simultaneously, had different effects and consequences in space, thus variability should be assessed simultaneously, and this requires us to measure the intensity of spatial contents of information flow in the given period, as well as of the spatial-temporal changes of drivers. We should concretize and classify the factors, i.e. select those factors of synergies that are determining, natural or anthropogenic. Then select those natural factors which actively affect the living conditions of an ecology community. Nature in general, as a complex and difficult system, i.e. the ecosystem is only relevant for human organisations, if its impact can be concretized in the ways of its manifestation and rational elements of its operation may be understood. Our past and present experiences/knowledge consequently appoint climate as being an active agent of the ecosystem. Pros and cons about the climate change of our days are formulated along the epistemological issues on the relationship between nature and the society, both in social sciences and in sociology. And, when it comes to climate change, it is the anthropogenic factor that is marked first in the causal relation of its study, which is due to the fact that all changes are explained on the basis of social environment. Doubts arise especially in relation to the latter, as sociological literature has less interest in the study of social consequences of natural-biological factors than in the anthropogenic factor, which does not mean that is without history.<sup>5</sup> National and international literature report on meteorological, hydrometeorological, geological, biological, anthropogenic events and the spatial and temporal

<sup>4</sup> PÁSZKA 2007, 2009., compare: PÁSZKA 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Terms of *Chinoiserie* and a *hydraulic society* for example emphasized correlations between the natural-geographical environment and the governing regime (see: PÁSZKA 1984. 27–47.; WITTFOGEL 1964., compare: PÁSZKA 1984.)

manifestations of different factors diachronically, and present them in descriptive/explanative representations, integrated in the paradigms of the given special science. This means that, even if they indicate so, they are neither interested neither in the issues of possible synergies nor in a synchronised analysis of events. As it has become clear from the aforementioned explication, epistemological insights emphasize the importance of going beyond the dichotomy of nature and the society, but they only refer to the general relationship between nature and society, and do not concretize any possible relations between other drivers.

3. In order to concretize the aforementioned suggestions, we try to draw up a general scheme that serves as a basis for a longitudinal observation which would synchronize the spatial and temporal consequences of climatic and biological drivers with the intended and unintended actions of humans. In order to realise our idea and to create a potential documentary framework and the main organising principles for such sociological study of history and knowledge, it is necessary to cross several boundaries between different disciplines. The table below was constructed according to the orientations of our study, and our aims were formulated on the basis of the available database. The table is mainly constructed in accordance with our purpose, but any extensions or reductions are to be applied in case of new, unforeseen thematic implications that will arise in the course of our study.

SOURCES AND TYPES OF THE STUDY

Natural	Archeological	Archive-library //	Narrative	Literature
Meteorological	excavation logs	maps	diaries, chronicles	sociology
hydrometeorological		tax tables	histories	demography
phenological		population	life histories	climate history
paraphenological		statistics	biographies	epidemiology
geological		official	amulets	anthropology
epidemiological		documents	historia domus	pharmacy
		medical reports		medicine
		wills		military history
		archives		history-geography
				history of science,
				migration history
				ethnography
				history of law
				historical ecology
				etc.

Studies before the time when modern instruments and procedures were used, both in the national and the international practice focus on spatial and temporal records about weather and epidemics.<sup>6</sup> Excavations of cemeteries and churches of the Middle Ages and the early modern age and the epidemiological analysis of plague cemeteries are a newer development (e.g. in Maksacernát in Székely Land or Bouches-du-Rhone in France). However, studies on the weather and epidemics still do not focus at all on archived medical reports and administrative protective measures of health care systems, which make the level of knowledge in the relevant age visible, and mark the beginnings of involving bureaucracy, health care and public safety in public policy. A more detailed study of narrative-type historical documents, such as diaries, memoirs,

<sup>6</sup> The classification of sources related to the research on climate history (see RÁCZ 2001. 19. /2.1.1, 27./2.2.3) which we complemented with *narrative type* sources.

biographies, histories, deeds, *historia domuses* is significant in many aspects during the study of synergies: observers in a particular age usually provide a detailed description of events that happened in their closer or more distant environment, report on their direct/indirect experiences related to these, thus make their subjective views, knowledge about these events, as well as any habits and rituals applied by them in critical situations available. This does not only expand the circle of sources on climatic history, geology, biology and anthropogeny, but provides us with insight into the world view and future visions of people in a particular age, according to which they understood their situations in life. Besides archive documents, it is these narrative historical sources which present the particular cases of continuous fights, expanding mercenary, billeting, robberies, pillage, spread of epidemics, growing taxes, etc., which imposed a permanent danger on public safety in these ages. Both in the broader sense of social studies and in the narrower sense of sociology, one should not focus exclusively on the longitudinal study of great climatic changes that affected history, but on the set of personal, communal or generational experiences related to events evoked by weather, biology or anthropogeny, which were recorded by our ancestors as events to remember due to their influence on their habits and the trends of their future plans. Involving the newest results of natural and social sciences in the study of synergies and checking the reliability of primary archive data are aimed at integrating regional databases in a more universal field of knowledge and at expanding the interdisciplinary framework of this study.

The aforementioned suggestions do not intend to comprise all traditionally known sources and secondary literature on weather and biological anomalies, or on human destruction.<sup>7</sup> From the perspective of synergy studies, sociology and social studies should be aimed at learning and understanding the social consequences of weather anomalies, anthropological and biological events (wars, administration, epidemics), as reported by their observers. This shall be done on the basis of related documents, within a closer or wider geographical space, within a longer period, and according to certain thematic classifications.<sup>8</sup>

The image of the past that revealed from primary and secondary databases will present a universal phenomenon to us, yet its spatial and temporal distribution is very much fragmented, not only in a particular continent but in a particular country as well— according to regional, local, microclimatic, hydrographic, demographic particularities and the particularities of settlement pattern, military procession, economics and trade, etc. Events of biological nature (such as epidemics and the plague of locusts) are diffusive phenomena, are not aware of any borders, while the intensity of weather extremities (floods, drought, freezing), despite the continental characteristics, are local. Wars, which usually take place at historically trodden sites, are similar, although the range of their concomitants (such as plague, syphilis, cholera, dipsomania, robbery, etc.) significantly exceeds these sites. A typical topic among complaining narratives in archive documents is the depredation of troopers.

Here we have no opportunity to provide a detailed description of all these burdens on everyday life, but it is a fact that natural-anthropogenic synergies are mainly local. Thus, while formulating a thematic unit, it is very important to identify the position of data providers/observers both in space and time in order to make the following clear: the person who provides

<sup>7</sup> PFISTER 1988. – types of archive sources in his table summarizing sources on climate history and types of information: chronicles and annals, administrative records, manorial records, personal notes, early newspapers, early instrumental surveys. Types of information: descriptions of weather, instrumental observations, biological information: phenological, paraphenological (quoted by: RÁCZ 2001. 27./2.2.3).

<sup>8</sup> As for synthesising historical sources on climate changes in Europe, major works do not deal with Central Eastern Europe at all: (see: LE ROY LADURIE 2008).



information is a direct, primary (witness, victim) or an indirect or secondary (hearsay) observer of events.<sup>9</sup> As it is known, contemporary providers of data/observers would attribute the consequences of natural, biological and related anthropogenic events to transcendental forces which does not mean that they would not recognise some correlation between the events. However, the sociological representation of synergies suggests a consolidated, complementary study of natural, biological and anthropogenic factors in all cases where these factors are combined, or the simultaneity or consecutive/overlapping nature of the consequences of their synergies may be detected or not.

INFORMATION TYPES AND PRINCIPLES OF ANALYTIC CLASSIFICATION

Spatial	Temporal	Thematic	Synergy nature-anthropogenic	Consequences socio-demographical
local	year	freezing	drought-famine- epidemics	population decline
regional	season	drought	flood – drought – war	high prices
national	month	flood	lack of money – flood	migration
continental	decade	phenological	earthquake – fire	pauperization
	day	paraphenological	flood – taxes – war	debt/servitude
		earthquake	freezing – flood – drought	public safety
		epidemics, famine		traumatisation
		war, robbery		destruction of
		bureaucracy		the social space (disorganisation discontinuity)

Our process is aimed at emphasizing the demographical-social consequences of synergies between spatial-temporal thematic information, conveyed by people/observers. On the other hand, by highlighting synergies between natural, weather and anthropogenic factors, we also try to detect the aspects of narrators' representations about events or stories, i.e. to understand the meaning that these narrators attributed to their observations/information and the ways they understood/explained the considered/real interrelation between these events and histories. Sociological suggestions, unlike suggestions of climate and epidemiology histories shall on one hand pay attention to the normal cycles of weather, to the spatial density of repeating pandemics/epidemics, as this allows us to assess differences between normal and extreme events within a particular period of time: changes of human resources and instruments, required to maintain certain life practices, may be compared according to the perspective of 'before and after'. On the other hand, it reveals the connections of different events caused by humans (war, epidemics) and nature (earthquake, flood, freezing), told by our narrators in episodic and/or linear schemes events or through some stories compiled about the events, which may also be included in the term of synergies. The perspective of 'before and after' here may reveal differences between statuses before and after demographic, communal/social consequences of the synergy between anthropogenic-natural events, as these are presented by the narrator. Contemporary observers do not understand different events, caused by either humans or the natural environment, and

<sup>9</sup> Thematic and spatial-temporal classification of data about climate history is presented by Rácz L in a pie chart, divided into three fields. His approach is definitely more illustrative as he presents weather cycles; nonetheless we have drawn up a linear/vertical scheme that corresponds to the Pfister scheme much better. We have also applied some more important elements of Rácz's diagram, which seem to be more relevant for the narrative documents used by us (see: RÁ CZ 2001. 37., diagram 2.3.2.1.).

resulting in negative/positive consequences, as synergies. *By introducing the term of synergy, we try to reveal demographic and social consequences (population decline, migration, pauperisation, etc.) of the combined, spatially and temporally sequential effects of intended and unintended damages caused by natural, weather and biological factors (flood, freezing, earthquake, phenology) and by anthropogenic, human action and behaviour (such as war, robbery, fire, epidemics, taxation).*

Precise geographical location of spaces is essential, as effects and consequences of the weather are spatially and temporally separated, i.e. the instability of the microclimate and meteorological and hydrometeorological events are not independent from local and regional terrains. On the other hand, as we have put it before, climate has a more decisive impact on biological and anthropogenic processes than vice versa.

Impacts and consequences of anthropogenic factors are more predictable both in time and space, and to some extent, it is also true about biological events, which are related to the expansion of centralisation, uniformisation and bureaucratization (development of the public health system, quarantine, etc.) from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Some degree of organisation may also be seen in earlier historical ages, which is proportional to the feudal structure and to the efficiency of organisational-administrative practice (lobbying, balance of power, defence) of towns and cities.

Separation of synergies and consequences of the aforementioned factors is also justified by analytic considerations, as drivers and their implications mostly follow each other according to different spatial (local, regional) distribution and shorter-longer periods of time, possibly one overtakes the other, or they overlap. Factors whose consequences evoked synergy, even if to a different extent, destroyed local, regional or national communal/social spaces, and seriously obstructed individuals and groups to follow their usual lifestyles, as well as hindered stabilisation that would have been required for regeneration. A possible typology of synergies may be drawn up according to the variability of time-space, extension/intensity and impact/consequences. According to these, we may speak about national and local strong, medium or weak synergies.

According to the presented database, we will be able to outline the aforementioned relation between natural, weather-anthropogenic events and their consequences. All this depends on the contents of sources: archive documents are short and stick to the facts, while narrative documents (memoirs, histories, biographies) are valued for making the narrators' experiences about certain events available and for providing understanding and explanation. They usually have a dual purpose: on one hand they actualise and compare actual experiences with earlier similar and/or identical experiences, and on the other hand, especially if some anthropogenic events correlate with weather or epidemic anomalies, they warn about the future by some 'signs from Heaven' and formulate predictions about what else might happen. They sense some correlation between epidemics and war. They compare these events with normal periods, although normal periods are still considered relative from the aspect of the stability of their life practices. Identification of writers of documents/stories in archive and narrative sources does not cause any difficulty to us, as their status, position in the feudal society and religion is certified by their signature (seal) on the document. More and more frequent correspondence among the forming bureaucracy, orders, etc. provide a comprehensive picture about the levels of protective measures, usual and new practices, usual or forced patterns of group solidarity and about deviant behaviour in the particular age.

Besides the outlined conceptual and formal characteristics, we must see that representations of our sources override our stereotypes about restricted, limited contacts, relations and communication, considered as typical in this age. As Mihály Cserei (a contemporary) puts it, it

is 'communication', i.e. people and centres of trade – markets and cities – what causes 'contagio' (contagion) in the 17-18<sup>th</sup> century Transylvanian feudal society. History and chronicle writers sometimes relate (or see some correlation between) damages caused by humans (with intended or unintended consequences) to weather-related problems: they considered extreme weather, epidemics and war as a kind of omen of existing or forthcoming social crises. It is not surprising that sometimes accumulation and simultaneity of negative events evoked images about the forthcoming end of the world. Writers usually tell about events which they observed directly, but there are numerous events reported by them which they had only heard about. This kind of information about weather is usually not related to their close environment and goes far beyond it, usually containing national or even broader, continental news – of which learned much after particular events had happened – usually from pilgrims wandering abroad, soldiers, legates or through postal service. Thus, there was information-flow, and writers showed great interest in all international news, regardless of their origin (they came from the neighbouring or from distant countries). However, when we decide to study the possible anthropogenic effects of weather conditions in Transylvania and their synergy representations, we should not ignore the fact that the geographic – topographic – hydrographic picture of Transylvania was/is not uniform but very much fragmented. Thus, weather and its related anthropogenic states show great variability even within the same historical region (such as Transylvania), which also results in significant differences among cultural principles of economic and social practices of the population, even in periods of tranquillity. Organisational forms of social and communal spaces, instruments of the ecological community, quality of food stocks in households, interiorised cultural patterns, lifestyle, habits, common rituals, the structure of households and families, the stability and structure of houses in villages and cities, order in settlements, etc. had significant influence on the efficiency of protective measures in extreme situations. Despite all this, communal/social spaces of székely villages and Saxon cities with several centuries old self-government were/are broken and destroyed, especially in extreme situations. It is still true today. The problem to be solved lies in the methods of regeneration, as surveys on possible population growth in periods after damages 'caused by God' do not provide any answer for the short- and long-term consequences of the suffered trauma, and sources remain silent about them as well. Knowledge is transmitted in families, communal spaces (markets, churches, the army), official announcements and other face to face situations. These notes and reports which recorded narratives of complaints of common people do not contain any other solutions for traumas than guilt and remorse. Neither churches nor rational theology have any answers for how to cope with traumas caused by extreme situations. The body and the mind are treated only by bureaucracy, and its expansion shows correlation with the 'politicizing' of weather, epidemics and public safety – there are more and more schematic orders that give a detailed description about protective measures which originate from above. These prescribe the same solutions from Croatia to Transylvania, despite the fact that weather extremities, epidemics and damages caused by war are local and regional, both in the colonies of the Habsburg Empire and all around Europe. Let us see a typical example: plague, which was regarded as the archetype of epidemics, almost disappeared from Western Europe by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the Viennese bureaucracy ordered still the same protective measures during the great cholera outbreaks in 1831 and 1872. Bureaucracy may be excused as there was very little difference between medicine and popular medicine at that age. We know about different amulets, recommended for the elite, which offered their patients drinks mixed from herbs, vegetables, spirit, wine and even some metals. The social status of

specialists of empirical medicine, such as physicians and surgeons was different, although they proved to be almost inefficient during the frequent visits of God's evil. Physicians were doctors with university degree, a kind of internal specialists, who prescribed medicine, were early representatives of recent telemedicine, usually served rich cities and the elite, and enjoyed a luxury lifestyle. During periods of epidemics they usually escaped. Surgeons, i.e. barbers – who often were executioners as well – carried out dirty work, such as amputation and the treatment of wounds, etc. Their 'knowledge' was mainly based on ancient Greek medicine, and most of the time they did more harm than epidemics and wars. After border regiments were set up in Transylvania and especially in Székely Land, military doctors were regularly employed. Thanks to them, numerous records were left to us, telling about the symptoms of epidemics, while there are very few which tell about successful treatments. All the aforementioned issues help us to understand why these critical situations, caused by extremities, evoked apocalyptic and 'end of the world' visions in people of these ages. This was supported by their experience as well, since natural and biological disasters repeated generally in ten-year cycles, not to mention the unreliability of public safety, which got even worse due to the almost permanent war-like spats.

In the course of studying synergies, we have to recognise other consequences of drivers (as results of their combined or individual impact) which are usually attributed to social inequality by sociologists. Thus, survivors of extreme situations either became much poorer or became wealthy due to inheritance, or possibly migrate or became servants. All these resulted in a restructured society, which was not characteristic in Transylvania, as we have already referred to it, as it was in the whole continent. It also means that we also have to consider drivers outside of society when studying reorganisation in the social structure, as well as when studying disintegration and integration processes. On the other hand, we might understand narratives about suffering better in our age, if we are aware of such experiences in the past.

We have also referred to the fact that writers of sources (archive documents, narrative stories) usually had certain intentions when they constructed their texts, which might have been subjective motivation or the fulfilment of orders given by authorities. It is a common feature that they are recorded *ex post*, from memory, which raises some doubts about their reliability.

When processing sources, studies in the field of climate history use the procedure suggested by Clim-Hist.<sup>10</sup>

According to their suggestion, one should use both quantitative and qualitative methods, after data (collected before and after surveying) have been selected and reliable data have been organised thematically according to temporal and spatial aspects. Reliability is acquired through selection, comparing data with similar data from other sources, the frequency of surveying/ observations, etc., which ensure that temporal limits for weather observations "were defined for one month at least" (RÁCZ 2001. 36.).

Another way of checking reliability, especially in our case, might be to highlight demographic-social consequences caused not only by the climate but by the synergy of more factors. We have also applied a special sociological procedure, and examined population and tax cen-

<sup>10</sup> About the method of Clim-Hist (see: PFISTER 1984. quoted by: RÁCZ 2001. 37. 2.3.2.2. diagram)

suses which were made since the Principality of Transylvania was formed (1541) until Habsburg colonisation and a dozen times after it as well.<sup>11</sup>

We must see that numbers in population and tax censuses are secondary, interpreted sources, not always sufficient, they are not always simultaneous with weather and anthropogenic anomalies, but surveys on longer terms (population decline, decreasing number of taxpayers) might be useful for setting up trends. On the other hand, reliability is also a relative issue – without relativising trials of scientific validity, we must admit that even those arguments about reliability are not free from uncertainties which have been supported by different quantification, weighting and indexing methods, as we are using, selecting and comparing data originating from such primary and/or secondary observers whose observations were probably not valid even at the time of recording. Intentionality is detected not just in statistic and narrative data of past ages, but in our days too, let us just think about large numbers of data, constructed according to different purposes and objectives. With all these, we only wanted to draw attention to those difficulties which we have to consider when we come across processing archive documents, tax tables, narrative historical stories, etc. It is even truer when we are interested in representations (conveying meaning) of stories told by different narrators. Their reliability shall be proved through comparing their information with other contemporary sources and through thorough study.<sup>12</sup>



The real test for linking factors involved in synergies according to the presented outline would be a monographic processing. We only intended to draw attention here to the questions and difficulties that arise during research and to set up a possible conceptual-theoretical framework for our topic. I hope that I could also draw attention to the fact that in past ages, as well as recently, the living world of communities and societies was/is embedded in a multidimensional correlation of effects, and even if sociology tries to understand the organisational and operational forms of individuals and groups within the society itself, we should not forget that there are several factors outside society which might limit or hinder the progress of potential resources in particular societies. Therefore, when trying to understand integration and disintegration processes, one must consider the complex interplay between multidimensional factors taking part in these processes. Learning about the knowledge of people before the modern, scientific world and information are not useless at all, even for us who live in a very much complex civilization, built on the basis of sophisticated, scientific knowledge, and thus being really fragile as well. \*

<sup>11</sup> Data about székely people (see: SZÁDECZKY LAJOS 1896. 177–321., 1029., 1030., 1031., 1032., 1033.): lists of noblemen and free székely people in Seps, Kézdi, Orbai, Csik, Gyergyó, Kászón, Udvarhely, Maros, Aranyosszék, who were made listed and pledged by György Basta, commanding general, for loyalty to the king-monarch. Surveys on taxes and population, performed in Transylvania by the Habsburg monarchy, are presented by: PÁL-ANTAL 2007 (Marossszék), 2009 (Udvarhelyszék), 2009. (Csik-, Gyergyó- és Kászonszék.), 2011 (Háromszék).

<sup>12</sup> Further information about this issue in the Hungarian literature, from different aspects: theoretical-historical (see: GYÁNI 2000. 128–145.), anthropological (see: NIEDERMÜLLER 1988), social psychological (PATAKI 2001.), sociological (PÁSZKA 2007., 2009., 2010.)

## BIBLIORAPHY

- ADAM, BARBARA – BECK, URLICH – VAN LOON, JOOST (eds.) (2000): *The Risk Society and Beyond: Critical Issues for Social Theory*. London, Sage.
- BECK, U. (2003) *A kockázat-társadalom (Risk Society)*. Budapest, Andorka Rudolf Társadalomtudományi Társaság – Századvég.
- BECK, U. (2008): *Világkockázat-társadalom. Az elveszett biztonság nyomában (World Risk Society)*. Szeged, Belvedere Kiadó.
- BETHLEN MIKLÓS (1955): *Önéletírása (Autobiography)*. I. kötet. Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó.
- BIRTALAN GYÖZÖ (1995): *Évszázadok orvosai (Doctors of Centuries)*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- CARACCIOLLO, A. (1988): *L'ambiente come storia*. Bologna.
- CASTELLS, M. (2006): *Az identitás hatalma. Az információ kora (The Power of Identity: the Informative Age)*. II. kötet. Budapest, Gondolat–Infonia.
- MAGYARY – KOSSA GYULA (1929) *Magyarországi orvosi emlékek (Medical Memories fro Hungary)* I. kötet. Budapest.
- STICKER, GEORG (1931): *Seuchengänge in Ungarn*.
- CSEREI MIHÁLY (1983): *Erdély története (The History of Transylvania) (1661–1711)*. Budapest. Európa Kiadó.
- FELSŐCSERNÁTONI BOD PÉTER (é.n.): *Önéletírása (Autobiography)*. In *Erdély öröksége. Erdélyi emlékirók Erdélyről*. Bevezette: Jancsó Elemér. VIII. kötet. A másik magyar haza. 1750–1790. Budapest. Franklin–Társulat Kiadása.
- KHON, G.CH (ed.) (2008): *Encyclopedia of Plague and Pestilence. From Ancient Times to the Present*. Third Edition. New York, Facts on File Inc.
- GIDDENS, A. (1990): *The Consequencies of Modernity*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- GIDDENS, A. (2000): *Elszabadult világ. (Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Live)* Budapest, Perfekt.
- GIDDENS, A. (2008): *The Politics of Climate Change*. Policy Network Paper. <http://www.policy-network.net>.
- GYÁNI GÁBOR (2000): *Emlékezés, emlékezet és történelem elbeszélés (Memory, Reminiscence and Historical Narrative)*. Budapest. 2000.
- HALMÁGYI ISTVÁN (1906): *Naplója 1752–63 és írásai 1669–1745 (Diary 1752-63 and Works 1669-1745)*. Negyedik kötet. Közli: Dr. Szádeczky Lajos. Budapest. 1906. MTA Könyvkiadó Hivatal. In *Monumenta Hungariae Historica – Magyar Történelmi Emlékek. Második Osztály. ÍRÓK. 38. kötet*. Budapest. 1906.
- HERMAN, B. – BUDDE, A. (1988): *Natur und Geschichte*. Hannover.
- HERMÁNYI DIENES ISTVÁN (é.n.): *Önéletírása (Autobiography)*. In *Erdély öröksége. Erdélyi emlékirók Erdélyről*. VII. kötet. Erdély változása 1703–1750. Bevezete: Tolnai Gábor. Budapest, Franklin–Társulat Kiadása.
- IMHOF, E. ARTHUR (1992): *Elveszített világok. Hogyan gyűrték le eleink a mindennapokat, és miért boldogulunk mi ezzel oly neheze (How Our European Ancestors Coped with Everyday Life and why Life is So Hard Today)*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- LATOUR, BRUNO (1999): *Sohasem voltunk modernnek (We Have Never Been Modern)*. Budapest, Osiris – Gondolat.
- LATOUR, BRUNO (2002): *Das Parlament des Dinge*. Frankfurt a. M., Suhrkamp.
- LE ROY LADURIE, E. (2008): *Histoire humaine et comparée du climat*. I-III. Paris, Fayard
- LE ROY LADURIE, E. (1967): *Histoire de climat depuis l'an mil*. Paris.
- LUHMANN, N. (2010): *Ökológiai kommunikáció. Képes-e felkészülni a modern társadalom az ökológiai veszélyekre (Ecological Communication)*. Budapest, AKTI – Gondolat Kiadó.
- NIEDERMÜLLER PÉTER (1988): *Élettörténet és életrajzi elbeszélés (Life Story and Biography)*. *Etnographia* 99. évf. 3-4. sz. 376–389.
- PÁL-ANTAL SÁNDOR: *Székely székek a 18. században. Marosszék 1701-1722 között (Székely Seats in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Marosszék 1701-1722)*, 2007. I. kötet. Marosvásárhely, Mentor Kiadó. *Udvarhelyszék 1700-1722 között.*, 2009. II. kötet. Marosvásárhely, Mentor Kiadó., *Csik-, Gyergyó- és Kászsónszék 1701-1722*

- között, 2009. III. kötet, Marosvásárhely, Mentor Kiadó., *Háromszék 1701-1722 között*, 2011. IV. kötet. Marosvásárhely. Mentor Kiadó.
- PÁSZKA IMRE (1984): *Struktúrák és közösségek (Structures and Communities)*. Bukarest, Kriterion Könyvkiadó.
- PÁSZKA IMRE (2007): *Narratív történetformák a megértő szociológia nézőpontjából*. 1. kiadás. Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale.
- PÁSZKA IMRE (2009): *Narratív történetformák a megértő szociológia nézőpontjából*. 2. kiadás. Szeged, Egyetem Kiadó. 246–278.
- PÁSZKA, IMRE (2010): *Sociology of Narrative Story Forms*. Cluj. Presa Universitara Clujeana.
- PFISTER, C. (1988): *Klimageschichte der Schweiz 1525-1860*. Bern II.
- RÁCZ LAJOS (2001): *Magyarország éghajlattörténete az újkor idején (The Climate History of Hungary in the Early Modern Period)*. Szeged, JGYF Kiadó.
- RÉTHLY ANTAL (1962): *Időjárási események és elemi csapások Magyarországon 1700-ig (Climatic Events and Natural Disasters in Hungary until 1700)*. Budapest.
- RETTEGI GYÖRGY (1970): *Emlékezetre méltó dolgok. 1718-1784 (Things to Remember, 1718-1784)*. Szerk: Jakó Zsigmond. Bukarest, Kriterion Könyvkiadó.
- SZÁDECZKY LAJOS (szerk) (1896): *Székely Oklevéltár (Székely Documents)*. V. kötet. 1296–1603. Kolozsvár.
- SCOTT, S. – DUNCAN, CH.J. (2008): *Biology of Plagues*. Cambridge University Press.
- SUSAN A. CRATE –NUTTALL, MARK (eds.) (2009): *Anthropology and Climate Change: from Encounters to Actions*. USA. *Workshop on Sociological Perspectives on Global Climate Change*. May 30–31. 2008. Report prepared by: Joane Nagel University of Kansas, Thomas Dietz Michigan State University, Jeffrey Broadbent University of Minnesota. Sociology Program Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences National Science Foundation. 2009.
- WITTFOGEL, A. KARL (1964): *Le Despotisme oriental. Étude comparative du pouvoir total*. Paris.

SIK, DOMONKOS

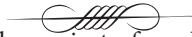
sikdom@gmail.com

DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.4

# *Critical Theory and Political Socialization*<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** The paper explores the relevance of critical theories of modernity in the research of memory transmission and political socialization. Firstly, the relevant concepts of Habermas, Giddens and Bourdieu are overviewed. Secondly, the notion of political culture and memory transmission are reinterpreted from the perspective of these theories, revealing different sources and forms of radicalism. Finally, divergent constellations of modernization are reintroduced as the broadest context of the processes of political formation.

**KEYWORDS** Habermas, Bourdieu, Giddens, political socialization, memory transmission



European identity is based on the project of modernization, including both emancipatory and pathological tendencies. In times of economic and identity crises, the distortion of democratic culture is inarguably amongst the most dangerous potentials threatening the whole European project of modernity. As the 2014 elections of the European Parliament indicate, the strengthening of the far right is an increasing tendency throughout Europe. As far right semantics are often inconsistent with basic democratic principles, from this perspective it does not seem to be an exaggeration to claim that European modernization is in danger. In this situation, a diagnosis of times has to reflect on the future of democratic culture which is the political socialization of young people including the formation of the perception of the political sphere, the interpretation of the historical traumas of totalitarian systems and the consequent democratic, radical or passive behaviour patterns. However, such ambitious project has a specific challenge: it requires the connection of critical theories of modernization with empirical researches of political socialization. The following paper makes a such attempt.

Most critical theories of modernity do not focus on the process of political socialization; instead, they rely on theoretical models of political formation. The empirical researches of political formation rarely build on critical 'grand theories' as well, but they examine the transmission of collective memory and the effect of the agents of socialization, the family, the institutions and the peer groups. Accordingly, the connection of the two fields requires elaboration. First of all, the actors' understanding of politics and history need to be embedded into the other aspects of the socially constructed reality. Secondly, political activism or passivism needs to be redefined in the context of other activities. Thirdly, all these issues need to be conceptualized in a dynamic model, capable of grasping those specific factors which explain their transformation. Only such contextualization can reveal those specific patterns of social integration that result in radicaliza-

---

<sup>1</sup> The writing of this paper was supported by the project MYPLACE (FP7- 266831). See <http://www.fp7-myplace.eu/>



tion, democratic engagement or turning away from the public sphere. In order to contextualize the interpretation of the world and acting in the world in a dynamic model, we need to rely on social theories that do not only operate on phenomenological and structural level, but are also capable of highlighting the historical dynamics, in other words the theoretical modernization aspect of these transformations.

Very few theories are capable of such complex task. I have chosen Habermas, Bourdieu and Giddens to highlight some important dimensions of a social theoretical model of modernization in a critical manner. I hope that from these theories, new perspectives and ideas can be deduced, which can help us to determine a theoretical frame of understanding the relation of divergent paths of modernization and different forms of radicalism. Firstly, I introduce how these theories describe the phenomenological and action theoretic level of social integration and the consequences of modernization. Then I summarize the conclusions of these theories for a theory of political socialization.

## The Frames of Understanding and Acting in Modernity

Social theories originating from the Weberian tradition argue that the key of social integration is a common interpretation of the world, which frames the potential means, norms and ends in other words, the horizon of action. According to the phenomenological tradition – from Schütz to Habermas – this interpretation is called the „lifeworld” (meaning “the world, as it is experienced”) and it is constructed in those action situations where mutual understanding is not pre-given, thus social action is hindered. In these moments of dissent, the actors are forced to reflect on their understanding of the world and potentially renew it. While Schütz describes this reflection as an individual process, according to Habermas the renewal of the lifeworld happens via linguistic interactions. One of the most important consequences of this shift is the chance to evaluate the processes of the renewal of lifeworld from the perspective of rationality and morality. Individual cognitive processes are not transparent, so they cannot be evaluated from the position of the observer, but speech acts can be indeed evaluated.

Those speech acts which are potentially criticized by the hearer and if needed justified by the speaker are rational in the sense that their series enables the triumph of the best argument. However, those speech acts which are beyond criticism or are maintained despite the inability of justification refer to distortions caused by unequal power relations. As communication occurs in an interpersonal space, it is based on moral foundations: the order of justification is embedded into the moral perspectives of the actors, which can be either pre-conventional (based on the raw power or private interests), conventional (based on roles or norms), or post-conventional (based on the recognition of the other as “an end in itself”). In this sense socialization, the rationality of lifeworld and the moral development are linked to each other: a rational lifeworld free of dogmatic meanings may be constructed in the series of undistorted interactions based on mutual recognition.

In contrast, sociological theories originating from the Durkheimian argue that the key of social integration is a system of social facts which enforces predefined tracks of action independently from the actors’ interpretations. These systematic forces are described since Parsons and Luhmann as symbolically generalized communication mediums. They coordinate social actions by defining automatized tracks of communication (e.g. money, law etc.). These tracks allow a substantively very limited communication (e.g. buy/ sell, legal/ illegal etc.), but provide

the opportunity of generalized communication. This means that anyone familiar with the given medium, independently from the mutual understanding with the potential partners may rely on the functioning of the systems. In this sense, according to the Habermasian theory, understanding can be modelled on three interrelated levels of the unreflected lifeworld, the social reflection of speech acts and the systematized mediums.

Habermas describes modernization according to this conceptual frame. He argues that the fundamental process is the rationalization of communication and lifeworld. This means a parallel learning process on the level of the moral frames of communication, a more reflective relation to lifeworld, the decrease of the proportion of dogmatic meanings and an increase of argumentative debates. As a consequence of these transformations, the need for mediated action coordination also grows high. The rationalized lifeworld allows the emergence of abstract, generalized communication mediums which can effectively integrate mass societies. However, the uncontrolled expansion of system integration results in a paradox trend of modernization. The replacement of speech acts by mediums ('colonization') endangers the reproduction of the same lifeworld which enables the emergence of systems. This tendency is the self-destructive potential of modernization, threatening with alienation, anomie, loss of meaning, legitimation, motivational and educational crises or psychopathologies (HABERMAS 1984, 1987, 1990).

While Habermas moves to the direction of highlighting the interactive capacities of reflection, Giddens relies on the reflective capacities of the actors themselves and their interactions with the institutional environment. According to him, at least three different levels of the agent can be differentiated. The most fundamental is the level of unconscious motivations, including the existential wish for ontological security that is the basic wish for a meaningful, inhabitable life. The second level is the practical consciousness which organizes the everyday action situations. The third is the reflexive/discursive consciousness which is responsible of strategic decisions and the supervising of practical consciousness. Understanding of the world can be characterized on these levels. Fundamentally, it is determined by existential needs which means that every interpretative process has an implicit existential level. It is never 'objective', as ontological security and identity are always at stake. Secondly, the understanding of the world is shaped and reshaped by the actors, who not only follow the structural forces or the personal routines, but continuously monitor themselves, the others and their institutional environment. In this process they rely on the available discursive resources produced by the experts of different areas. As a result of these process of understanding, institutionalized structures emerge which continuously interact with the potentials of actors as a frame of future processes. In this sense and according to the Giddensian theory, understanding can be modelled as a circulation of personal reflection and institutional reflection, complemented with unconscious existential motivations (GIDDENS 1984).

Giddens analyses modernization from this perspective. According to his diagnosis, the fundamental process of modernization is the transformation of the relation of actors and institutions. While the first period of modernity created its own authority based on positivist scientific knowledge, this authority has also been the target of serious criticism in late modernity. As a consequence, expert institutions lost their self-evident legitimacy, the trust in science and politics have been lost, risk and contingency became general. These transformations put extra burden on the actors. Not only did they need more intensive reflective activity to handle the new contingencies, but also the contours of identity became blurred and ontological security became unsure. In order to handle these challenges, the actors need to navigate better in the jungle of public sphere to find those narratives which can help their reflection. In addition, they need to develop skills and competences which allow them to establish intimate relationships and invent

individualized life courses capable of grounding and maintaining self-identity. The unsuccessful handling of all these challenges may result not only in subordinated socio-economic position, but also psychopathologies (such as dependencies) or attempts to collectively reject late modernity in the form of political fundamentalisms (GIDDENS 1990. 1991).

Unlike Habermas and Giddens, who both approach to the problem of understanding from the perspective of the interacting or the individual agent, Bourdieu's starting point is the structure of inequalities. According to him, different spheres of social practices ('fields') are inevitably unequal, as the definition of the rules of the spheres ('illusions') is inevitably arbitrary. As the act of defining is necessarily a zero sum game (either I define or someone else), fields are necessarily battlegrounds of competing interests. The winner of these fights gains the right to define the illusion and to control its engraving into the actors themselves ('symbolic violence'). Legitimate orders and interpretations of the world are always the result of successfully veiled power relations in this sense; this is why they are by definition illusive. Of course, the power distortions are rarely explicit, especially as they are incorporated not only on the level of reflected or unreflected intentions, but on the level of dispositions ('habitus') as well. The habitus in this sense is the preintentional understanding of the world, expressing the position in the different fields. In sum, according to the Bourdieuan theory, understanding of the world can be modelled as being necessarily distorted by veiled inequalities which results in partly conscious interpretations (illusion) and unconscious (habitus) dispositions.

For Bourdieu, modernity is not a separate theme; he admittedly analyzes modern (French) society and does not necessarily want to extrapolate trends from his observations. Accordingly, his ideas on modernity can be deduced from the empirical works. One of his central observations is the reproduction of inequalities through hidden mechanisms. Not the reproduction, but its hiddenness is something genuinely modern: the replacement of the raw power relations to seemingly legitimate hierarchies and the naturalization of inequalities. Even if these inequalities reproduce themselves in great extent, they do not at all result in a static society, as the more advantageous positions are continuously challenged from below and independent fields are continuously tried to be detached from the existing ones. These are the main dynamizing factors of modernity: newer and newer illusions emerge, as those in privileged position, in aspiring middle position and in defeatist or revolting subordinated position confront each other and attack or defend the existing order of fields. In this constellation, there are no clear emancipatory or pathological tendencies, only the inevitable logic of modern class struggle that overlap material and symbolic fields as well (BOURDIEU 1984, 1992, 1998).

## Passivism, Radicalism and Democratic Culture in Modernity

These different models provide the opportunity to conceptualize collective memories, political intentions and behaviour patterns as an aspect of everyday actions. In this way, the preconditions of an activist, a passive or a radical political culture can be understood from the perspective of the complexity of life, not only in a theoretically reduced way. The different social theoretical models emphasize different aspects of the modern society which in many ways complement each other. These models together highlight the contours of late modern conditions which can be used as a general frame of explanation.

The Habermasian model is exceptional in the sense that it is explicitly based on a democratic value choice. At the heart of the theory, there is a normative concept of undistorted communication which can be used as an analytical tool of evaluating the democratic quality of the

processes of social integration, cultural reproduction and socialization. If the speech acts are distorted – that is instead of argumentative debate explicit or implicit power relations define the interpretation of the world –, then a dogmatic lifeworld is reproduced. Dogmatic meanings imply antidemocratic social relations as they cannot be justified; only forced on others. Accordingly, with the Habermasian approach collective memories, political intentions and behaviour patterns can be analyzed from the perspective of the rationality and morality of interactions. Political culture is formed in every communicative process in which young people are involved, independently from the topic of the discussion. Depending on the rationality and morality of the communicative processes, participants may experience freedom and democratic social relations or lack these impressions. As these experiences are the ground and precondition of the substantive democratic values (e.g. tolerance, solidarity etc.), the everyday communicative process play a crucial role in the formation of an activist, a passive or a radical actor.

According to Habermas, the tendencies of modernization imply ambiguous consequences for the chance of undistorted communication. On the one hand, an ongoing moral learning process provides better and better opportunity for undistorted communication and the rationalization of the lifeworld. On the other hand, the expansion of mediated communication narrows the space of linguistic interpretation of the world as such. In this sense, modernization is a potential and a danger at the same time for democratic formation. Both under- and overrationalization of the lifeworld holds the potential of opening up space for radicalization. This means that only such social constellation is capable of overcoming these difficulties which balances between the two types of trespass successfully: fosters communicative rationalization, while controls the system expansion. In this process of balancing, collective memory plays a crucial role. It is a substantive dimension of lifeworld, framing collective identity through the examples of the past. In those cases where these examples include reference to either the under- (e.g. traumas caused by dogmatic ideologies) or the overrationalization of lifeworld (e.g. crises of over-bureaucratization), the chances of avoiding their pathologies is higher. That is why young people's interpretation of collective memory plays a crucial role in the formation of political culture. The identification with its under- or overmodernizing narratives – in a dogmatic and a technocrat way – opens up space for antidemocratic political culture.

According to Giddens' model, political culture can be understood through the interaction of actors motivated by unconscious, practical and reflected drives and institutions characterized by the reflective capacities of experts. The democratic quality of social situation can be evaluated based on this model. If the actors have a chance to ensure their ontological security, construct their identity and have a mutually satisfying reflexive relation with their institutional environment, then there is no systematic obstacle to the emergence of an active democratic civic culture. However, if any element of this constellation becomes problematic that could affect the political culture as well. If ontological security is unsure that may result in anxiety and frustrations which provide fertile ground for radicalization. If reflective capacities are not acquired that may result in disadvantage not only in material sense, but also in the processes of identity formation which make actors susceptible for populist ideologies. If the institutions and experts are not reflective or not cooperative enough that may result in structural inequalities, alienation and psychological pathologies, which open up the space for cognitive or emotional radicalization.

As Giddens describes the main trends of modernization, on all these levels serious challenges emerge. The ensuring of ontological security becomes more and more difficult as risks and contingency grow, while trust in others and in institutions weakens. With the individual-

zation of life courses, identity formation becomes a personal task requiring not only reflexive, but interactive capacities as well. With the weakening of the authority of the expert knowledge, institutions are burdened with the augmented task of justify their legitimacy. This task can be done only by adapting to the individualized needs of the actors which requires significant reflexive improvement. These challenges imply various attempts of overcoming whose success remains contingent as the speed of social transformation accelerates and new crisis appear. This contingency has particularly disturbing consequences for the chances of democratic culture, as the emergence of democratic culture depends not only on the success of one of these attempts, but on the parallel success of all of them. The different failures of overcoming the different challenges of modernization open up different paths of radicalization which needs to be distinguished in order to understand the complexity of the emergence of antidemocratic political cultures.

Collective memories may play important role in the attempts of overcoming the challenges of radicalization. They can be defined in the interaction of actors and institutions: memories are expert knowledge being evaluated by the reflection of the actors. Both traumatic memories and positive examples can be used for supporting the attempts of overcoming the challenges of modernity, i.e. fostering democratic socialization (e.g. if they include narratives of successful transformations). Or they can be used as a retrograde source, which legitimize radical or fundamentalist worldviews (e.g. if they emphasize the failures of modernity).

Similarly to Habermas' model, Bourdieu's is also fundamentally political, although not in an idealistic, but in an extremely suspicious fashion. In the Bourdieuan approach, the problems of political culture are embedded into the context of structural inequalities. Politics is on the one hand an autonomous field, with autonomous rules and capital. On the other hand it is the general model of the functioning of any other fields, in which the actors continuously naturalize the inequalities through the mechanisms of symbolic violence. According to this approach, democratic culture itself is an illusion which is maintained, transformed and instrumentalized by those in privileged position, in order to legitimize the inequalities and fight field struggles. This of course does not nullify those democratic values which have been crystallized since the Enlightenment. It rather highlights those practices whose unintended consequences create them and those structural constellations which maintain them. From this perspective, we may argue that democratic habitus and illusions require first of all autonomous fields, having if not equal, but measurable powers. Also such habitus and illusion require relatively balanced power inequalities within the fields. Democratic values are defended and maintained only if there is a space where they can be effectively used and there are actors who are interested in using them. The former is ensured by the independence of economic, political, public sphere, scientific, artistic etc. fields. The latter is ensured by actors who – unintentionally, while fighting their own field struggles – are interested and willing to fight in the name of democratic values.

Modernization in Bourdieu's approach does not have a specific substantive trend. It is an open process in the sense that its substantive characteristics depend on the concrete struggles within and between fields. Accordingly, the potentials of democratization are also open in modernity: as inequalities and imbalanced power relations grow high, the chances of democratic socialization decrease, as the relation between and within fields are balanced, the space of democratic illusions and habitus increases. Of course this includes not only the macro level of fields, but also those smaller circles which surround the agents in everyday situations. If there are space and resources for criticism of dominant illusions in these everyday relations, democratic socialization has better chances. Collective memories in Bourdieuan context can be defined as

instrumentalized discourses which are affected by the field struggles. Their significance comes from their capacity of framing the attempts of these struggles. As they can either be effectively used in order to centralize power and increase inequalities, or to decentralize power and decrease inequalities, the control over their definition is always amongst the central stakes of the struggles.

## Multiple Modernities, Multiple Radicalisms

The above described models outline different conceptual frames of analyzing social phenomena and different diagnosis of modernity. Even if these models were created with the claim of universality, they clearly carry the trace of the specific socio-historical constellations of their birth. This means that even if the diagnoses can be applied to any other socio-historical constellations, they are not equally relevant in every case. Therefore, probably it is the wisest, if we treat these models as the descriptions of the different aspects of the same process of modernization. European modernization is constituted of significantly different constellations of modernization within each country. These constellations can be described from the perspectives of Habermas', Giddens' and Bourdieu's theory, and reveal those specific pathologies and emancipatory potentials which frame the processes of political formation on the most general level.

By distinguishing between constellations of modernization, first of all we may reveal potential causes for radicalization. In those cases where communicative rationalization is challenged, the potential sources of radicalization are dogmatic meanings and distorted interpersonal relations. In those cases where communicative rationalization is overextended and mediated, communication replaces linguistic communication, radicalization can be explained with the dissolution of the space of moral and democratic experiences. In those cases where ontological security is unsure, radicalization may be tracked back to affective causes such as frustration and anxiety. In those cases where reflexive capacities are unsatisfactory, radicalization can be explained with incapability of dealing with the augmented level of risk and the challenges of identity formation. In those cases where institutions are not reflexive, radicalization may be deduced to legitimacy or functional crises. In those cases where – between or within fields – structural inequalities are extremely high, radicalization may be explained with the lack of space of democratic illusions and habitus.

In this sense, modernization constellations constitute a distinct level of analysis along with those levels which usually appear in empirical researches of political socialization, namely the memory reproduction and the individual factors of political socialization. These different levels interact with each other in the sense that not only the modernization constellation affects collective memory production and the individual processes of political socialization, but also these latter levels affect modernization. Traumas or positive historical examples may ground collective identities which support either pathological or emancipatory processes. The individual processes of political socialization may also result in actors either capable or incapable of overcoming the challenges of different modernization constellations. The following figure summarizes these relations:

The inclusion of the level of modernization theories into the analysis of the formation of political culture can be justified by both normative and scientific reasons. Social theories of modernization are capable of clarifying the broadest normative stakes which is none other than the European project of modernity. From modernization theoretical perspective, radicalization can be defined as a crisis symptom of modernity, the sign of insufficient handling of the

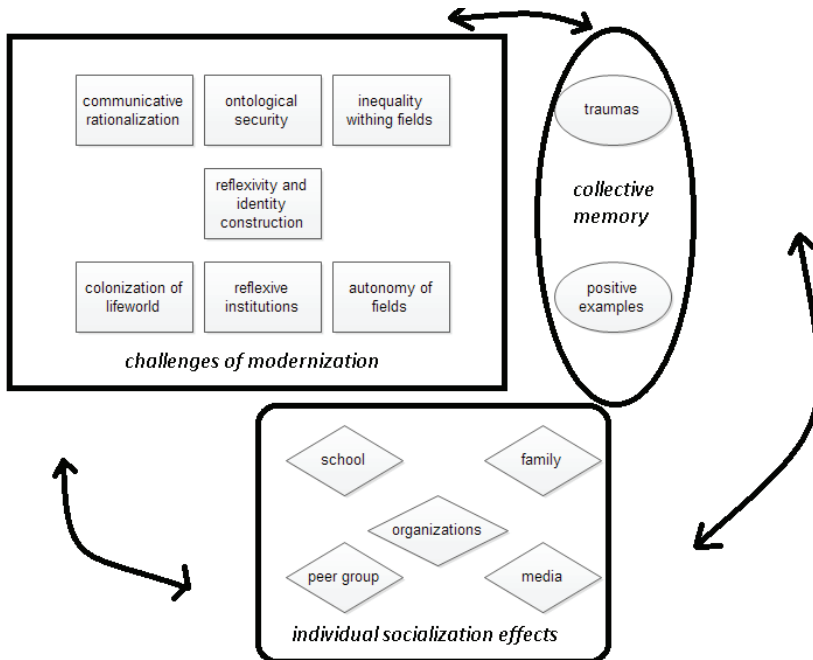


FIGURE 1 ❖ Framing political socialization

challenges of modernization, the indicator of new types of pathologies and the need for new emancipatory methods. If radicalism is the crisis symptom of modernity, then different aspects of modernity potentially imply different types of radicalization. These types require different frames of explanation which are provided by social theories of modernity. Furthermore, to understand radicalization on a European level, a 'common denominator' is needed that is a common ground to compare the different phenomena of radicalism. Social theories of modernity provide such ground as well, as they reinterpret the national cases as different constellations of modernity.

In sum, critical theories of modernity and empirical researches of political socialization are interdependent: while the former indicate the stakes of political formation and provide analytical tools for its analysis, the latter provides empirical evidence for the diagnosis of times. \*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BOURDIEU, PIERRE (1984): *Distinction: a Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press.
- BOURDIEU, PIERRE (1992): *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* with Loïc Wacquant. Cambridge, University of Chicago Press and Polity.
- BOURDIEU, PIERRE (1998): *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*, Stanford, Stanford University Press.
- GIDDENS, ANTHONY (1984): *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Oxford, Polity Press.
- GIDDENS, ANTHONY (1990): *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford, Stanford University Press
- Giddens, Anthony (1991): *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- HABERMAS, JÜRGEN (1984): *The Theory of Communicative Action*. Volume 1. Boston, Beacon Press.
- HABERMAS, JÜRGEN (1987): *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Volume 2. Boston, Beacon Press.
- HABERMAS, JÜRGEN (1990): 'Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action'. Cambridge, Polity Press.

JANCSÁK, CSABA

jancsak@jgypk.u-szeged.hu DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.5

# *Student Self-governance in Hungary in the New Millennium: Advocacy, Organisation, Entrepreneurship in the Higher Education Supermarket<sup>\*1</sup>*

**Abstract** The research focuses on active personal and community citizenship, political participation, self-organisation by generations and patterns of public and community activity in the interpretive communities of higher education, as well as on new forms of public activity and the development of student organisations in the new millennium. The empirical source of this article is the database resulting from the study “Active Youth in Hungary” (Aktív fiatalok Magyarországon) (2013, N=1300). This article presents the characteristics of the different phases in the life-cycle of higher education students’ unions as organisations (in terms of performance, creativity, risk-taking, administration and integration). The author analyses the institution system of students’ unions, and the underlying causes of shifts in functions and values and their consequences by using a sociology-of-youth approach to higher education’s historical milestones between 2000 and 2013. The reforms introduced in Hungarian higher education in the new millennium, in particular the introduction of the credit system, led to the transformation of the students’ collective interests which caused a shift in values, a decline of advocating function and the loss of the mass base in the students’ union movement.

**KEYWORDS** higher education, students, youth participation, students’ union, student movement



## **Introduction**

A social achievement resulting from the development of European democracies is the widespread application of the principle of subsidiarity. The basic units of democratic institutional

\* This study is dedicated to memory of my friend Gabor Katai (1975–2014).

<sup>1</sup> The expansion of the Hungarian higher education (the emergence of mass higher education) took place at the turn of the millennium when the number of students reached 300 000. From this point, more than 20-30% of the secondary school graduates entered the higher education as freshmen, which clearly corresponds to the definition of mass higher education. The credit system was introduced between 2002 and 2004. These changes turned higher education into a ‘supermarket’ where the ‘shelves’ of syllabus offer a choice of courses in forms of credits that the students could choose and put into their ‘shopping baskets’. However, the actors of the Hungarian higher education were unprepared for these modifications.



systems are self-governments. These specific organisational frameworks of social self-governance are suitable for representing both professional and political interests and values. It is the great interest of both the people concerned and the central authorities to delegate to representatives the task of raising and addressing issues and problems. Self-governance in European higher education has been present since the establishment of the first universities. Autonomy is an important value added to the transhistorical nature of the institution of the university: together with the Roman Catholic Church and the British and Icelandic Parliaments, the University is one of the most durable institutions of human civilisation, as “there are 70 universities among the 85 institutions that have been functioning continuously since 1520” (KERR 1982.152. in BERDAHL 1993. 163.). The autonomy of universities also meant a reasonable task sharing, thus students were involved in addressing student-related issues with an extending scope of activities in different institutional forms: raising students’ problems, developing, accepting and implementing proposed solutions. These responsibilities are carried out most effectively by student representatives who treat the community of students as their own communities (JANCSÁK–MATISCSÁK 2004, SZABÓ–KUCSERA 2006, EKLER 2008, JANCSÁK 2008, SZABÓ 2009, SZABÓ–KUCSERA 2009, JANCSÁK 2011b, JANCSÁK 2014).

In this article we monitor and analyse the evolution of the student union movement from 2000. In this article, the timeline of the development of students’ unions is analysed in the process of Hungary’s accession to the European Higher Education Area: amending the Act on Higher Education in 2003 (introducing the credit system), amending the Act on Higher Education in 2005 (introducing 3-year bachelor’s degrees [BA and BSc] and 2-year master’s degrees [MA and MSc]) and accepting a new Act on Higher Education in 2011 (reducing the proportion of student from 1/3 to 1/4 in main university decision making bodies and university senates<sup>2</sup>). Analysing the responses given by the organisation to societal challenges, we interpret the underlying causes of shifts in functions and values of the students’ union institutional system and their consequences. Interpreting this change through the corporate lifecycle model (Adizes 1992), we try to point out how the institutionalisation of the student movement closed the organisation into a “gilded cage” limiting its innovation potential, and how the introduction of the credit system between 2003 and 2005 and the consequent erosion of collective students’ interests lead to a crisis of values and a decline in advocacy.

The historical span of the article is illustrated by extracts from interviews with leading actors of the student movement, however, we intend to give a more profound insight into the values of the service providers on the “higher-education market” and their relations to public life and advocacy through the analysis of data from the study “Active Youth in Hungary” conducted in 2013 and the thorough examination of the views of students who consider themselves related to the Students’ Union.

<sup>2</sup> Since 1993, Students’ Unions have had a representation of 1/3 in university decision making bodies (University Councils) in Hungary. This high proportion was the result of the period abundant with alternative opposition movements before the change of the communist regime: students supported the regime change with their strike started in Szeged in 1988 that later spread in the whole country and from which the future student union movement developed. Reformers of higher education and the parliament elected in 1990 strengthened this base by codifying a student proportion of 1/3 in university councils and granting a right of veto to students’ unions in determining the different fees to be paid by students. All students enrolled for a certain semester can become members of the Students’ Union, can elect and can be elected to be members of different Students’ Union bodies and committees. The mandates last for one year, elected members receive a scholarship of public activity and are exempt from classes during official events (meetings of bodies and committees).

## Searching for New Directions in the New Millennium

Higher education associations developed in parallel with the higher-education integration process and the Students' Unions of integrated universities and colleges established on 1 January 2000 partly intended to draw on the fundamentals (mass events, platforms, debates, active communication, demonstrations against the tuition fee to be introduced at national level [2005, 2007, 2010]). In service providing, there was a shift towards professionalism and enterprises were created who were active exclusively within universities, in providing services to students (e.g. Műegyetemi Ifjúsági Szolgáltató Kft.<sup>3</sup>, Debreceni Campus Kft.<sup>4</sup>, Universitas-Pécs Kft.<sup>5</sup>, Universitas-Győr Kft.<sup>6</sup>, Universitas-Szeged Szolgáltató Kft.<sup>7</sup>). The economic entities of the national Students' Union were established (HÖÖK Kht., Diákbonusz Kht.)<sup>8</sup>. The period that started at the beginning of the new millennium (and still ongoing!) can be characterised by the words "reformation" and "recreation", because it has divided the organisation into a three-part unity and at the same time segmented it further. The first function is *advocacy* using a union-like space of activities. The second function is *administration* manifested in the self-governance and organisational characteristics. The third function is *financial management* operating in a domain of entrepreneurs (enterprises).

The officials of the movement express themselves in these distinct "divisions": some of them represent loudly the (presumed or real) interests of their fellow students, others organise events (festivals, sports competitions) or are active in student services and student enterprises. By obtaining knowledge and connections within these frameworks, collecting cultural capital and building a contact network, they prepare for the serious competition on the labour market. The scene of information exchange and cooperation among these segments (divisions) is the students' union office which the members of the movement fought for and won at the beginning of the 1990s. As far as carrier planning is concerned, today's officials (volunteers and employees), who are active in these different segments, are already oriented towards the domains of politics, economics or financial markets at the very beginning of their admission to the organisational framework of higher education. And they do so with increasing consciousness.



"At the end of the 1990s in the Students' Unions, there was a kind of erosion process, maybe it is still going on, because there had been so many social changes and the structure of the universities and the mentality and world view of students had changed so much that Students' Unions simply lost almost all their political weight. So as a matter of fact, we could say that the services have overgrown us, but on the other hand we could also say that the Students' Unions simply lost these areas, they couldn't handle them any more. And it was the moment when it became quite clear that we have to create service units that are independent from the Students' Unions, but are definitely close to students, that are capable of providing these student services, and that we have to build a tripartite student service area. One part of it is advocacy and the promotion

<sup>3</sup> Ltd of University of Technology and Economics (Budapest)

<sup>4</sup> Ltd of University of Debrecen (Debrecen)

<sup>5</sup> Ltd of University of Pécs (Pécs)

<sup>6</sup> Ltd of Széchenyi University (Győr)

<sup>7</sup> Ltd of University of Szeged (Szeged)

<sup>8</sup> Kht = Non-Profit Ltd

of interests which remains the task of Students' Unions, another part is an administrative role which, we can say, is represented by the Student Service Centre, and there is an organisation providing lifestyle and welfare services, and this is a non-profit company or another entity that is very close to Students' Unions in respect of its organisation and in every other respect as well, but whose financial management is independent from the university. These three large groups can cover all the areas of students' needs during their studies." (Csaba Fekete, former student of the Faculty of Science, University of Szeged, president of the University Students' Union of the University of Szeged [SZTE EHÖK] between 1996 and 1998)

Market and politics made these groups of student elite, but Students' Unions were very heterogeneous. The tripartite structure (advocacy, service and administration) did not only divide the bodies and representatives, but also generated inner conflicts that were handled with the same methods used by "adult" actors of politics (e.g. professional use of the mass media).

*"In 1999, the network of higher education institutions was reformed and this process is known as the higher education integration process by the general public. At that time, during this process, we modified our earlier, so to speak, trade union-like advocacy behaviour that also involved democratic street politics. Since the beginning of the negotiations, there had been a government proposal to practically remove – banish – Students' Unions and possibilities for advocacy from faculty life and institutional councils. We initiated private members' motions for amendment and we turned the whole thing, so we managed finally to keep the rights to representation at faculty level in the integrating higher-education institutions. In all integrated institutions, in university and college councils representational rights were handed down as the strongest Students' Union rights to representation. This had been achieved by HÖOK [National Conference of Students' Unions] using a new technique that was unlike a trade union, street-politics style, "social-mass-appearance" technique. It was rather like the technique characteristic of political lobby organisations in a parliamentary democracy. The same method was used in 2000 when they wanted to take the rights of HÖOK and cut down its financial conditions or transfer it to others. Instead, we practically increased our statutory operational support by one and a half times, and so we also reversed the government proposal. And at that time, we also achieved our goal acting as a political lobby organisation through individual representatives and committee motions of amendment." (Tamás Gergely Kucsera, former student of the Faculty of Arts, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, President of the National Conference of Students' Unions [HÖOK] between 1999 and 2000)*

The twenty-first-century students' life includes less and less problem solving that students explicitly define as advocacy. With the development of the credit system, former study groups were dissolved. With the dissolution of these groups, group interests gave way to individual interests. However, individual interests resulted in diverse carrier plans and individual professional plans, and more or less correspondingly planned and developed study paths. Consequently, classical forms of advocacy disappeared, as individual and atypical problem solving methods started to evolve at the level of needs. Therefore, advocacy nowadays means providing (good and useful) information for students.

*"When we compiled the program for our presidency, one of the central elements, one of the key categories was how Students' Unions should deal with the increased number of students. And the primary problem was not the number of students, but rather the structure: half of the students did*

*not pursue their studies as full-time students. Students spend shorter periods of time in the same institution. In our time, people spent 4, 5 or 6 years at the same place where they started their studies. When they were admitted, in the first year, they became members of the Students' Union and after climbing the career ladder, in the third or fourth year, they became president of the Students' Union. Now, with the Bologna Process, this kind of representative activity might have become more difficult, as the main reason behind the whole thing is the fact that people often do not obtain their master's degrees at the same place where they began their undergraduate-level training, but in a different institution." (Gergely Ekler, former student of the Faculty of Arts, Eötvös Loránd University, President of the National Conference of Students' Unions [HÖOK] between 2005 and 2006)*

The content of activities considered to be similar to trade union activities has changed, and advocacy is not included in them any more, at least not in the sense of the 1980s and 1990s. An increasing number of students need a provider of information. An organisation that can provide information in more and more complex everyday activities of higher education. We intentionally use the expression of service provision, as, with the introduction of credit systems, when study groups – that used to be stable from the beginning to the end of the studies – were dissolved, it is impossible to show a standardized path or beaten track to students, therefore, information can only be collected and provided knowing that everybody takes as much as they can. Since the credit system was introduced, students compiled the elements of their higher-education paths themselves. The freedom provided by the credit system had been unknown to Hungarian higher education, and the lack of collective knowledge and experience that could be provided for both teachers and new students of higher education, causes problems. Today, new inequalities are created and a widening gap is formed based on the quality of information and on the time and speed of the acquisition of useful information. These services operate in more and more places successfully and range from credit counselling, study counselling, career orientation, mental health consoling, teaching learning techniques to recreational or anti-stress techniques, information portals and newsletters. These are the activities that we consider as operational advocacy today.

*"The system of leadership trainings, the establishment of career centres and career trainings, all were done at that time. And it was a really calm period when you had time to focus on that. We had leadership trainings with two or three hundred people. This also meant the strengthening of the core of student self-governance. I think it was a period when we tried to build cohesion. It was encouraged to have personal relations among the leaders of Students' Unions – not only among presidents, but also among vice presidents and members –, it was important to form personal relationships. And another important thing: we tried to position HÖOK as a student association which is not any student association, but a youth association, and not any youth association, but THE youth association." (Kornél Almási, former student of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics, President of the National Conference of Students' Unions [HÖOK] between 2001 and 2002)*

*When I became the President of the National Conference of Students' Unions in 2003, the National Conference of Students' Unions was already a mature, institutionalised and bureaucratized institution. On the one hand, there was a legal guarantee for the operation of HÖOK both financially and organisationally, on the other hand, there was a network of connections in the HÖOK based on the connections built at the time of OFÉSZ (National Higher Education Advocacy Association)*

*that resulted in a professional organisational network of operation. (Zsolt Barthel-Rúza, former student of the Faculty of Arts, Eötvös Loránd University, and President of the National Conference of Students' Unions [HÖÖK] between 2003 and 2004)*

In parallel with the development of higher education policy after the political transition, the students' movement and its newly established organisations of self-governance gained political and economic positions. The students' patterns of political action strengthened the increasingly radical advocacy efforts, then in the new millennium, the market economy developments. This went hand in hand with the increase in student numbers and the penetration of free market conditions into higher education. Besides the mentioned factors, the emergence and the later evolution of the movement, and the representatives' behavioural patterns were also influenced by the change in the value system of the students, and in particular by the new type of public activity of the intelligentsia that was manifested in the decline of innovative thinking and in the preservation and imitation of official positions of authority.

*"I don't know if there is a direct connection between the impact of these structural and organisational changes and the fact that we seemingly have fewer debates in general assemblies and less energy is put into confrontation. I'm not sure if it's so because of the above mentioned facts, maybe it's because the world is changing, students are changing and so is the temperament of student representatives." (Tamás Gergely Kucsera)*

The tripartite structure (advocacy, service and administration) that developed not only divided bodies and representatives, but also generated inner conflicts which catalyzed the necessity for change.

*"I think – although at that time we didn't think so – that, in fact, these conflicts enabled the organisation progress. For example in many respect we already...there were also personal conflicts... but these contributed to the development of the organisation." (Kornél Almási)*

*"There is no other advocacy organisation, no other professional or civil society organisation in this country that would have such an ability to reform itself and that could continuously respond to external challenges in a way that meets the requirements of a changing world." (Tamás Gergely Kucsera)*

Through this defragmentation, the organisation opened new spaces and it became the actor in the arena of youth policy by following the path of political professionalization.

*"HÖÖK cannot be considered only as a student organisation or an organisation dealing with higher education. I think there will be a breakout opportunity for HÖÖK, and it will engage in the representation of students' interests and higher education student issues again, but also it will be able to engage in youth organisation structure again. It is worth examining what the problem is, and the problem is more and more the fact that why the members of the young generation get tired of the things, and why they don't participate in public life. I think these issues must be addressed." (Kornél Almási)*

In this period, Hungarian higher education became part of the European Higher Education Area. Therefore, it has to be noted that unlike in Hungary, in 63 % of the universities in the countries participating in the Bologna Process, students only formally participate in decision-making (participation in the senate or council, or at faculty/department level). (REICHERT-TAUCH 2003). According to a European Union study, half of the students feel that they play a fairly active role in the development of the European Higher Education Area through their national and European organisations; however, further development is needed in a number of areas so as to involve students in different initiatives at institutional and in particular at department level. (REICHERT-TAUCH 2003). Among the actors of the higher education arena, the students were who continuously emphasized the values of student-oriented learning, flexible study paths, the entry into higher education and the planning of study burden based on empirical study when the credit system for the whole institution was developed. The representatives of European students are the most hopeful about the basic principles of the reform, and they primarily criticize their implementation and increasingly limited interpretation; however, they contribute effectively to maintaining professional and political discussion on certain themes (like the social dimension of higher education and higher education as public good) (see JANCSÁK 2011b). Examples in Hungary (e.g. demonstrations based on social arguments) seem to confirm this.

## **New University Youth – New Challenges**

The reason for the changing students' self-governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not only the changing social environment, but also the transformation in the domain of universities. Higher education periods are offered by universities to enrolled students as a type of life style. This transformation entails significant risks deriving from the lack of comprehensive regulation, and the fact that the higher-education arena in Hungary (and its legal background) is very heterogeneous. This period (the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Bologna Process, strengthening the borders of the European Higher Education Area) determines the role of the Students' Union in Hungary (as an element of the European youth/student movement system starting from a different base and taking a different development path) and the importance, the possibilities and the future of institutions for a long term at both national and international levels.

With the increasing importance of the consumer society and the transformation of student life-styles, representation (of interests) has also changed and its domain is not the revolutionary campus any more, but the entrepreneurial campus (KOZMA 2004. 117–129.). All these tendencies were strengthened by the emergence of a new 'managerism' at the end of the first decade of the new millennium in which the classical academic direction of the university was substituted by a managerial approach. Consequently, decisions are made in a central (narrow and professional) domain that involves neither faculty councils and university councils/senates, nor the body of vice rectors (possessing resources of academic knowledge capital and prestige), but executive and administrative employees, especially in the field of finance, economy, management, strategy, development, tenders and human resource, and a governing body (sometimes appointed by the operator and not elected by university citizens) emerging from these employees (Cf. ESTERMANN-NOKKALA 2009; ESTERMANN-NOKKALA-STEINEL 2011). Thus, certain representatives and leaders of Students' Unions have become members of university management (even before finishing their studies) thanks to their knowledge and contact network.

*“In fact, since 2000, Students’ Unions started to provide services, services for students. We have to add that it already happened in Europe 20 years ago. There, Students’ Unions are huge service centres catering for student life. This is a totally natural development and I’m happy that it has also happened in Hungary. But it entails that movement-like features die out a little. The president of the Students’ Union is a university manager. The meetings of university management look like this: rector, secretary-general, general director for finance, deans and the president of the Students’ Union. He or she is a university manager working non-stop like a full time employee. Unfortunately, the whole organisation (with a few honourable exceptions) gradually adopted this mentality. It became bureaucratic and the movement side disappeared.” (Dávid Nagy, former student at the Faculty of Law, Széchenyi István University, President of the National Conference of Students’ Unions [HÖÖK] between 2011 and 2013)*

As for the power conditions within the institution, it has to be noted that the public (academic) management of a higher education institution (the level of rectors or deans) is in a better position for negotiations against a Students’ Union with limited social legitimacy and a small (or non-existent) group of student supporters, or conformist collaborating student representatives. It also has to be mentioned that certain advocacy roles were rewarded by institutional sanctions on the side of the university’s “adult” society. The following citation illustrates the symbiotic relationship:

*“At the Faculty of Arts, it was an old »tradition« that faculty direction allowed Students’ Union members to do everything until they represented the interests of the dean, but once they turned against the dean, earlier defaults that had been overlooked would be brought up officially and the person would be kicked out of the Faculty. The members of the Students’ Union at the Faculty of Arts are »stupid«, because they always make this same mistake.” (András Döbör, former student of the Faculty of Education, University of Szeged, president of the University Students’ Union of the University of Szeged [SZTE EHÖK] between 2002 and 2003)*

In this case, although students’ representatives have a limited ability to promote student interests, they can still mobilise their forces in concealed personal deals that is manifested in students’ possibility to be present in faculty-level and institutional councils granted in the Act on Higher Education. It was observed that the lack of legitimacy strengthen the earlier mentioned tendency of distinction and separation which enhances the chance that Students’ Union members build their own careers, or instead of representing student interests they intend to promote the direction’s opinions to students. This way, representatives of students’ interests may become sellers in the higher-education supermarket, although fellow students (and also acts and regulations!) require Students’ Unions to play the role of the consumer protection.

As a result of its historical and organisational development, the organisation of the student movement has become an important player not only in the youth policy arena, but also in the civil society sector: besides delegating representatives into regional youth councils (regionális ifjúsági tanács – RIT), and from 2011, participating in the strategic cooperation of the New Generation Programme (Új Nemzedék Program), it also mobilised its support base of civil society organisations successfully during elections and delegations to decision-making and fund-allocating bodies of the National Civil Fund (Nemzeti Civil Alapprogram – NCA) created in the late 1990s and of the National Cooperation Fund (Nemzeti Együttműködés Alap – NEA)

established after the change of government in 2010.

*“HÖOK cannot be considered only as a student organisation or an organisation dealing with higher education.” (Kornél Almási)*

*“I think that with these three significant areas – education, youth affairs and general civil society area –, HÖOK created perspectives that became even stronger in 2003 and 2004, and that may be unique among civil society organisations. There’s no other civil society organisation in Hungary that would have such a huge mass base. And it’s not so important how many students there are in Hungary and how big the supporter base of HÖOK is, but how quickly and how many people it can contact, to how many people it can reach out and steer into another direction in connection with political elections considering that students have families that comprise mostly people of voting age. I think HÖOK became an unavoidable organisation in the fields of education, general civil society affairs and youth affairs.” (Zsolt Barthel-Rúzsza)*

By observing the transformation campus life, we can conclude that universities cannot yet deal with the phenomenon of a flourishing civil society life within the walls of the institution. It seems that they cannot get rid of the concept of “one party, one youth association” remaining from the times before the regime change, a concept that is expected to extend and become extremely heterogeneous in the near future. Students’ everyday activities are intertwined with participating in civil society initiatives independent from the university budget, with using services and visiting events. In our opinion, this tendency will strengthen with the extension of the Hungarian “Civil Society Arena”. Universities have not realised the potential in civil society public life yet. Moreover, civil society actors are inevitable for the creation of a really lively and developing university community. There are already sufficient examples, even if they are undeveloped: the work of civil society organisations is irreplaceable in the field of fund raising, developing community spirit and quality assurance. All these civil society volunteer activities inspire the student movement as well.

In a study conducted on Students’ Unions in 2008, it was discovered that “students’ union officials showed little willingness to answer the questions, we could even say that they were demotivated to participate in the study” (EKLER 2008). In case of the student union movement, this demotivation is a symptom – and here we refer again to the model of Adizes – that the movement still has the competences needed for legitimacy thanks to its developed administration; however, as for creativity, risk-taking and (exactly for these reasons) integration, its resources and potentials are in decline.

*“The kind of bureaucratization that has happened – and it is perfect in peacetime, it is good until Students’ Unions and HÖOK can be invisible – has to be substituted by a little more movement-like style, and this process should be a little accelerated.” (Dávid Nagy)*

As a result of this shift in students’ views, a system of representation needs to be established (recreated and/or created) in the new millennium that focuses primarily on these potentials. On the other hand, in order to develop the system, enhance its competitiveness and maintain it as a role model and a representation of values, it is inevitable to allow new movements to develop that not only point out problems, but also adequately react to them, and to help the student movement to be reformed based on these alternatives.



*“It has to be noted that Students’ Unions have a great deal of institutional responsibilities. [...] If we took and eliminated the Students’ Union, there would be no allocation of scholarships, because the institution has no capacity for that. It’s both a blessing and a curse. [...] The Student Network movement existed already around 2006. Now, current events have strengthened it and this alternative was needed exactly because the HÖÖK was slow. [...] Anyway, I consider many of the principles maintained by HAHA<sup>9</sup> identical to those of the HÖÖK. So it won’t appear in the future, it has already appeared! But it can also happen at personal level, as I’ve already mentioned. If there is a person among the activists of the Student Network who wants to step on the official path. And I can only support it! (Dávid Nagy)*

Today, change can generate a development in two directions. Either movement spirit will override institutional forms, or advocacy will be reborn in alternative movements without being connected to any institutionalized organisations. However, in the current situation, there is also a chance that students in higher education do not grab the opportunity. The reason for this may lie in individualisation, the phenomenon of retiring into one’s shell as a result of the financial crisis, the crises of altruistic and community values and the evaluation system, the lack of interpretive communities and democratic citizen competence and a democratic deficit among students.

The fact that student self-governance today is at a turning point again is confirmed by the data from the study “Aktív hallgatók 2013” (Active students 2013); however, the more profound patterns of connection to student communities also show that reference groups and interpretive communities (Pusztai 2012) mean communities of peer groups that may be of professional nature, rather than public-life and advocacy organisations. Moreover, we can suppose student activity and community activity based on the information that almost two thirds of students are connected to a loosely organised community and only every tenth student is totally passive as regards community participation.

**TABLE 1** ✧ *Are you connected to a group? (%)*  
Aktív hallgatók 2013 (Active students 2013)

	Yes
Students’ Union	7.8
HAHA	1.7
Other student organisation	11.2
Other organisation addressing public issues other than parties	5.3

Few students are connected to student advocacy groups (Students’ Union, HAHA). As regards the methodology, we have to mention that in this case “connection” has a broad sense, as it may range, for example, from following the Facebook site of an organisation to submitting applications for social aid in person, but it may also mean recreational activities in the sport

<sup>9</sup> HAHA (Hallgatói Hálózat, Student Network) was established in 2011 and, according to its website, it is “a self-organised Hungarian student movement” which is not identical with the HAHA (Cultural Association of Students’ Unions in the Hajdúság Region) established in 1996. It considers as its antecedent the student group called Student Network established at the Eötvös Loránd University in 2006.

association or club of the organisation, participation in demonstrations or work in a student committee. According to the Act on National Higher Education in force, every student enrolled is member of the Students' Union; however, students interpret this expression in a different way: not all students consider themselves as members of the Students' Union. Based on our interviews, for university students, the expression "member of the students' union" means a representative elected into one of the bodies of the Students' Union (HÖÖK [National Conference of Students' Unions], university/faculty level Students' Union, students' union committee). The survey "Active Youth 2013" interpreted "connection" as social contact (during which there is an exchange of values); however, it raises the consequences of interaction, as the parties generate reactions from each other. For us, the most important is a connection to (any) form of representation. We have to note that the two types of representation under examination are fundamentally different in this respect: the Students' Union is a representation with democratic legitimacy (set out by acts and regulations) exercised through elections, while HAHA (Student Network) its alternative organisation is a group of peers who engage in advocacy (where the source of legitimacy is not granted by law, but rooted in showing interests and values).

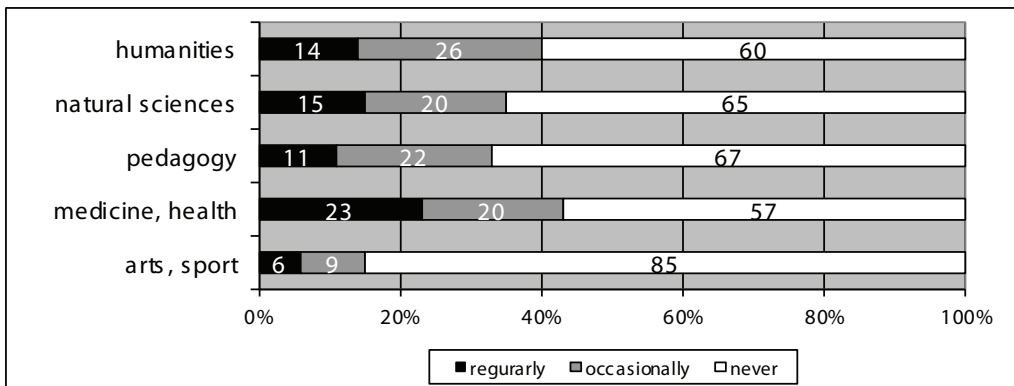
Data from the survey "Active youth 2013" show that few students are connected to the Students' Union (8 %) and even less to HAHA (2 %) the most popular alternative student initiative at the time of data collection. From all this, we drew the conclusion that there is limited contact between students and their fellow students representing them. The proportion of the connection to the Students' Union is the same among students from state universities and colleges and not state-owned (church-owned and private) higher-education institutions. Most connections to representative groups are maintained by students of the humanities, pedagogy, medicine and technology, while most connections to other student organisations are kept by students of economics, law, social sciences and medicine (one fifth of students are a member of such an organisation by areas of study), and students of social sciences maintain the closest connections to other (non-party) organisations addressing public issues. Only full time students answered that they are connected to the Students' Union and HAHA or other student or public-life organisations. (This information can be distorted by the fact that part-time evening and correspondence students are significantly underrepresented in the sample).

We also examined the instances of connections to the student movement with respect to certain canonized resources of capital. There was no pattern of difference in students' closeness to or distance from the Students' Union either by cultural capital (parents' education level) and economic capital (financial situation of the family), or by size of permanent residence locality and gender.

Vivid and active connection can be examined when we analyse the participation in the election of representatives. This election is successful and valid, if more than one quarter of full time students participate in it as set out in the statutory regulation on higher education in force in the period examined in the study. This condition is met by operative Students' Unions.

The data from the survey "Active Students 2013" show a more profound pattern with respect to participation: 85 % of students participating in the election of Students' Union representatives state that they are not connected to the Students' Union, and 97 % of students who have never participated in the election are, not surprisingly, also not connected to the Students' Union (two thirds [746] of the students in the sample belong to the latter group). However, one third of the respondents connected with the Students' Union have never participated in the election of student representatives. 4% of students not participating in the election of the Students' Union stated

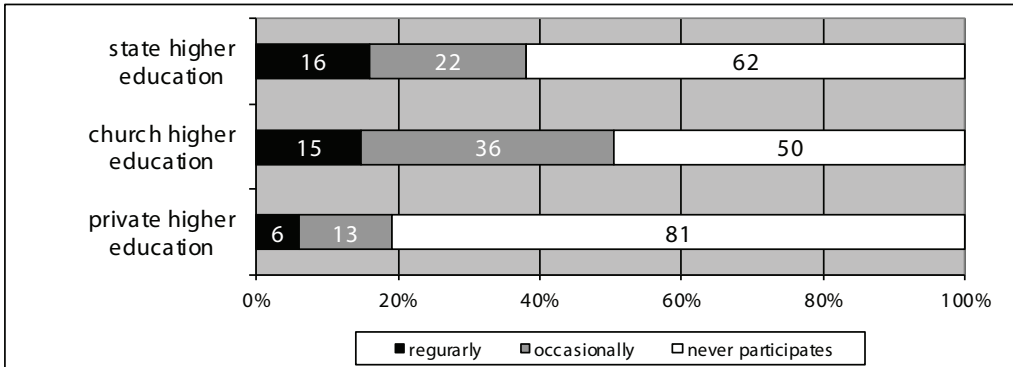
that they are in connection with the Students' Union. The latter two facts raise new research questions considering the low number of elements (26 students) in this set. It has to be noted again that there is a need for further studies on the more profound patterns of Students' Union connections that are – as it can be seen from the above sections of this article – interpreted as an extremely complex network given the diversity of Students' Union activities (higher-education professional policy, individual and group advocacy, service provision, administration, financial management, organisation, operations management). As for the alternative advocacy group HAHA, it was not possible to show significant results in this respect given the small number of elements (21 students connected to HAHA). The democratic value-transfer function of student peer groups is manifested in one of the results of the study indicating that two thirds of students connected to other (e.g. professional) student organisations participate regularly in the Students' Union election. If we examine the participation in the election of representatives according to distribution by areas of study, students of arts and sport are the least active (10 out of 8 students have never participated in the Students' Union elections), and students of medicine and health related subjects are the most active, as one quarter of them participates regularly in the election. This is an outstanding result compared to the proportion of regular voters in other areas of study (10 to 15 %).



**FIGURE 1** ❖ *Do you regularly participate in the election of representatives in the Students' Union?*  
Distribution by areas of study, %

More than one third of students from state-owned institutions participate in the election of Students' Union representatives. Distribution by types of institution operators (NEXT CHART) shows a surprising result, as students of church institutions seemed to be more active participants than those of private institutions. The reason behind this difference in activity might be the small number of the elements (among respondents, there were 69 students from church-owned and private higher education institutions respectively, while there were 1112 students from state institutions); however, we can also refer to the effect of social capital on the development of democratic citizen competences, that is the community-building function of church-owned institutions and the valuable role of interpretive communities (PUSZTAI 2011) in enhancing community and public activity (UTASI 2013).

FIGURE 2 ❖ Do you regularly participate in the election of representatives in the Students' Union?  
Distribution by institution operators, %



Almost two thirds of students answered that their interest in societal problems is above the average and the distribution of this interest is independent of whether students characterised themselves with an active connection to the Students' Union or not. Thirty percent of students connected to the Students' Union are interested in politics (42 % of them are not interested), while the same is true for 40 % of students connected to other student organisations (in this latter group, 33 % of them are not interested in politics). One third of the respondents state that they are more than average interested in politics; however, in this respect, there is no significant difference between young people defining themselves as being close to the Students' Union or being distant from it. Three quarters of young people connected to the Students' Union positioned themselves to the middle of the scales "rightist-leftist", "liberal-conservative" and "moderate-radical" based on their political views. These data show similar patters compared to the distribution of students not connected to the Students' Union; however, in the case of students connected to the Students' Union, there are higher proportions towards the middle of the scales, which means that the proportion of students not connected to the Students' Union are closer towards the two extremes of the scales. For example, as 5 % of students connected to the Students' Union and 9 % of students not connected to the Students' Union defined themselves as rightists, while 2 and 3 % of the latter groups respectively defined themselves as leftists. 5% of students connected to the Students' Union defined themselves as being fully liberal, while for non-connected students, this value is 8 %. 3% of students connected to the Students' Union and 4% of students not connected to the Students' Union are conservative. As for radicalism, 3 % of students connected to the Students' Union marked the highest values on the scale, while the same figure was 4 % for students not connected to the Students' Union. Three quarters of students connected to the Students' Union would definitely go to vote if there were national elections that Sunday. This confirms our statement that the student union movement is a school of democracy.

The data show that two thirds of students connected to the Students' Union have already been in connection with a Students' Union in primary or secondary school (meaning that they were socialized to be active in this field at an earlier life phase), which suggests a relation between democratic participation and citizenship education.

Surprising results were discovered when we examined the connection between virtual communities and student representation: online communities addressing public issues are

not connected to the Students' Union and students connected to the Students' Union are not members of these online communities. Consequently, we can draw two conclusions: firstly, members of informal virtual communities represent a new type of public activity that reflects (and in its framework, deconstructs) the official rigidity of the Students' Union organisation, and secondly, youth initiatives outside the university policy arena of the Students' Unions are uninterpretable for the Students' Union.

We have to note that young people experienced a crisis of values and a general lack of trust at the beginning of the new millennium which concerned also student self-governance; however, the deficit is stronger in case of other institutions.

TABLE 2 ❖ *The proportion of students who think of certain institutions that they do not operate entirely fairly*  
N=500, Transparency International, 2013, %

	Not at all typical	Rather not typical	Total of the two
Business sector	15	35	50
National Government	22	25	47
Public sector	10	27	37
Local government	9	15	24
Police	7	12	19
Students' union in higher-education	6	12	18
Public education	4	11	15
Teachers in higher education	2	7	9
Admission committee in higher education	2	6	8

As of the launching of the Bologna Process, students and Students' Unions representing them (similarly to other members of the European Students' Union) may play a more important role in the development of future values of the new and modern higher education, and even for Hungary; however, it can also be an obstacle to everything, especially, if it fails to play an active and proactive part in problem solving.

Once young people express indispensable needs, they can generate a medium that can organise and influence these processes. If the conscious direction of the Students' Union will be still aimed at legitimacy issues, it can remain a player that is caring for administrative needs, and although it has responsibilities that are crucial for institutions, new potentials, new objectives and in this way a new system will be built by new movements.

## Conclusion

By the late 1980s, the student movement had been only partly acknowledged, but it was undoubtedly influential because of its size, and it could make a difference both at the level of general politics and of university policy.

Student demonstrations in 1989 and 1990 spread all over the country, and in particular the consequent changes in university direction and national government allowed the student movement to outgrow its role as a movement and become an organised unit based on the experience gained in the 1980s. In the political and economic vacuum that had been created, there were obstacles to this process, as a number of social and political groups emerged under the aegis of democracy and civil rights and all of them intended to legitimize the new system. This way, the

catalysing role of the student movement was over, because it followed neither the direction to be a political (party-like) organisation, nor the path to become a trade union.

The institution of the student movement became mature with the acceptance of the Act on Higher Education of 1993. Although this “adulthood” created a statutory framework, it also closed the student organisation into a gilded cage the glittering of which obscured the (radical) mass movement past, while the system of rules made it rigid. By the turn of the millennium, the student movement of Hungary had gained strength and become an important actor in the arena of university policy. The debates about the movement versus advocacy activity, and the professional versus economic path were the sparks that set off the reform processes of the organisation.

In the new millennium, new challenges emerged that transformed the life of Students’ Unions significantly and forced them to go on an ontological quest for a new direction. As for participation in public life, the phenomenon of retiring into one’s shell can be observed among students that can be considered as the result of a democratic deficit in the Hungarian society, on the other hand, new civil society or public interpretive communities appeared that became alternative movement initiatives at the beginning of the current decade.

In sum, we can conclude that the student union movement of Hungary which is unique in its development in Europe, represents a fundamental value for the higher education system, and, with the expansion of higher education in Hungary, a school of public life for Hungarian youth (which supports democracy by non-formal citizenship education) to experience the existence of a lively society based on democratic principles and civil liberties.

In our article we showed how a movement could emerge from the environment of rebellion in Merton’s sense in the late 1980s by rejecting the actual goals and means for ones, and how the atmosphere of innovation expanded with the democratic statutory legitimization from the political transition until the middle of the first decade of the new millennium (goals and frameworks were accepted; however, non-conventional patterns of action became more diverse), which development was followed by storms within the organisation of the student movement.

By the end of the first decade of our century, the downward equilibration had been limited to routinely used means and empty conformism; however, local economic and institutional policy power gained strength. New organisations emerging at the turn of the first decade and at the beginning of the new decade raised new questions and answers to meet new challenges. As a consequence of all these, we interpret the path followed by the student union movement of Hungary (marked by focusing public attention on youth policy, influencing higher-education policy, activities in connection with highlighting the values and interests of young people) as a passage from the periphery to the centre from the 80s through the 90s to the millennium, and a return to the periphery in the new millennium. Further research may answer the question whether new current types of youth activities function as an alternative movement or a catalyst of reforms. \*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ADIZES, ICHAK. (1992): *Vállalatok életciklusai.* (The Corporate Lifecycle) Budapest, HVG Rt.
- ARON, RAYMOND (2005): *Az elkötelezett szemlélő.* (Committed Observer) Budapest, Európa.
- BALOG, IVÁN (1993): Egyetemi hallgatói mozgalmak Szegeden a nyolcvanas években. (University Student Movements in Szeged in the 1980s) In *Civilizációs korszakváltás és ifjúság.* (Civilizational Change of an Era and Youth) Szeged, JATE. 24–25.

- BERDAL, ROBERT (1993): Public Universities and State Governments: Is the Tension Benign? In Carin Berg ed. *Academic Freedom and University Autonomy*. Bucharest, UNESCO. 162–172.
- EKLER, GERGELY (2008): Hallgatói szervezetek 2008-ban. (Student Organisations in 2008) In Kocsis, Miklós – Kucsera, Tamás Gergely (eds.): *Hallgatók és hallgatói szervezetek 20 évvel a rendszerváltás után – konferencia kiadvány*. (Students and Student Organisations 20 Years after the Political Transition – conference proceedings) Budapest, HÖÖK.
- ESTERMANN, THOMAS – NOKKALA, TERHI (2009): *University Autonomy in Europe I*. Brussels, EUA.
- ESTERMANN, THOMAS – NOKKALA, TERHI – STEINEL, MONIKA (2011): *University Autonomy in Europe II*. Brussels, EUA.
- GÁBOR, KÁLMÁN [1993] (2006). Az ifjúsági korszakváltás, avagy az ifjúsági és a politikai kultúra a kelet és a nyugat-európai fiatalok körében. (Change of Era by Young People: Youth Culture and Political Culture among Young People of Western and Eastern Europe. In Gábor, Kálmán – Jancsák, Csaba (ed.): *Ifjúságszociológia*. (Sociology of Youth) Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale, 351–384.
- JANCSÁK, CSABA – MATISCSÁK, ATTILA (2004): Hallgatói mozgalom és az önkormányzatiság a '80-as '90-es években. (Student Movement and Self-governance in the 1980s and 1990s) In Gábor, Kálmán – Jancsák, Csaba (ed.): *Ifjúsági korszakváltás – Ifjúság az új évezredben*. (Change of Era by Young People – Youth in the New Millennium.) Budapest–Szeged, MTA SZKI – PH FOK – Belvedere Meridionale, 150–166.
- JANCSÁK, CSABA (2008): Hallgatói demokrácia és a hallgatói önkormányzatiság Magyarországon (1988–2008) (Student Democracy and Student Self-governance in Hungary [1988–2008]) In Farkas, Olga – Jancsák, Csaba (eds.): *Állampolgári kompetenciák kutatása és fejlesztése. Útkeresés és továbbadás az aktív állampolgárságra képzés folyamatában*. (Research and Development of Citizen Competences. Searching for New Directions and Transmission in the Training for Active Citizenship.) Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale. 39–56.
- JANCSÁK, CSABA (2011a): A magyarországi hallgatói mozgalom bölcsője: a szegedi MEFESZ (The Cradle of Student Movement in Hungary: MEFESZ [Association of Hungarian University and College Students] of Szeged.) In Jancsák, Csaba (ed.): *A szegedi szikra: MEFESZ, 1956*. (The Spark of Szeged: MEFESZ, 1956) Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale. 63–87.
- JANCSÁK, CSABA (2011b): Az európai hallgatói szervezetek Bologna-kritikája. (Criticism of the Bologna Process by European Student Organisations) *Hungarian Educational Research Journal* vol. 1. no. 2. 38–50. <http://herj.hu/2011/11/jancsak-csaba-az-europai-hallgatoi-szervezetek-bologna-kritikaja> Download: 2 May 2014.
- JANCSÁK, CSABA (2014): Álomtalan ébrenlét. A hallgatói önkormányzatiság útja a perifériáról a centrumba és vissza a perifériára. (Dreamless Wakefulness. The path of Student Self-government from the Periphery to the Centre and Back to the Periphery [1988–2013]) In Szabó, Andrea (ed.): *Racionálisan lázadó hallgatók. 2*. (Rationally Revolting Students 2) Budapest–Szeged, MTA PTI – Belvedere Meridionale, 111–127.
- KOZMA, TAMÁS (2004): *Kié az egyetem?* (Who Owns the University?) Budapest, Új Mandátum.
- KERR, CLARK (1982): *The Uses of the University*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press
- PALOVECZ, JÁNOS (1981): *Magyar felsőoktatás helyzete*. (The Situation of the Hungarian Higher Education) Budapest, OKI.
- PUSZTAI, GABRIELLA (2011) *Hallgatói közösségektől az értelmező közösségekig*. (From Students' Communities to Interpretive Communities) Budapest, Új Mandátum.
- PIKÓ, ANDRÁS (1985): Az ügy érdekében. beszélgetés Pikó Andrásal. (For the cause. Interview with András Pikó) *Gondolat-jel*. 4. 20–26.
- REICHERT, SYBILLE – TAUCH, CHRISTIAN (2003): *Trends 2003 – Progress towards the European Higher Education Area. Bologna Four Years after: Steps toward Sustainable Reform of Higher Education in Europe*. Brussels: European University Association. Available: [http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Trends\\_III\\_neu.pdf](http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Trends_III_neu.pdf) Download: 30 June 2014.

- SZABÓ, ANDREA – KUCSERA, TAMÁS GERGELY. 2006. *A magyarországi főiskolai-egyetemi hallgatói mozgalom története, 1998–2006.* (The History of the University/College Student Movement in Hungary 1998–2006) Budapest, HÖÖK a Hallgatókért Alapítvány.
- SZABÓ, ANDREA – KUCSERA, TAMÁS GERGELY ed. (2009): *A magyarországi hallgatói mozgalom húsz esztendejéről.* (On the Twenty Years of the Student Movement in Hungary) Budapest, HÖÖK a Hallgatókért Alapítvány.
- SZABÓ, ANDREA (2008): *Politikai tiltakozások Magyarországon, 1993, 2003.* (Political Protests in Hungary, 1993, 2003. Unpublished PhD dissertation. Budapest, ELTE. [http://www.ajk.elte.hu/file/POLDI\\_Szabo\\_Andrea\\_dis.pdf](http://www.ajk.elte.hu/file/POLDI_Szabo_Andrea_dis.pdf) Download: 30 June 2014.
- SZABÓ, ANDREA (2009): *A magyar egyetemisták és főiskolások társadalmi helyzete a 2000-es évek közepén.* (The Social Situation of Hungarian University and College Students in the Middle of the First Decade of the 2000s) In Szabó, Andrea – Kucsera, Tamás Gergely (eds.): *A magyarországi hallgatói mozgalom húsz esztendejéről.* (On the Twenty Years of the Student Movement in Hungary) Budapest: HÖÖK a Hallgatókért Alapítvány.
- SZABÓ, MÁTÉ (1986): *Alternatív társadalmi mozgalmak és reform Magyarországon.* (Alternative Social Movements and Reform in Hungary) *Ifjúsági Szemle.* 86/6 Available: [www.kka.hu/\\_Kozosseg\\_Adattar/esemeny.nsf/.../Szabo%20Mate.doc](http://www.kka.hu/_Kozosseg_Adattar/esemeny.nsf/.../Szabo%20Mate.doc). Download: 9 December 2013.
- SZABÓ, MÁTÉ (1998): *Társadalmi mozgalmak és politikai tiltakozás.* (Social Movements and Political Protest) Budapest, Villányi úti könyvek
- UTASI, ÁGNES (2013): *Kötélékben. Szolidaritás-háló és közélet.* (Community Ties. Solidarity Networks and Public Life) Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale. [http://issuu.com/belvederemeridionale/docs/utasiagnes\\_community\\_ties\\_2014\\_belv](http://issuu.com/belvederemeridionale/docs/utasiagnes_community_ties_2014_belv) Download: 13 August 2014.
- ZINNECKER, JÜRGEN (1986): *A fiatalok a társadalmi osztályok terében. Új gondolatok egy régi témához.* (Young People in the Area of Social Classes. New Thoughts on an Old Issue) In Kálmán Gábor and Csaba Jancsák ed (2006): *Ifjúságszociológia.* (Sociology of Youth) Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale. 69–94.
- ZINNECKER, JÜRGEN (1990): *Gyermekkor, ifjúság és szociokulturális változások.* (Childhood, Youth and Socio-cultural Changes) In Gábor, Kálmán – Jancsák, Csaba (eds.) (2006): *Ifjúságszociológia.* (Sociology of Youth) Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale. 95–116.

❖ INTERVIEW EXTRACTS IN THE ARTICLE

Fekete, Csaba = 10 October 2002 in Szeged.

Kucsera, Tamás Gergely = 6 December 2008 in Szeged.

Almási, Kornél = 6 December 2008 in Szeged.

Ekler, Gergely = 6 December 2008 in Szeged.

Barthel-Rúzsa, Zsolt = 6 December 2008 in Szeged.

Döbör, András = entry made on 27 January 2007 [www.delmagyar.hu/forum/hok/21/3538/?action=kifejt](http://www.delmagyar.hu/forum/hok/21/3538/?action=kifejt).

Nagy, Dávid = 25 January 2013 in Budapest (by Dániel Oross).



PÉTER LÁSZLÓ

peterlaci@yahoo.com

DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.6

# *The Genesis of Romanian Football*

## *Social Factors and Processes behind the Game<sup>1</sup>*

**Abstract** The present article deals with those social and economic factors that contributed to the genesis of Romanian soccer at the turn of the previous century. The author argues that football was imported from abroad via peregrination and schools, but certain social processes, such as urbanization, capitalization and the appearance of massive working classes, are the reasons why this beautiful game became socially embedded in the local environments. The different circumstances in Banat and Transylvania and in the old Romanian Kingdom marked the social history and trajectory “travelled” by the ball. While in the western part of the country, football arrived in a fertile ground because of the already existing bourgeois sport associations and the rapidly emerging local working classes, the role of foreign companies and expats in implementing football was more significant in the southern regions. This difference in the genesis of the game produced two distinct styles of playing football. These two styles clearly reflect the historical and social background specific to the different regions.

**KEYWORDS** football, modernization, social history, Romania, education, capitalism, social development



## **Introduction**

This article tries to sketch the genesis of Romanian<sup>2</sup> football, but it is by no means exhaustive.<sup>3</sup> I believe that modernization has contributed to the emergence and institutionalization of

<sup>1</sup> This article is based on the results of an ongoing research called *Soccerology* supported by the Department of Art and Cultural Studies of Jyväskylä University, Finland, and it is a shortened version of a subchapter of the manuscript entitled *Social Problems and Conflicts Mediated by Public Sport Discourses in Romania* (monograph forthcoming in late 2014) on social history of football through the lenses of conflicts and problems.

<sup>2</sup> Publications in Romanian usually refer to their topic as Romanian football. We prefer to use the term football in Romania, since some spots where football started did not belong to the Romanian state as they do today. (If we use the term Romanian football, we mean football in Romania, when not expressly defined otherwise).

<sup>3</sup> Although there are several works concerning the history of Romanian football, there is no comprehensive monographic work. *Istoria Fotbalului Romanesc: 1909–2009. Ani pentru fotbal (History of Romanian Football: 1909–2009. Years for Football, 736 p.)* is a valuable and useful book edited by ANGHELESCU–CRISTEA and published by the Romanian Football Federation on celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. The book includes statistics, figures, journal articles, pictures and other data with short comments or explanations. Ioan CHIRILĂ wrote a series of reportage where he sporadically created fictional passages (1966, 1979, 1983, 1985). His writings are mostly about the history of Romanian football and persons connected to the world of football. Another valuable book is IONESCU, MIHAI-TUDORAN, MIRCEA (1984) *Fotbal de la A la Z (Football from A to Z, Bucharest: Sport Tourism Publishing House)*. It is a synthesis considered as the most important work in the history of football, as it publishes the description of clubs, the most important features of Romanian football and the biographies of important players. We also have to mention Sergiu LAURIAN LUPU's book (2012) *Pentru cine s-a cântat imnul? O istorie a sportului Romanesc 1948–1989*

local football. I am going to present the most important moments (milestones) in the early history of football, moreover, I am going to discuss the social problems that accompanied football. I also intended to look beyond the quite limited context of this popular game's practice and to highlight the patterns of its social embeddedness.

## The Genesis: Historical Roots of Romanian Soccer

According to our fundamental perspective, there are several distinctive phases in the social history of Romanian football. Social, political and economic relations of each era have shaped these distinct phases of Romanian football. Working class and capital in the process of industrialization and centralized administration determined the social conditions that led to the spreading of football in Romania, just as it had happened in other parts of the world (see GOLDBLATT 2006). Romania witnessed two waves of expansion process: one emerged after the turn of the century when industry started to expand organically as a part of the modernization process, and the second took place in the early years of communism because of the forced industrialization. This paper focuses on the first stage.

Two initial statements formed the starting point of this analysis of the Romanian football. First of all, modernization shaped the emergence and development of football: industrialization, urbanization, embourgeoisement and the involvement of academic field (high schools, universities, innovative actions of open-minded individuals who returned from studies abroad). Meanwhile, peregrination is also a factor that we should take into account when discussing the spread of football. Secondly, the evolution of football arose from two distinct sources: one of them is related to Transylvania, Banat and the Partium in the Austro-Hungarian period. The other one is related to the Kingdom of Romania, more specifically to the oil companies which were financed with foreign capital (British, German, American, Dutch and French), as well as textile and other industries in Bucharest and Ploiesti. Early modern Romanian football emerged and developed from the merging of these two distinct traditions after 1919–1920.

The fusion of these two emerging fields of football was not at all smooth and easy, since social and historical antecedents led to many ethnic and regional conflicts (ANGELESCU–CRISTEA 2009) and to frictions in connection with technique and playing style (CHIRILĂ 1966). Moreover, different interpretations of the status of players became another source of contention. Romanian majority and minorities, amateurship or professional playing, centre and periphery articulated contradicting interests. Minorities imagined a regional championship, while the centre thought of a national championship as a part of the construction of Romanian nation.<sup>4</sup> Finally, a centrally

*(For whom the Anthem Sung*, Bucharest: FEST), a sport history that also comprises passages about football. Articles about football's history appear regularly in the popular journal *Historia*, a magazine that targets the general public. Our chapter uses the above-mentioned sources and some works in Hungarian (for example KILLYÉNI 2006; DÉNES–PETERDI–ROCHY–SELMECI 1999; CSILLAG 2011; SALLAI 2011). In addition, we considered literature on Romanian social history as well (especially EGYED, 1981; RONNAS 1984; LIVEZEANU 1995; GALLAGHER 2004; STAMATESCU et.al. 2008; GYÁNI 2012; BĂRBULESCU et.al., 2012). Statistics of RFF, UEFA served as data sources for our paper.

<sup>4</sup> For processes of unification and nation building based on cultural politics in Greater Romania after 1920, see LIVEZEANU (1995). Schools, universities and football, a mass sport that mobilized urban population, had an instrumental role in nation building. For example, Universitatea 1919 (University) in Cluj formulated its mission and aims in the national building paradigm from the start in 1919 (for more details see BODEA 2004). Romanization was a continuous project for the Romanian national team (POPA 2012) – more on this in the subchapter below.

organized “national championship” started in 1932-1933. Teams had the chance to compete for the Romanian Cup for the first time in 1933-1934. Let us have a closer look on the beginnings.

### ***The Beginnings: the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy Branch***

Football, a ball game originally from England, reached Hungary passing through Central Europe, primarily through Austrian and Swiss networks and influence (GOLDBLATT 2006. 141-144.). In the first phase of this process of diffusion, football got to Budapest from Vienna and presumably from Prague: people already played football (initially named „*rugdaló*” – *kicker* – in that time) in the Hungarian Athletic Club (HAC; MAC in Hungarian) (HADAS 2003. 292.). Football spread to Banat, more precisely to Arad in 1888 (GOLDBLATT 2006. 141-144.) where students embraced this game, because there was a sport association named Meteor functioning since 1879, which gave the basis for the adoption of football. According to contemporary Romanian sources, the official birth date<sup>5</sup> of football in this country is around 1890 (GOLDBLATT 2006. 143.; IONESCU-TUDORAN 1984. 9.). That year Gyula Wiener, a dentist, returned home to Arad from his studies in England, brought a real football, and introduced the precise, standardized rules in his town.

Other Romanian sources (IONESCU – TUDORAN 1984. 9.) prefer the idea that in its rudimentary form, football had already appeared right after 1875, in Timisoara, where youngsters regularly played in the Gymnastic Association of Timisoara. However, we cannot consider it as football, since they did not follow the rules of the game, so it cannot be seen as an important antecedent. Earlier in 1888, chronicles stated that youngster from Arad had already played football in the forest of Csala. What we know for sure is that in 1889 they played the ball regularly in the Physical Training Association in Arad (established in 1897). Newspapers published the rules of the game in the same year (IONESCU-TUDORAN 1984).

The next year proved to be decisive. Timisoara, situated close to Arad, also discovered the game, and its inhabitants organized semi-official matches, almost simultaneously with the matches organized in Arad. Sequence is a matter of dispute, because some sources (IONESCU – TUDORAN, 1984: 11) state that the first game was part of the closing ceremony organized by the Piarist High School in Timisoara in June 1899, while other sources claim that high school students organized the first match in August in Arad (CHIRILĂ 1973. 7.). Moreover, the “Brown-book” (DÉNES-PETERDI-ROCHY-SELMECI 1999) puts the organization of the first regular football match on an earlier date in 1888 (p. 89). According to the official historiography of the Romanian football, Arad hosted the “first match”<sup>6</sup>: the first team, the Football Association of Arad played against the team of the Technical University of Budapest at the end of October or at the beginning of November (p. 22). The Football Association of Arad was a department of Physical Training

<sup>5</sup> In this article, we do not consider such protocronist statements which claim for example that Romanian speaking revolutionaries in 1848, among them Avram Iancu, had already played football in their leisure time in Cămpeni (Topánfalva in Hungarian and Topedorf in German) (DUMITRESCU 2011. 7.).

<sup>6</sup> Defining the first occasions is problematic, because it is clear that some form of the game with loose rules had been already played before 1890. The official “Blue Book” of RFF is also uncertain about the date and records as probable date of the AFE matches in November instead of October (ANGHELESCU-CRISTEA 2009. 22.). In this case the criteria for establishing the date of the first match is official status of the game played within formal frames. Authors count also the matches played in June in Timisoara and in August in Arad, but given their informal status and the uncertainty surrounding them, they consider these games important antecedents. They were games played in summertime, which signals the pioneering role assumed by high school students in promoting football in both cities.

Association of Arad (PTA), which changed its name to Athletic Club of Arad (ACA) later in August (UJJ 2009) and played a decisive role in popularizing the game. It obtained a field next to the Wagon Factory the next year and the city “gave” them a regular stadium in 1903 (*idem*).

Physical Training Association of Workers from Arad came into being in 1911 (LÁSZLÓ 1937). The team, with the Romanian acronym AMEFA, played an important role in the city’s history of football.

The nearby rival, Timisoara, did not fall behind either. On the contrary, the Association for Physical Training of this town was among the first sport clubs that were established in Transylvania. It was founded at local initiative in 1875. A kind of standardized football very similar to the game we know in the present day appeared in 1897. Mostly local educational institutions gave room for playing the game, primarily the Piarist High School (very much like in Arad). We can find the reason for the emergence of football in high schools in a law adopted in 1886. The law was initiated by Baron József Eötvös and regulated obligatory classes of physical education (MÉSZÁROS–NÉMETH–PUKÁNSZKY 2005). It was relatively strictly enforced and followed in this period.<sup>7</sup> The immediate consequences were the organization of the match that the Piarists played in June 1899, and the appearance of Football Club in Timisoara, which in 1902 tried to organize football in a formal vein. Also in August the same year, FC Timisoara met Sport Association of Lugos which was immediately followed by the game organized with ACA (IONESCU–TUDORAN 1984. 13.; ANGHELESCU–CRISTEA 2009. 23.). The Kinizsi, the team of Hungarian Railways, was established in 1911 and it represented the leap in the case of the football in Timisoara. Worker’s Sport Association in Timisoara followed right after (1911). The city had had a stadium appropriate for football since 1902 (*idem*).

Oradea joined this trend somewhat later. We know that the Rhédey garden hosted a football match in the spring of 1902. Organizational and institutional frames of football became more formal in 1910, when the bourgeois Athletic Club in Oradea (ACO, originally called Nagyváradí Athletikai Club in Hungarian) was established, which later on had a successful carrier. NAC organized its first official game in August the same year. They played with the KVSC of Cluj in the Bunytay Park. The guests won 2-1 (THURY 2010). Other two associations were founded in 1911: the Harmony and the worker’s team named Pursuit Worker’s Sport Association of Oradea (MAROTI, 2013). Both the football department of the Physical Training Circle (1880) established in 1901 and the Sport Association of Oradea established in 1906 was important forerunner (LÁSZLÓ 1937). The emergent sport movement also had a beneficial effect on the reception of football in Oradea.

The case of Cluj is somewhat different. Similar to other important towns, Cluj had a rapidly expanding sport life<sup>8</sup> especially in fencing, gymnastics, athletics, skating, and cycling. The privileged aristocracy initially practiced these sports. However, the bourgeoisie gradually joined the sport associations and later they became involved in local leisure activities (see KILLYÉNI

<sup>7</sup> Instituting physical education classes was problematic throughout Transylvania because of the poor infrastructure (there were no gym halls or adequate flat ground). The opportunities for these classes arose from 1880 in big towns.

<sup>8</sup> KILLYÉNI András (2006) recorded the most important moments in the history of sports in Cluj that belonged to the monarchy in his volume *Kolozsvári sportélet életrajzi gyűjteménye (1818–1918)* (Episodes from Cluj’s Sporting Life) published by local Ábel Publishing House. The recorded data – a factual list – indicates which association were born and when: fencing school in 1818, Association of Fencing and Gymnastics in 1873, Athletic Club in Cluj, which had a prominent role was founded in 1885, Skaters Association in Cluj in 1872, a Cycling Association in Cluj in 1890, and Bowlers’ Society in year 1872. (29–31).

2006). In spite of all this trickling down, sports remained “gentlemen’s passions”. The university of Cluj transformed the emerging field of sport in a particular way and immediately influenced the spread football which was a novelty at that time. The Franz Josef University was opened in autumn 1872 and it immediately turned Cluj into a university town. It was a catalyst for em-bourgeoisement, and increased the central and administrative role of the city (GYÁNI 2012. 153.). More and more white-collar workers and members of the intelligentsia settled in the town (we refer to the students and graduates who opted for staying in the town), many other people visited the town, and the proportion of entrepreneurs, intellectuals and liberal professions increased (idem). Moreover, the University enabled the application of legal articles concerning physical training in the Eötvös’s educational law. It created a professional group of sport and gymnastics teachers, who had a crucial role in integrating and popularizing sports, especially football in the local society (SALLAI 2011. 41–43.). The ballplayers’ circle of Cluj began its activity in 1889, but football matches were occasional in this period.

Thus, university created opportunities for promoting professional knowledge and it soon produced a strata of young people who would become active participants in football: players, referees, sport managers, founders of associations, as well as sport writers, supporters and patrons. Professional teachers<sup>9</sup> were the first to spread the football and make it popular in schools. University brought the first regular football in the town: a clerk in the ministry who controlled sport education at the universities gave a ball brought from England as a present to the university in 1895 (SALLAI 2011). This act revolutionized the spread of the game. By the end of the decade, pupils of almost every educational institution knew the rules and practice of the game (exclusively under the supervision of teachers at the beginning, who had the monopoly over the administration of the ball and had some sort of control over the pupils, who started to play more frequently) (idem.).

Independent institutionalization and formalization outside schools occurred in 1902, when the English-sounding Youth Football Club was established (the previous year the University Football Club had already been established informally). The foundation of the Football department of the Athletic Club of Cluj in 1904 which can be considered as a breakthrough in this sense (KILLYÉNI 2006. 26.) (as part of the Athletic Club of Cluj, Kolozsvári Athlétikai Club or KAC, formed by aristocrats and bourgeoisie in 1885) was also an element and sign of independent institutionalization. Young graduates created the club, because they wanted to play after graduation and they needed a formal organizational framework. They also gained some independence from the “Vermes ball”<sup>10</sup> whose monopoly and control over the students ceased (in the beginning they kept the ball locked in one of the university’s halls). The commercial and academic sport circle established in 1905 parted from the school for the same reasons and in a similar logic. These endeavors can be interpreted as the pursuit of independence and the first steps towards the emergence of a field of football in Cluj which was also supported by the local media. However, workers of the Hungarian railway took the decisive step in 1907, when they

<sup>9</sup> Teachers of physical education like Lajos Vermes (at Franz Josef University and Roman Catholic College), Gyula Lassell (Unitarian College), and Ferenc Hoffman (Economic School) (SALLAI 2011. 42. KILLYÉNI 2006. 20–21.). They formed informal teams based on friendships and played against each other on the amateur championship in 1904.

<sup>10</sup> Vermes earned merits in naturalizing football as founder of University Athletic Association in Cluj (1902). A Croatian student brought a ball to Cluj in 1901 (Sallai 2009), which gave huge impetus to the spread of the game, since it freed the ball from the control of teachers.

established the Railway Sport Club of Cluj, the Railway Sport Association.<sup>11</sup> These three associations asked for membership in the Hungarian Football League in 1908. HFL admitted them, thus they participated in the Transylvanian championship a year later. The Worker's Sport Club of Cluj was established in 1911 which completed the map of local football.<sup>12</sup>

Apart from the fact that these three teams joined the HFL, the inauguration of ACC's court in 1905 and of the Stadium in the Central Park in 1911 represented the symbolic acknowledgement of football in the town.

Other towns in Transylvania shared a similar pattern given the fact that many sport associations were born in urban settlements in this period. Football clubs grew from these associations and became very popular very rapidly: Workers' Physical Training Association in Salonta (WPTA, 1912), Sport Club in Turda (SCT, 1907), Sport Association in Târgu Mureş (SATG, 1898), Toma Association in Aiud (TAA, 1914). It has to be noted that the Kronstadter Turnverein, the Saxon sport association in Braşov established in 1861, and the Hermannstadter Turnverein established in 1862 were among the first sport associations in Transylvania (LÁSZLÓ 1937. 153.).

What can we say about the adoption of football in Transylvania? Firstly, the emergence and spread of football can be easily linked to modernization – especially to urbanization, embourgeoisement and industrialization. Apparently, football grew roots and spread in places where modernization was more significant in space and time, in the main urban settlements of Banat and the Partium, namely Arad, Timișoara, Oradea, and Cluj. Secondly, it seems that peregrination and schools had an important role in popularizing football: a dentist who had studied in England brought a ball to Arad and a clerk in the ministry took a ball to Cluj, the first students of enthusiastic sport teachers were the first people “enchanted” by football. Thirdly, due to its adoption by the rapidly expanding working class, football did not remain simply a “bourgeois leisure passion”, but it trickled down and became a mass phenomenon. Football became independent from the academic sphere and the bourgeois sport associations of Arad, Timișoara, Oradea, Cluj, because of the emergence of workers' associations, a phenomenon caused by the rapid growth of railway and industry. These workers' associations became the rivals of the bourgeois clubs, and later they took over the initiative. Young people were the most receptive to football. Let us examine some of the social and historical preconditions that turned football into a mass phenomenon that determined the specific character of the Danube-style<sup>13</sup> Transylvanian football until the fifties.

We have to take a closer look on modernization while searching the origins of football's expansion. The main carrier of industrialization was the railway that reached Banat and the Partium first. Timișoara and Arad also joined the railway in its eastward expansion. Timișoara was linked to Szeged in 1857, while Arad was linked to Szolnok with a rail line in 1858. Railway reached Oradea in the same year, when the Nagyvárad–Püspökladány line was built (EGYED

<sup>11</sup> The association was renamed as Railwaymen's Association was the product of a leisure circle; more precisely young men from the Harmony Singer's Society of MAV established (Sallai 2011) with the support of MAV (Hungarian Railways).

<sup>12</sup> There were many active teams in Cluj before 1918. The most important ones were University Athletic Club in Cluj, (KEAC, 1912) and Sport Association of Commercial Employees (KKASE, 1912) (KILLYÉNI 2006. 30.).

<sup>13</sup> “Danube football” was a style of playing and organizing football characteristic to Central European soccer in Austria, Bohemia and Hungary. Its main features were rational organization and a less regulated style of playing and more room for initiative in comparison to English football (see goldblatt 2006). The direct result of this style of football was the Austrian Wunderteam established in the early thirties.

1981. 150.). In this way, a series of possibilities opened up for these three cities: to join a larger economic and commercial network and to start modernization in the midst of an ongoing economic liberalism. Cluj also joined the expanding railway later, when the Oradea-Cluj connection was built in 1870 (EGYED 1981. 155.). We have to note, without going into the details of railway history, that all together 190 kilometres of railway was built in Banat from 1849 to 1867. These were railways that linked Timișoara to the miner and iron industrial region of Caraș-Severin which highly contributed to its development. After 1868, the first Transylvanian railway network linked Arad and Alba Iulia, Piski and Petroșani, where the main coalmines of the region were located.

Eastern railways provided North Transylvania with opportunities for industrialization, thus a total of 1106 kilometres of rail line was built from 1867 to 1873 (EGYED 1981. 155.); another 326 kilometres in 1874–1880 and 2174 kilometres in 1881–1900 (*idem.*). Arad, Timisoara, Oradea and Cluj were the main centres of the 4548-kilometers long railway. The railway had encouraged urban development since 1867, but it had a more intensive effect after the economic crisis in 1873.

It is not surprising that the population of the cities mentioned above learnt about football at the end of the 1880s. Railways extended labour market, boosted industry and built an economic environment that accelerated urbanization, industrialization and embourgeoisement (EGYED 1981. 161.): railways, traffic and transportation facilitated the development of industry especially in Banat where railways came first, and where the proportion of entrepreneurs and workers constantly increased along with the general population increase. Football spread where there was an *open bourgeoisie* stratum that “took over” the game from England, Wien, Prague or Budapest in our case (GOLDBLATT 2006. 143), and “transmitted” it to local society. In the next step, they “handed it over” to the emerging and expanding working class through the mediation of schools. Starting with Arad and Timisoara, the next steps in the spreading of football are Lugos (Sport Association of Lugos, 1903) and Resita (a city of steel industry, Athletic Club of Resita, 1911). Engineers and telegraphers diffused the popular game to these places.

Timisoara became the “Hungarian Manchester” at the beginning of the twenties century (Szász 1992), it was a real industrial town with several factories (GYÁNI 2012). It is obvious that football and economic development started simultaneously after 1890. When Kinizsi and Workers’ Physical Training Association in Timisoare (Temesvári Munkás Torna Egylet or TMTE in Hungarian) were formed in 1911, there were 32 financial institutions in the city (Szász 1992), the number of inhabitants was 72 555, and 7155 employees worked in various companies (EGYED 1982. 286–288.), there were 62 large companies (compared to just 32 in 1900) working in chemical and textile industries as well as mill and alcohol industries. The case of Arad was very similar. A great number of companies were founded from 29 to 54 in the first decade of the twentieth century. These companies employed 4645 people in a city inhabited by 63 155. There were 49 industrial companies in Oradea in this period (only 26, 10 years earlier) and employed 2727 people from a total population of 64 196. Cluj was the smallest town regarding the population; 3295 people from 60 080 inhabitants in 1910 worked in one of the 42 companies of the industrial sector (only 27 in 1900) (*idem.*)<sup>14</sup> Football was institutionalized in every town in this period. Next to aristocratic-bourgeois clubs, several clubs emerged from the working class. State-owned railways and factories and companies financed with local capital facilitated

<sup>14</sup> The trends are similar in case of financial institutions: these cities concentrated most of the credit associations, banks, savings banks besides Brașov, Sibiu and Târgu Mureș (see EGYED 1981. 168–191.). All this is true also for embourgeoisement (see GYÁNI 2012. 138–158.).

this process. This situation became predominant in the second phase of the history of football's evolution from 1919 to 1940.

To sum up this subchapter, the following statements can be made.

Football reached Banat, the Partium and Transylvania through the direct connection between peregrination and education. Students studying in England (Arad), school inspectors from Budapest (Cluj) imported the game and other central European educational (Timisoara)<sup>15</sup> or commercial connections of the bourgeoisie (Oradea) enabled the adoption of football. This was the situation around 1895. Football was first connected to educational institutions where groups of students started to emerge in physical education classes and later they played football outside the school in formally organized frameworks. "Athletic Clubs" and sport association founded after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise provided such frameworks. They were the first to establish football departments throughout the country, but these were accessible only to the newly developed intellectual and bourgeois strata. This had happen until 1900. The evolution of football accelerated when capitalization reached a critical threshold, industry created a sufficiently large worker class and there was enough capitalist profit for financing organizational and institutional costs of football. This happened approximately at the beginning of 1910s, and State Railway Company had a pioneering role in this process. By 1914, bourgeois and worker football associations constituted a small-scale, but well-functioning system in the region (membership in Hungarian Football Association and championships in Banat and Transylvania, large recruitment basis, specialized knowledge and experience). However, the outbreak of the World War I put an end to the development.

Football was different in each of the above-mentioned cities. In Cluj, for example, football was a bourgeois sport. The majority of football fans came from the educated bourgeois stratum, from the university, high school or professional-intellectual milieu (GYÁNI 2012) (there were in this city more the bourgeois, university, high-school and commercial based clubs than worker clubs). The football in Cluj was the result of embourgeoisement and emerged from the university and aristocratic-bourgeois sports movement, a movement highly represented by the KAC in the past. It is also important to emphasize that Cluj was the centre of Hungarian nation building supported by the city's leadership in which sport life was a medium (the KAC field and Stadium in Central Park were constructed by the city). Emerging local sport media had a significant role in forming football's trajectory beyond the university, town leadership and implicitly the state.

Timisoara had the most favourable location for development of football. The city is considered as the stronghold of early football. Industry had an utmost role here; after the beginnings of football in schools, local entrepreneurs and later the rapidly expanding working class took over the promotion of the game. It is correct to say that capitalization produced football. Because of the multiethnic nature of the town, Timisoara was no ground for nation building; grand entrepreneurs undertook the organisation of football. As far as Oradea is concerned, we have to underline the joint and balanced role of bourgeois and worker groups. Initially, Arad reproduced the pattern of Cluj – peregrination, teachers – but because of the more rapid economic growth and continuous increase of the workers' and entrepreneurs' influence, the outcome resembled the Timisoara-model.

What was the newly emerged football like in the "monarchy"? Schematically: it had the

---

<sup>15</sup> We suppose that Károly Müller, P. E. teacher at the Piarist High School in Timisoara kept in touch with his colleagues in Cluj, Arad and Budapest.



Danube region character; it spread and developed relatively quickly, its centre was Timisoara and it was territorially concentrated. It was mainly an urban phenomenon and had a significant ethnic dimension (Hungarian, Swabian, Serbian and Jewish supporters and players), names of the clubs rang local (from Cluj, Oradea, Timisoara), had local meanings (for example Kinizsi) or they expressed social status or aspirations (Workers' associations like Railway, or Striving or Harmony). Football was a sport of passion played in spare time.

Now let us turn to the questions where and how football was born in the old Romanian Kingdom.

### ***Beginnings: the Old Romanian Branch***

Although the Old Romanian Branch evolved in a different way than Transylvanian and Banat football, it had nevertheless an important role in shaping Romanian football. Foreign capital had the decisive role in this part of the country (while it was a negligible factor in the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy). Other two important characteristics were belatedness (a 10-15 years delay compared to Banat) and insignificance of educational institutions.

The Romanian Kingdom, comprising Moldova and Muntenia, was the most underdeveloped region in East-Central Europe with a delayed modernization process (HITCHINS 2012). After gaining total independence in 1877, Romania started to develop, became more connected to Western Europe economically, its population increased,<sup>16</sup> but the majority of population still lived in rural areas.<sup>17</sup> Bucharest, Ploiesti and the ports along the banks of the Danube: Galati and Braila showed the most significant economic growth. Bucharest is the capital of the country, while Ploiesti is the centre of oil fields. Social and economic structure is extremely uneven. The majority lived by small-scale agricultural activity in villages (GALLAGHER 2004), while the urban middle class that comprised workers, clerks, traders, and entrepreneurs was still developing. The proportion of workers was relatively low. Approximately two hundred thousand people made up 10% of the employed population (HITCHINS 2012. 326.). Despite all, the country stepped on the path of industrialization which was clearly reflected by the evolution of football.

As Romania and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy offered different circumstances for the development of football until 1918, we believe that the diffusion model presented by GOLDBLATT (2006) gives the most apt and comprehensive guide for the interpretation of its appearance and spread. According to this model, football spread all over the world from England, carried by English people and through informal networks of the British colonial empire (2006 112-169.). Clerks, investors, engineers and English workers played football for fun in their leisure time. "Local" people learnt the game from them, and integrated the game in their communities. In Romania, like in Argentina, Spain or India it happened in the same way, as foreigners brought the game in the country. However, the details of the process are more complicated, since other nationalities joined the English in spreading the game until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Dutch and German also transmitted football, since their countries had already flourishing football culture. In Romania, booming industrialization created the opportunity for such evolution of football. Development of transportation infrastructure and the adoption of mine-law were two important preconditions of industrialization which was closely connected to football.

<sup>16</sup> The total population of this young country was 3 790 000 in 1861, and 5 957 000 in 1899 (HITCHINS 2012. 324).

<sup>17</sup> Only 12% of the total population lived in urban areas in 1912. However, urban population increased by approximately 90% from 1859 to 1899 (HITCHINS 2012. 324.).

The first railway was inaugurated in 1869: it was built between Bucharest and Giurgiu, a port city along the Danube. Cernavoda Bridge, a bridge considered very modern throughout Europe was completed in 1886. This bridge ensured the extension of rail line towards East. Until 1896, the length of the railway reached 921 kilometres (RONNAS 1984. 112.). The aim of these building projects was to connect the eastern Danube ports to rest of the country (HITCHINS 2012. 327.). By 1914 the total length of the railway lines reached 3500 kilometres (HITCHINS 2012. 328.); it connected the main industrial towns of Oltenia, Tara Romaneasca and Moldova.

Certainly, industrial development, which had started with the emergence of railways, transformed the economic structure. However, economy retained its pronounced agrarian dimension: before the First World War, there were no significant industries in Romanian Kingdom (e.g. steel or heavy machinery, while the processing industry was dominated by petrol and timber) (HITCHINS 2012. 327.). Apart from industrial enterprises established by foreign investors, banks, commerce and insurance were the engines of economy as a whole (HITCHINS 2012. 327.). Only 169 000 people worked in industry in 1901-1902, which represented a tiny fraction of the entire population: 2,2% of the population and 13, 3% of heads of households (RONNAS 1984. 113.). A quarter of the labour force was not Romanian citizen; they worked in big companies founded on foreign capital (idem.). People from this group had brought football in Romania.

The Law of Mines, the formal legal frame of extraction industry, enacted in 1895 had a beneficial effect on Romanian industrialization (HITCHINS 2012). However, oil extraction gained more benefits with the adoption of the law, since the ruling act enabled investments and did not make any claims regarding property of minerals. Moreover, it instituted preferential treatment for large foreign companies. The law almost instantly created Romanian oil industry. Oil extraction sites were concentrated in the Pitești-Câmpina and Bacău areas. Oil industry became the leading sector in two steps: firstly, Steaua României, the company that started the exploration and exploitation of Campina fields had been established in 1895-1903<sup>18</sup> and secondly, big foreign corporations entered the field and these were the ones shaping the domain's profile from 1904 to 1916.<sup>19</sup> Nominal capital value of these corporation reached 519, 5 golden lei in 1915 (BUZATU 2009. 30.). More than one third (35%) of the invested capital was German, one quarter (25%) English, 13,1% Dutch, one tenth French and 5,5% American (idem.). Foreign capital was important in all economic domains and it had an almost monopolistic situation in oil industry, gas extraction and production of electricity (94 and 95, 5%). Moreover, it was also dominant in other industries such as sugar (94%) and steel industry (74%) which appeared a little later (HITCHINS 2012. 328.). All this is important for us to demonstrate the foreign origins of industrial sectors which represented the mediating environment for Romanian football; foreigners established the first football teams, and players were in fact recruited from the employees in the mentioned big corporations (CHIRILĂ 1973. 6-8.). They gave the initial impulse for the evolution of football in Old Romania.

Which were the first teams and who were the players? Let us turn to them now.

When it comes to the beginnings of Romanian football, official sport history in Romania generally mentions that "French sailors working in the Sulina porto franco, on the banks of the Danube brought several ball games from home, including football" (POPOVICI 2011. 6.). The other important milestone was 1895 when Dimitrie Ionescu, sport teacher at Gheorghe Lazăr High

<sup>18</sup> Its full name was *Societatea Româna pentru industria și comercializarea petrolului*; initially started to work with Austrian capital then with English-Hungarian capital (Buzatu 2009. 29.).

School in Bucharest described the rules of football for the first time (IONESCU–TUDORAN 1984. 10). The third element of this origin myth was 1899 when Mario Gebauer (a person to become prominent personality and active organizer of football league later on) brought a standard ball to Romania while returning from his holiday in Lausanne, Switzerland (ANGHELESCU–CRISTEA, 2009. 11.; IONESCU–TUDORAN 1984. 11.). Supposedly, this is why young people played football in Bucharest at the very end of the nineteenth century.

Unlike in Banat-Transylvania, the first genuine sport club (and its football department) emerged as late as in 1904; German workers in the oil industry established the Olympia Sport Club. Mario Gebauer was a member of this team.<sup>20</sup> Two years later, clerks of the Standard Oil of Ploiesti, founded the Romano-Americana team, or Roma in short. The team moved to Bucharest in 1914. United Athletic Club was another team established by Brit and Dutch people (ANGHELESCU–CRISTEA 2009. 12-13.). The textile factory from the Colentina District in Bucharest founded with British investment the next, rival team named Colentina Athletic Club in 1904 according to some sources (POPOVICI 2011. 7.), or in 1907 according to others (CHIRILĂ 1973. 7.). IONESCU–TUDORAN's chronology of Romanian football prefers 1909 as the year when Colentina is established (1984. 15), while the statistics of Romanian Football Associations mentions 1904 as the probable year of foundation (2009. 11). FC Bukarester was born in 1912 aided by foreign investment (2009. 18.). One cannot consider these clubs to be Romanian, although there were Romanian players in the teams as well. Founders established them for their own entertainment and names were spelled in English. However, they had an important function, since they introduced football as a sport to the curious Romanian public. Moreover, they created a pattern that rapidly gained popularity.

The clubs were not embedded in Romanian society yet: founders and players were mostly of foreign origin and supporters were also foreigners. Consequently, foreign teams won the "championships" organized from 1909 to 1915. The first Romanian football game, organized in 1907 between SC Olympia of Bucharest and Roma of Ploiesti in front of a larger audience constituted an important moment in spreading and social embedding of football. Four foreign clubs created the ancestor of the present day football league in 1909, the Federation of Football Associations,<sup>21</sup> which organized the championships and the so-called Hertzog Cup. As a direct consequence, another association in Ploiesti was established in 1911, namely the FC Prahova. This was predominantly a Romanian initiative, but it was still connected to oil extraction, industry and refineries.

From that moment, football started to spread rapidly: young Romanian people were the most important supporters of the game. They regularly played in schools and organized the first mini-football championship between school teams in 1912.<sup>22</sup> Three years later a team appeared

<sup>19</sup> We refer to the following companies: German capital bought *Steaua Română* (Deutsche Bank took it over some time later), and to *Romano-Americana* (Standard Oil), which entered Romanian market in 1904, and to other companies such as *Aquila Franco-Romana* (French Colombia) active from 1904-1905, or the *German Concordia* (Disconto Gesselchaft-S. B. 1907) and *Astra Romana* (Royal Dutch-Shell, 1910) (BUZATU 2009. 29–30.).

<sup>20</sup> According to some sources, the association was born in 1905 (CHIRILĂ 1973. 7.) or in 1908 according to other sources (ANGHELESCU–CRISTEA 2012. 12.). Dates differ, because there were differences in the establishment dates of the sport club and the football team. In addition, activity and formal legal status of clubs did not always coincide; therefore, we encounter different dates regarding the establishment of clubs.

<sup>21</sup> See the next section.

<sup>22</sup> Mihai Viteazul, Gheorghe Lazăr, Sfântu Sava and Matei Basarab high schools participated (IONESCU–TUDORAN 1984. 16.).

whose formation can be directly linked to schools.<sup>23</sup> Both the players and the founders were Romanians and they chose a symbolic name for their team, FC Tricolor - its predecessor was the informal group called *Teiul* one year earlier (CHIRILĂ 1973. 9.). The name evoked the colours of the Romanian flag which highlighted the Romanian national character of the team in contrast with the English-sounding names of “foreign” teams (this process is similar to the emergence and evolution of Argentinean and Italian football, see GOLDBLATT 2006). Another Romanian club was *Venus Athletic Club* in Bucharest which was active in an informal manner already from 1914, but it was officially born in 1915, and made a great carrier later (ANGHELESCU-CRISTEA 2009. 19.). *Coltea* was a club established by students of Saint Sava High School a year earlier, in 1913. The founding document of the club stated that it was a Romanian club “a team not just passively watched by fellow citizens, but in which Romanians actively played” (POPA 2012. 1.). *Sporting University Club* (later *Sportul Studențesc*) was a university team established in Bucharest in 1916 as the official team of the University in Bucharest (IONESCU-TODORAN 1984. 16.).

Football in Old Romania started to gain a national dimension after 1914, after employees in foreign companies left the country because of the outbreak of the First World War. No important teams were born until the end of the war.

What conclusions can be drawn from the events described above? It can be stated that the adoption and spread of football in Old Romania conformed to a diffusion model, in which foreign oil companies, textile industry and the bank sector had a decisive role. The reason for this was the fact that foreign capital played such an important, pioneer role in Romanian industrialization. Furthermore, football emerged here with a fifteen-year delay compared to Central Europe. This delay was determined by the pace of industrial development that slowed down the spreading of Romanian football. Compared to the aristocratic-bourgeois clubs in Transylvania,<sup>24</sup> lagging modernization of Romanian society and the relatively low percentage of bourgeois stratum resulted in the lack of sports movements and feeble system of sport associations. In this situation, qualified employees of foreign companies were the ones who had done the most for the expansion and institutionalization of football in this region. This group of foreigners mediated the spreading of football, a process unknown in Banat and Transylvania. Capitalization generated the emergence of imported football; embourgeoisement had some role later in the social embedding the game. This was later accelerated when Carol I, the king of Romania became personal patron of development of Romanian sports and after the outbreak of the war in which Romania was neutral in 1914-1916. Later, football was concentrated territorially meaning that Ploiesti and Bucharest were the two primary poles on the football map of the period.

In sum, we can say that “foreign import” is what determined the adoption and evolution of football as far as the Old Romanian branch is concerned. Locals and schools entered the process only after initial steps had been already taken. War also had a decisive role in this. However, territorially concentrated football had gained relevance and importance relatively rapidly among the younger generation and later on, after 1919, among workers as well. Names of associations did not express Romanian social relations and local identity, they were rather English-sounding words, and evoked names of foreign companies. However, it is clearly the opposite that characterised the

<sup>23</sup> Alumni of Dimitrie Cantemir, Gheorghe Lazăr and Gheorghe Șincai high schools (CHIRILĂ 1973. 9.).

<sup>24</sup> The most important club was *Societatea Centrală Română de Arme, Gimnastică și Dare la Semn* (Central Romanian Gymnastics and Shooting Society), its more popular name was *Tirul* appeared in 1876. Its predecessor was *Societatea de Dare la Semn București* (Shooting Society Bucharest), established in 1863 which had a marginal role in football.

clubs established by Romanians (like Tricolorul, SC Universitea București, Universitatea Cluj). Football centred on real life: actors played for their own entertainment, state had little to say in the organization or exploitation of symbolic capital produced by the game. All these changed radically after the world war. But this is a whole different story...

### Conclusion

The genesis of football is strongly connected to and determined by objective social factors. The diffusion of soccer from England to Banat, Transylvania and old Romanian Kingdom followed different paths. Nevertheless, football was imported from abroad via peregrination and schools, but certain social processes as urbanization, capitalization and the massive appearances of working classes are the crucial factors of social embeddedness of this beautiful game in local environment. The different circumstances in Banat, Transylvania and in the old Romanian Kingdom determined the social history and trajectory “travelled” by the ball. While in the western part of the country the football arrived in a fertile ground because of the already existing bourgeois sport associations and rapidly emerging local working classes, the role of foreign companies and expats in implementing football was much higher in the southern regions. This difference in the genesis of the game produced later two distinct style of playing football: these styles practically reflected the historical and social background specific to these regions which could be a further topic to investigate.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ANGEHESCU, MIRCEA – CRISTEA, OVIDIU DAN (2009): *Istoria fotbalului Romanesc. Vol. I.-II.* Bucuresti, FRF.
- BARBULESCU, MIHAI ET AL. (2012): *Istoria Romaniei.* Bucuresti, Grupul Editorial Corint.
- BODEA, GHEORGHE (2004): *Agora U.* Cluj, Napoca Star.
- BUZATU, GHEORGHE (2009): *Istoria petrolului romanesc.* Iasi, Casa Editoriala Demiurg.
- CSILLAG PÉTER (2011): Kolozsvár magyar futballélete (1940–1945). *Me.dok.* No. 1. 61–72.
- DÉNES TAMÁS – PETERDI PÁL – ROCHY, ZOLTÁN – SELMECI JÓZSEF (1999): *Kalandozó magyar labdarúgók.* Budapest, Aréna 2000.
- DUMITRESCU GHEORGHE (2011): *Fotbal.* Oradea: Universitatea din Oradea. [textbook]
- EGYED ÁKOS (1981): *Falu, város, civilizáció.* Bukarest: Kriterion.
- GALLAGHER, TOM (2004): *Furtul unei natiuni. Romania de la comunist incoace.* Bucuresti, Humanitas.
- GOLDBLATT, DAVID (2006): *The Ball is Round. A Global History of Soccer.* London, Penguin.
- GYÁNI GÁBOR (2012): *Az urbanizáció társadalomtörténete.* Kolozsvár, Komp-Press.
- HADAS MIKLÓS (2003): *A modern férfi születése.* Budapest, Helikon.
- HITCHINS, KEITH (2012): Desavirsirea natiunii romane. In Barbulescu, Mihai-Et Al. (Eds.): *Istoria Romaniei.* Bucuresti, Grupul Editorial Corint. 287–406.
- IONESCU, MIHAI – TUDORAN MIRCEA (1984): *Fotbal de la A la Z.* Bucuresti: Editura Sport-Turism.
- KILLYÉNI ANDRÁS (2006): *A kolozsvári sportélet életrajzi gyűjteménye (1818–1918).* Kolozsvár, Ábel Kiadó.
- LÁSZLÓ ZOLTÁN (1937): Az erdélyi magyar sport mérlege. In Kacsó, Sándor (ed.): *Erdélyi magyar évkönyv 1937. A kisebbségi magyar polgár kézikönyve.* Brassó, Brassói Lapok-Népújság. 152–157.
- LIVEZEANU, IRINA (1995): *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania. Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930.* Ithaca-London, Cornell University Press.
- MAROTI, STEFAN (2013) Din istoria echipei de fotbal a Asociației de Cultura Fizica a Muncitorilor Staruinta Oradea. 1912–1944. *Palestrica Mileniului III - Civilizație și Sport.* vol 14. no. 4. 313–319.
- MÉSZÁROS ISTVÁN – NÉMETH ANDRÁS – PUKÁNSZKY BÉLA (2001): *Neveléstörténet. Bevezetés a pedagógia és az iskoláztatás történetébe.* Budapest, Osiris.

- POPOVICI, CORNEL (2011): *Fotbal. Curs de baza*. Cluj, Universitatea Babes-Bolyai. (textbook)
- RONNAS PER (1984): *Urbanization in Romania*. Stockholm, EFI.
- SALLAI ANDRÁS LÓRÁNT (2011): A kolozsvári futballsajtó a labdarúgás meghonosodási időszakában. *Me.dok.* No. 1. 41–51.
- SERGIU, LAURIAN LUPU (2012) *Pentru cine s-a cântat imnul? O istorie a sportului Romanesc 1948–1989*. Bucuresti, FEST.
- STAMATESCU, MIHAI et AL. (2008): *O istorie a comunismului*. Iasi, Polirom.
- SZÁSZ ZOLTÁN (1992): A magyar Manchester. *Historia*. No. 1. 1–5. (in online version)
- THURY GÁBOR (2013): Százéves a NAC, az első vidéki futballbajnok. *Nemzeti Sport*. [2013.06.21]
- UJJ JÁNOS (2009): *Arad (1699–1910)*. Szeged, Nemzeti Civil Alaprogram.

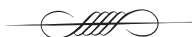
SZABÓ, ÉVA – KÉKESI, MÁRK

szeva@edpsy.u-szeged.hu markkkesi@gmail.com DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.7

# *Success Perception Embedded in the Experience of Adverse Social Selection of a Post-Communist Transition Society*

**Abstract** Based on the four different types of success ethics described by DE VITIS-RICH (1996), a questionnaire was created and used in a representative sample (N = 1007) of the contemporary Hungarian society to gain understanding of the dominant social representation of success achievement two decades after the fall of the iron curtain. Results showed that none of the four distinct types of historical American ethics could gain sole dominance, but a specific blend of success ethics characterizes the national public thinking, with the vast majority of respondents belonging to a cluster best described by strong belief in immoral success achievement and low confidence in hard work-based goal attainment. At the same time, a relatively slow movement towards a more proactive approach to success perception was detected by comparing the results of two earlier researches in Hungary, but having powerful social capital and well-functioning connections still holds the first place on the list of success factors.

**KEYWORDS** success, success perception, success ethics, post-communist transition, adverse selection, social representation



Success and its achievement is a key issue for most people. This concept is essentially related to the concepts of subjective well-being and happiness. Experiencing success is an essential part of one's satisfaction with him/herself and with his/her life. In Hungary, this has become a central issue only after the fall of the Communist regime. This was partly due to political and ideological reasons, but the effects of the information revolution, the fall of the real and virtual iron curtain, along with globalization, have also contributed to the reproduction of the American cult of success in Hungarian public opinion. Local researches conducted in the field pointed out that the concept of success is strongly connected to, and to some extent, overlaps the concept of richness and welfare (VÁRINÉ-SOLYMOSSI 1999, SZABÓ-VÁRINÉ 2007, SZABÓ 2007). Moreover, achieving success requires a type of immoral, corrupt behaviour along with a few undesired personality traits in case of successful persons, especially in the business sphere (FÜLÖP 2004; SZABÓ-VÁRINÉ 2007; SZABÓ 2007). Elaboration of success ideologies is always a result of social discourse. Patterns and models mature into abstract representations and are distributed as widely shared views among different social strata and generations (BAR-TAL 2000).

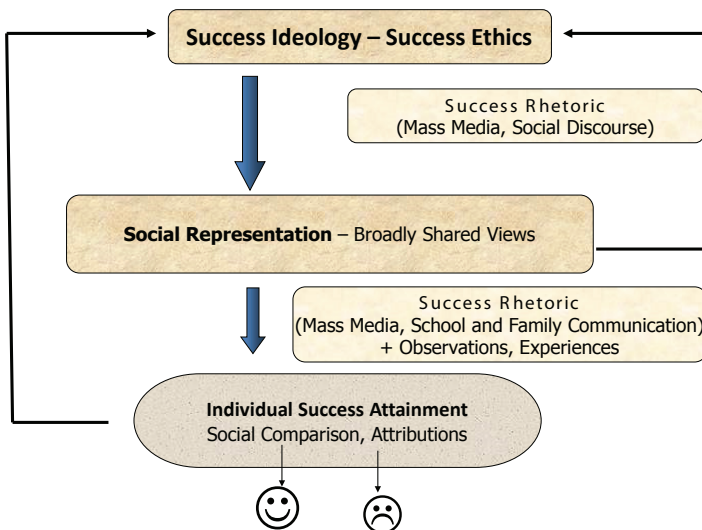
As promised by success stories in books and trainings, man can achieve any target through positive thinking and hard work. It is unclear, if this approach is compatible with that of the

individuals who were socialized in the Hungarian culture. Did we adopt this philosophy, import the ‘American dream’, or did we shape our own version, the ‘Hungarian dream’? Does the achievement of virtually anything by hard work sound plausible in the Hungarian context, or did historical and cultural impacts develop an ethic of success with different focal points? To answer these questions, probably large-scale interdisciplinary researches would be necessary which are out of our current scope. In this paper, we aim to present the most prevalent success perception using the results of a representative national survey carried out in 2008, to draw comparisons with the well-known American success ideologies (DE VITIS–RICH 1996) and to locate its role in the experience of Adverse Social Selection (HUNYADY 2002).

### 1 Success as a Social Concept – Success as a Social Representation

The word ‘success’ has a broad range of meanings in any language. It refers to one’s actual performance as well as to a more abstract interpretation covering several areas of life. These two interpretations are not independent from each other; however, it is still important to distinguish between the so-called social success (a socially determined phenomenon with a larger scope covering a number of areas in life) and the actual experience or result of a person based on actual successful performance. The concept of social success is in the focus of our investigation whose key factor is the presence of appreciation of others or the society. This aspect and the importance of this distinction were first emphasized by Ichheiser and Mannheim, defining the chief criteria of success as social appreciation and upward social mobility (ICHHEISER 1970, Mannheim 1930). Merton’s theory highlights the distinctive success perception of individuals, which usually reflects the dominant success image of the society, but it may also be different or even contradicting because of personal experience (Merton 1980). In this sense, the interpretation of success can be regarded as a social representation, which reflects and shapes the dominant perception in the society (MOSCOVICI 1981). *Figure 1* shows the possible dynamics of the development and changing of social representations concerning success.

FIGURE 1 ❖ Empirical model of the development and changing of success ideologies





The figure summarizes the main concepts of the different levels of success perception and the directions of its development and impacts. Starting with the success ideology of the society, in this system, *success ideology* describes the target system projected by the given society as an idea of success (MERTON 1980). *Success ethic* is a systematic pattern of methods and opportunities used as ways of achieving success in a given society. It is an abstract construct containing the attitudes behind the behavioural patterns leading to success rather than the concrete actions (DE VITIS – RICH 1996). During social communication (*success rhetoric*) or social discourse, these patterns mature into broadly shared views. Different socializing agents are the mediators of this process, such as mass media (written, electronic) and family or interpersonal communication (BAR-TAL 2000; VÁRINÉ 1999). The created social representations are to some extent different in their contents depending on the social strata and the level of education (KATZ 1964; HYMAN 1953). These broadly shared views are returned to the individuals via the channels of communication, shaping their own concepts and ethics of success. At this level, real interpersonal communication plays a more significant role; moreover, observation and model following as new important elements of acquisition are introduced. Based on all these inputs, individuals shape their own valid success ethics and success ideologies. This structured representation controls behaviour with a direct and conscious goal orientation, or in the form of latent intentions, setting the demand level of a person (MERTON 1980) and serving as an initial point for social comparison in the area of successfulness. These are the benchmarks for evaluating one's own and others performance, lifestyle, achieved social status and success, and as a result, satisfaction, happiness or disappointment is felt.

Success perception at the level of the society changes because of the modification of the broadly shared views which comprises the imprints of success ideologies and success ethics and retroacts on the formation of success ideology and the dominant success ethics (see *figure 1*). At another point, individuals' perception of success and identification with goals and achievement methods offered by the society might influence the chief or dominant views. Hence, success ideologies continuously change in course of the development of the society, and so do the possible methods of success achievement. This change was documented by DE VITIS and RICH (1966) in their work that analyzes the different periods of American social history.

### **1.1 Success Ideologies and Success Ethics in the American Society**

Analyzing the documents of the development of the American society, De Vitis and Rich described four elementary forms of success ethic, which were predominantly characteristic to the given period. These showed the people in each era how to achieve the desired 'American dream'. In their summarizing work, they do not only present these, but also highlight their connection to the prevailing psychological schools of the era. Below we present the main characteristics of the four types of success ethic based on their 1996 book.

#### **1.1.1 Character Ethic**

The first identified success attainment method is called *character ethic*. This approach became prevalent at the end of the nineteenth century and obviously reflected the concepts of Protestant ethics: poverty and hardship contribute to the formation of personality traits and a character necessary for succeeding. Lacking these, human personality would not be mature enough, since it is not compelled to prove. Key characteristics of men living in conformity with character ethic (and patterns contributing to personal success) are: perseverance, sobriety, steady-

ness, hard work, sparing, righteousness, fairness, manhood, sense of duty, diligence, trustfulness, initiative and ambitiousness. This approach proclaims the omnipotence of the character. According to the original form of character ethic, talent and education play a minor role in prosperity. Nevertheless, this feature was 'tamed' by the end of the twentieth century. Today even the followers of character ethic consider education and school performance through hard work essential, primarily because of the decreasing importance of physical work in financial welfare. The key reasons for failure are inadequate or weak character traits, laziness and the lack of efforts.

The concept of character ethic is somewhat similar to David Riesman's concept of inner-directed character (RIESMAN 1983). This personality type is directed by the inner compass and dignity brought from his/her family, regardless of social mobility, the ever changing world or commercials and propaganda tools.

### 1.1.2 *Mind Power Ethic*

According to this approach, success depends on the power of ideas and the appropriate spiritual orientation. Its formation was mainly the consequence of economic expansion that enabled social mobility and the dissemination of psychological theories. As a result, the lay culture of psychology has developed, incorporating the theories of psychoanalysis, hypnosis, etc.

By rejecting character ethic, mind power ethic disregards the role of the character and the need for an ascetic lifestyle. An important thesis of this approach is the unrelated nature of success (welfare) and morality; it is not only the honest man who is entitled to richness and upward social mobility. One of the most prominent representative of this view is Orison S. Marden, who edited the magazine 'Success' at the beginning of the 1900s, and wrote a number of books on the question of success. In his view, everybody can achieve success in life which he/she believed to be achievable (MARDEN 1908). In mind power ethic, self-development and formal schooling play little role in success. The source of failure is not laziness, but negative approach, anxiety and pessimism.

This idea is reflected in later success perceptions and theories emphasizing positive thinking. Imagination, mental constructing and recalling successful outcomes as the practical recipe to success achievement appear in a number of subsequent theories (e.g. HILL 1972). Techniques linked to this theory are still used nowadays in several fields (such as in psychotherapy and sport psychology) to promote factual changes or to reach goals (LÉNÁRT 2007).

### 1.1.3 *Personality Ethic*

The techniques of making good impression are the key to success in this theory; charming appearance is just as important as good communication style. The key to achieve success is clever establishment of relationships and smart influencing of others. The most prominent author (or 'preacher') of this approach is Dale Carnegie, probably best known for his book 'How to Win Friends and Influence People'. The basis of personality ethic is a type of Machiavellianism, in which there is no clear-cut line between sincere influencing and manipulation of people (CHRISTIE 1970; GEIS 1970). In this approach, neither fortune, nor prior financial circumstances are significant; the sole precondition of success is the good insight into the character and the smart way of handling and influencing others. The spread of personality ethic in public thinking contributed to some positive changes, such as the development of 'human relations' approach in psychology, marked with the name of Elton Mayo (Bakacsi 2004).

#### 1.1.4 Service Ethic

This is the less prevalent in American culture, but it had some effect from the early 1900s until the 1950s. In this 'Gospel'-type ethic, good and selfless action is the key to success, with central concepts such as helpfulness, benevolence, self-sacrifice, responsibility, strenuousness and denial of the importance of welfare. To some extent, this approach contradicts the previous ones: the sole interest of someone is to feel that he/she is a good person, which is achievable through serving a good cause. This idea appears in psychology in researches on altruism and prosocial behaviour, which have become a central topic of modern evolutionary psychology (BERECZKEI 2009).

The success ethics described by DE VITIS and RICH (1996) were developed successively, on the basis of historical, economic and political changes, and sometimes they reflected earlier ethics. A certain developmental period had its dominant success ethic, however, nowadays in Europe as well as in America, all four ethics are present, and their specific blending provides the basis for success perception and success attainment in the given society. In our model (*Figure 1*) these views appear on the top level, becoming broadly shared views mediated by (tele)communication. Nevertheless, these representations are not perfect reflections of the original rhetoric; much more they appear as specifically reconstructed attitudes and views filtered through individual experience that influence the judgments of individuals concerning themselves and others.

### 1.2 Exploring the Broadly Shared Views – Success Researches

Classical attribution researches boast the greatest tradition in success perception research, in which the attitudes towards successfulness are concluded from the analysis of explanations given to success and failure. This tradition extends along the entire line of success researches; almost all investigations include the analysis of patterns associated with successful people and the situational effects influencing success. Researches point out that people are likely to attribute actual success and being successful to internal reasons (personal dispositions or efforts), while external reasons are blamed for failure. The reason for this is self-protecting distortion mechanism (KELLEY – MICHAELA 1984), however, these mechanisms are culture-dependent (Smith and Bond 1993). Attributions of economic success, beyond the well-known cultural effects, are influenced by a number of factors, such as the belief of the respondents about the locus of control (VECCHIO 1981), political affiliation (LEWIS 1981; FURNHAM 1988) and socioeconomic status (FORGAS 1982). Attributions following success or failure are not only important because of presuppositions, but they also largely influence the person's later motivation, as presented by WEINER (1979). When exploring success perception, it is not only and not primarily the orientation of attribution which plays a crucial role. Analyzing the contents of the conclusions shows the patterns and factors which are identified as conditions fostering success. General success perception and stereotypes concerning 'successful people' in the given society are reflected in these contents. This is affirmed by Moscovici's theory on the connection between social representations and attribution processes: attribution always follows and justifies the social representation of the given topic (MOSCOVICI 1981, 2002). A similar theory of justification system was formulated by JOST (2003).

Stereotypes of successful people were investigated during the period of the political transition in Hungary by Ms Ibolya Szilágyi Vári and her research team (VÁRINÉ 1999). This complex qualitative and quantitative research incorporated the traditions of success research based on the examination of attitudes and explored the success perceptions of three intellectual groups

(architects, economists and agronomists) in two age groups (last-year university students and senior experts) with the analysis of the effects of social context. Results showed that the concepts of success and financial well-being are strongly interconnected. The success-image of a given profession is further influenced by the characteristics of the chosen occupation (e.g. agronomists chose 'determinedness', economists chose 'being well informed' as the key factors to success). However, a number of similarities were explored between the three groups. Respondents described two characteristic patterns of success: firstly an image of success built on exceptional individual performance, hard work and its enjoyment, while the other can be summarized with the concept of economic success. The latter appeared more frequently in all three groups of respondents compared to the individual performance and enjoyment, a concept related to Maslow's self-actualization (VÁRINÉ 1999). This research 'snapshotted' the representations of success at the moment of the political transition, which also means that dissatisfaction and frustration caused by the economic decline in the 1990s was not tangible in the results yet.

### *1.2.1 Success Perception and Experiencing Adverse Selection*

Following the political transition in Hungary, success perception and success ethic have dramatically changed. Aiming at equality, a concept emphasized by the socialist authorities, was gradually replaced by an image of success that manifested in the differences in financial welfare. The political and economic turn made success achievements easier for certain social groups and strata, while the new success ideal became more and more unreachable for others. In this sense, winners and losers of the political transition can be distinguished (KOLOSI – TÓTH 2008). However, economic welfare and income only constitute one determinative component of successfulness and satisfaction. Social and individual well-being is strongly determined by subjective impressions of success achievement, its foreseeable preconditions and methods, thus, the dominant success ethic of the society. According to the survey carried out in 1993 and repeated in 1998 by the Gallup Institute, the Hungarian population mainly believed in the first period following the transition that the safest way to achieve success leads through patronage and unscrupulous careerist behaviour. Five years later a small move towards the appreciation of hard work and individual abilities was revealed. Nevertheless, the strengthening of this success ethic appeared only among younger and more educated strata, those under forty and with secondary or lower education found honest work and actual abilities less important in success attainment (GALLUP INSTITUTE 1998). This approach also manifested in stereotypes regarding successful businessmen (SZABÓ 2007); the image of a successful businessman is significantly more negative compared to that of a generally successful man. According to the respondents, a successful businessperson is the least honest and helpful, but significantly more violent than his/her 'non-business' counterpart. A rather similar outcome was concluded by Márta FÜLÖP (2004). In international comparison, the belief in the connection between success and competition with immoral means is a highly salient feature in the Hungarian results. Compared to the Japanese sample, Hungarians more frequently point out this connection. According to the interviews, Hungarians believe that immoral solutions during competition play a far more important role in success attainment than one's exceptional qualities (FÜLÖP 2008).

These findings confirm the presence of the social and public phenomenon called 'experience of adverse selection' by György Hunyady in the Hungarian society (HUNYADY 2010). In his theoretical introduction, he explains that the experience of adverse selection determines whether members of the society feel that those who get the good or better social (financial) positions deserve them or not. The concept of 'merit' here does not only reflect the connection between

hard work and success, but also implies the existence of moral and human virtues. The perception of the successful man radically differs from this image, the supposition of experiencing adverse selection becomes reality, resulting in ‘malaise’ or ‘discomfort’ in the society. In his researches, symptoms of this negative attitude were detected at several points. According to the results of the adverse selection and system justification factors of his questionnaires, the understanding of success as a result of social connections rather than that of hard work or talent is still prevalent in Hungarian society (HUNYADY 2010). This result is especially remarkable in the light of the above mentioned GALLUP research (1998). We suppose that public opinion did not really change during the period of ten years.

The goal of the present research is to explore the dominant success ideologies developed in the Hungarian society during the twenty years of democratic transition, to examine their relations to the American models of success, and to reveal the relationship between success perception and the subjective feeling of success. No hypotheses were set up, since the research was not the repetition of an earlier experiment or testing an existing model, but to explore the phenomenon. However, a few presuppositions were made based on the results of preliminary investigations and observations of social processes. We presupposed that no clear dominance of any single success ethic would be detected because of the unique development and history of the Hungarian society, rather a combination of success ethics would be found in public thinking. Beyond these, we supposed based on Hyman (1953) and Merton (1980) that in the success perception of different social groups, these patterns would appear with different levels of acceptance. We also assumed a difference between the attitudes of those claiming themselves successful and unsuccessful and we believed that signs of experiencing adverse selection would be more noticeable in the latter group.

## 2 Combinations of Success Models and Success Ethics in the Success Perception of the Hungarian Society – Results of a Representative Survey

The survey was conducted by TÁRKI Public Opinion and Social Research Institute, in collaboration with the Department of Sociology of the University of Szeged. A representative national sample of 1,010 persons (women: 56.5%) was drawn, the questionnaires were administered by interviewers. Mean age of the sample was 47.2 years (SD: 16.85 years), the youngest respondent was 18, the oldest 87 years old at the time of the survey (2008). Educational distribution is in correspondence with the national trends; hence the proportion of the particular vocational group is unequal. Key descriptive statistics are shown in *Table 1*.

Sex		Level of Education			
		Vocational or Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
Male	Number	248	137	53	438
	Percentage in the Sample	24.7%	13.6%	5.3%	43.6%
Female	Number	290	208	68	566
	Percentage in the Sample	28.9%	20.7%	6.8%	56.4%
Total	Number	538	345	121	1004
	Percentage in the Sample	53.6%	34.4%	12.1%	100.0%

## 2.1 Attitudes to the Factors Defining Success

Respondents were asked ( $N=1003$ ) to rate the importance of personality characteristics in being successful. Four-grade scales were used, 1 meant the lowest and 4 the highest importance. The listed options almost completely matched the ones used in our earlier surveys (teacher and student survey, SZABÓ-VÁRINÉ 2007, SZABÓ 2007), extended with the item ‘compliance with the law’, which appeared earlier among personality traits, as an ‘honest/dishonest’ trait. At the same time, we considered important to include this item, because preliminary researches had suggested that this moral aspect is of cardinal importance both in market competition (FÜLÖP 2004, 2008) and in the thinking about social processes (HUNYADY 2010). The average importance and standard deviation of the elements of becoming successful is shown in *Table 2*.

Aspect	Mean	SD
To have good connections with important people	3.68	.633
Intellectual abilities	3.62	.613
Personal characteristics	3.56	.631
The family environment in which he/she grew up	3.56	.723
Fortune	3.43	.791
His/her financial situation	3.39	.745
External appearance	3.28	.781
Place of residence (in a geographical sense; city, town, village)	3.16	.919
Hard work	3.15	.861
Compliance with the law	3.12	.933
His/her former school performance	2.79	.927

TABLE 2 ❖ Evaluation of certain aspects in becoming successful ( $N = 1001$ )

As it is shown in *Table 2*, in accordance with preliminary findings, having good connections is the foremost item on the list. The importance of intellectual abilities in achieving success was second on the list which is a promising result; it was followed by the importance of personality and family. School performance was not regarded as a relatively unimportant element by respondents, which coincides with the results drawn from the sample of school teachers (SZABÓ 2007). In the scope of exploring success ethics and the experience of adverse selection, a remarkable result is that hard work and compliance with the law ended up in the end of the list.

### 2.2.1 ‘Popularity’ of Certain Ethics of Success in Hungarian Public Opinion

The roads that lead to success highly differ. According to the model presented in the theoretical introduction of this paper (DE VITIS – RICH 1996), beliefs regarding behaviour and attitudes which assist someone in becoming successful are divided among four main success ethics. In our questionnaire, all four approaches were represented by several items. We asked independent, but theoretically qualified experts to categorize the items representing the four factors; only those items remained in the questionnaire which were put by both experts in the same category. Eventually, ten items remained on the form, representing the four types of success ethic.

Items of character ethic:

- » Works hard.
- » Lives rather for work than for pleasure.
- » Always abides by the laws.

Items representing belief in mind power ethic:

- » Strongly believes that he/she might be able to do anything.
- » Always thinks positively.

Items representing belief in the power of personality:

- » Gains advantages through his/her connections.
- » Treats people well.
- » Is able to influence others.

Items representing the approach of service ethic:

- » His/her main goal is to work for the benefit of others.
- » Is able to and willing to make sacrifice for others.

These were extended with a line of items representing the ability of fast adaptation to changes and the related willingness to take risks. Introduction of these items were vindicated by preliminary research outcomes which claimed that one of the most important traits of successful persons is such a dynamic approach (Váriné 1999; Szabó-Váriné 2007). This group of items was named 'dynamism ethic' and represented by the following items in the questionnaire:

Dares to risk. ❖ Always ready to renew. ❖ Always ready to make changes.

Finally, we sought to ask about the acceptance of 'wangling', a particularly Central Eastern European way of attaining success. This behaviour is not obviously immoral, but certainly not completely legal; wangling means pushing the legal boundaries and searching for weaknesses in regulations. The core attitude behind such behaviour is that everything is certainly allowed which is not explicitly forbidden; this attitude was measured with a single item in the questionnaire: 'He/she knows and takes advantage of loopholes'.

Similar four-grade scales were applied (1 = absolutely not characteristic of a successful person; 4 = a very important trait). Means and standard deviations are shown in *Table 3*.

	Mean	SD
He/she knows and takes advantage of loopholes	3.43	.921
Gains advantages through his/her connections	3.42	.910
Dares to risk	3.40	.826
Always ready to renew	3.39	.768
Strongly believes that he/she might be able to do anything	3.37	.768
Is able to influence others	3.32	.857
Always ready to make changes	3.27	.773
Always thinks positively	3.23	.822
Lives rather for work than for pleasure	2.96	.882
Works hard	2.92	.926
Treats people well	2.91	.953
Is able to and willing to make sacrifice for others	2.45	.950
Always abides by the laws	2.39	1.022
His/her main goal is to work for the benefit of others	2.16	.910

TABLE 3 ❖ Evaluation of the characteristics of successful people (N = 909)

Data in the table show that it was worth extending the original system of De Vitis and Rich with the observed characteristics of the Central Eastern European societies, since the item measuring wangling scored the highest average in the entire list.

Chief mental and behavioural characteristics of the successful man reflect primarily the ethics of mind power, personality and what we called dynamism here, while less important features include character and service ethics. At the same time it is obvious that the separate categories described by De Vitis and Rich are largely blended. Hence it was important to explore the patterns of interconnectivity of these items in the minds of the respondents by principal component analysis. As a result, two distinct types of success ideology could be separated among the Hungarian population, as shown in *Table 4*. The two factors explain 55.76 percent of the original variance; items of dynamism and personality ethic appear in the first factor along with elements of mind power, while components of character and service ethic appear in the second factor.

	Factors	
	1	2
Dares to risk	.818	
Gains advantages through his/her connections	.779	
Always ready to renew	.775	
He/she knows and takes advantage of loopholes	.765	
Is able to influence others	.752	
Always ready to make changes	.704	
Strongly believes that he/she might be able to do anything	.593	
Is able to and willing to make sacrifice for others		.778
Works hard		.751
His/her main goal is to work for the benefit of others		.747
Always abides by the laws		.724
Treats people well		.666
Lives rather for work than for pleasure		.440

TABLE 4 ✧ *Factor structure\* of success ideologies*

*Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.*

One item ('Always thinks positively') had to be left out from the principal component analysis, because it appeared in both factors with a nearly equal weight (.552 and .424). Evaluation of the results shed light on a difference in the interpretation of the creators of the questionnaire and the respondents. In our intentions, 'Treats people well' belonged to category of personality ethic, since it was meant to be a type of smart influencing or utilization for goal attainment according to De Vitis's model. The factor structure showed us that respondents unanimously interpreted this item as a friendly, kind and helpful attitude, linking it to service ethic. Due to these results, we also regard this interpretation as authoritative.

We examined the difference in the standardized factor score variable between certain groups by using a few independent variables. Sex proved to be insignificant, but the level of education as grouping variable produced significant differences in the first factor ( $F = 5.148$ ,  $p < 0.005$ ). The ANOVA Post Hoc test showed that respondents with tertiary qualification regarded this attitude much more prevalent than those with primary or vocational education. Another significant difference in both factor score means was produced by the active/inactive labour force status of the respondent: active citizens scored higher on both scales (*Factor 1*:  $t = 2.057$ ,  $p < 0.005$ ; *Factor 2*:  $t = 1.993$ ,  $p < 0.005$ ). This suggests that interest in successfulness and developing attitudes that



lead to successfulness is strongly connected with one's own experience of success or the possibility of experiencing success, since inactive people actually regard this question less important.

### 2.2.2 Patterns of Success Achievement Methods

Principal component analysis revealed that the two types of success ethic are simultaneously present in the respondents' thinking. However, it is worth investigating which combinations of these are to be called 'broadly shared views'. A cluster analysis was carried out with the standardized factor score output variables of the principal component analysis, targeting the separation of two distinct groups of respondents (clusters). Nearly 80 percent of the respondents were classified in the first cluster (N = 740) that revealed which combination of attitudes is the most broadly shared view in Hungarian society. The vast majority of the sample belonged to the group which believes to a higher-than-average level that success ethic based on wangling and dynamics leads to success; and to a lower-than-average level that honest ethic and serving others results in being successful. A smaller proportion of respondents (N = 181) provided an inverse answer; they believe in service and character ethic and to a lesser extent in other methods of succeeding (Figure 2).

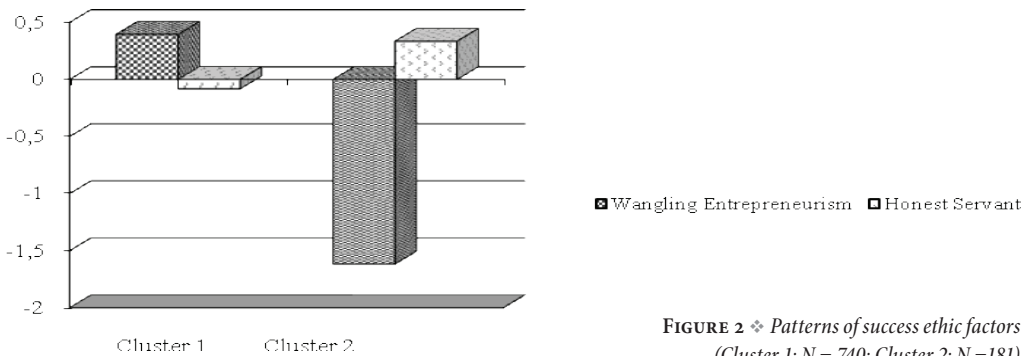


FIGURE 2 ♦ Patterns of success ethic factors  
(Cluster 1: N = 740; Cluster 2: N = 181)

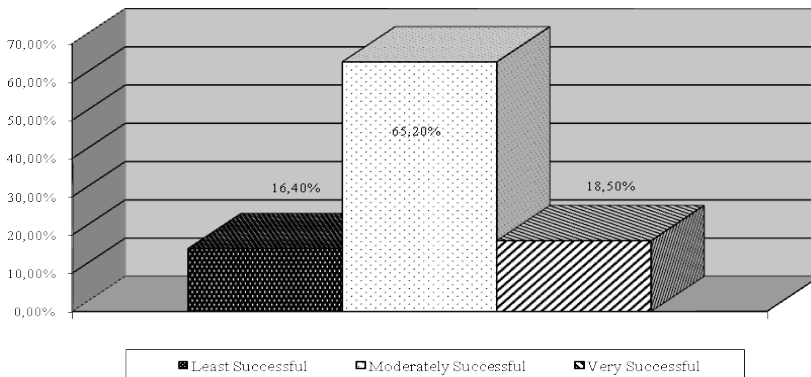
By using cluster analysis, the predominant view (the majority of the people were classified in the first cluster) could be identified. It seemed fruitful to investigate the patterns by which the respondents of the two clusters differ from each other. Using the Chi-square test, sex proved insignificant, and so did the profession types of the respondents. Two independent variables showed significant effects: the first is the level of education. People with higher qualifications were overrepresented in the first and underrepresented in the second cluster, in other words, respondents with lower levels of education are more likely to believe in the functioning of 'protestant' and service ethic in success attainment (Pearson's  $\chi^2 = 12.730$ ;  $p = .002$ ). The other factor determining cluster membership was the subjective experience of successfulness and satisfaction that we measured on an 8-item Likert-type scale based on Diener's (2000) Satisfaction with Life Scale and modified the items in accordance with the goals of the study. The new instrument proved to be a valid and coherent indicator of subjective experience of successfulness and satisfaction (explained original variance of the one-factor model: 50 %; Cronbach- $\alpha = .889$ ). Data are presented in Table 5.

Item	Factor Weight
I am satisfied with my personal relationships	.771
I am happy and balanced	.750
I consider myself successful	.744
I am satisfied with my professional skills and abilities	.711
I am satisfied with my financial situation	.689
I am satisfied with my social appreciation	.689
I live in a safe and balanced family	.630
People are curious about my opinion, which matters to them	.627

TABLE 5 ❖ Factor weights of the subjective experience of successfulness and satisfaction scale

An indicator of subjective satisfaction/successfulness was calculated from the eight items. Using cluster membership as independent variable, the means of the two groups significantly differ: respondents in the first (and larger) cluster feel far more successful and satisfied compared to those in the second cluster ( $t = 3.823, p < .001$ ). This might imply that people who trust the honest and accommodating success ethic are less satisfied and successful. To gain a better understanding of the question, we used the above mentioned index and divided the respondents into three unequal groups by using the standard deviation of the variable as cut points (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3 ❖ Distribution of subjective evaluation of successfulness (N = 959)



This new indicator of subjective perception of successfulness affirmed the result of the comparison of means. According to the Chi-square test, the least successful group is under-represented in Cluster 1, while the group of the most successful respondents (mean + 1 SD) is overrepresented, while obviously the opposite is true in Cluster 2 (Pearson’s  $\chi^2 = 10.022, p = .007$ ), see Table 6.

		Cluster membership and its meaning		N
		1 Ethic of the ‘wangling entrepreneurship’ prevails	2 Ethic of the ‘honest servant’ prevails	
Least successful	Count	99	39	138
	Expected count	111.0	27.0	
Moderately successful	Count	474	112	586
	Expected count	471.3	114.7	
Most successful	Count	142	23	165
	Expected count	132.7	32.3	

TABLE 6 ❖ Crosstab of cluster membership and subjective perception of successfulness

Moderately successful people were represented proportionally in both clusters. The experience of successfulness and the acceptance of success ethics cannot be explained with the larger cluster membership; based on the analysis above, a real connection is measurable between the two variables in the case of the least and most successful people.

### 3 Discussion – Still Far From the ‘American Dream’

The goal of our research was to explore the Hungarian model of success perception and its collation with the available American patterns of success. In our analysis carried out on a representative sample of the Hungarian population, we tried to demonstrate the presence and acceptance of success ethics presented by DE VITIS and RICH (1996) and their connections to the level of experienced success.

As far as the whole issue of success perception is concerned, our results overlap the outcomes of earlier researches. The evaluation of the factors contributing to success has changed little since the previous surveys. In accordance with the findings of the Gallup Institute (1998) and VÁRINÉ (1999), the belief in good nexuses with important people still holds the prime position on the list, shortly followed by intellectual abilities which is a promising tendency already forecasted by Gallup Institute’s 1998 survey. Family stands in the third place, a fact that can be interpreted as a manifestation of a positive value. However, the simultaneous evaluation of the first and the last three items suggest a different interpretation as well. The last three factors are hard work, abiding by the law and school performance. If we take a look at the first and last three items, we may conclude that the respondents believe that smart people who are able to utilize good relationships and values originating in the family are more likely to succeed than those who lack these virtues, but work hard, were good students in school and follow the rules. It should be noted that devaluating school performance to such an extent may also reflect the judgment of school curriculum as well as the weaknesses of school evaluating/grading system, as it was suggested by our earlier teacher survey (SZABÓ 2007). Even if this argumentation seems a bit oversimplified, it is no exaggeration to claim that choosing these items in the first and last place reflects the experience of adverse selection introduced by György Hunyady in his work presenting the splashing waves of social well-being (HUNYADY 2010).

A further goal of the current research was to identify the extent to which the well-known success ethics are characteristic of the success perception of Hungarians. In their 1996 publication about success ethics, De Vitis and Rich introduced four types of success models, all of which are connected to certain developmental periods of the American society. Our results show that we have collectively ‘imported’ these in the past 25 years, nevertheless none of them gained sole dominance in the success perception of Hungarian people, most probably due to the different developmental patterns of the Hungarian and American societies. In the patterns explored in Hungarian public thinking, the four success ethics blend with each other and with other patterns characteristics to Central Eastern Europe known from preliminary researches (GALLUP 1998; FÜLÖP 2008; HUNYADY 2010). As a result, two markedly distinct patterns of success ethic could be identified. One of them delineates a success attainment path in which personality and mind power ethics appear alongside dynamism and what is colloquially called wangling (or finding loopholes). The other Hungarian model of success is honest and accommodating behaviour, thus showing the key elements of character and service ethics. A vast majority of respondents strongly believe in the first blend of success ethics (‘wangling entrepreneurship’) and to a smaller extent in

character and service ethics. The picture was further refined by the respondents' level of education and the experienced success. Respondents with lower qualification were characterised by honest and accommodating ethics more significantly than people with higher levels of education.

If we accept the assumption outlined in the first part of this paper that we acquire the dominant success ethic to some extent as a social representation, and use it as a guideline and as a reference frame for comparisons when we evaluate our own successfulness, than it is not surprising that experiencing success is also connected to our own perception of success and to the dominant general image of success in the given society. According to our results, those who feel less successful are more likely to believe in character and service ethic, while people who consider themselves extremely successful are overrepresented in the cluster with ethics based on dynamism and wangling. On this basis, we can conclude that both success patterns exist in Hungarian public thinking, but a more broadly shared view is currently the 'wangling entrepreneurship', which also includes the experience of adverse social selection. However, the modifying effects of experiencing success and the level of education, along with further differences explored during the analysis, but not detailed in this paper show that even if public thinking basically carries the above mentioned characteristics, success perception has a distinctive pattern among different social groups and strata. Detailed exploration and the in-depth analysis of these require further tough research work. \*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BAKACSI, GYULA (2004): *Szervezeti Magatartás és Vezetés*. Budapest, Aula Kiadó.
- BAR-TAL, D. (2000): *Shared Beliefs in Society – Social Psychological Analysis*. Sage Publication Inc.
- BERECZKEI, T. (2009): *Az erény természete (Önzetlenség, együttműködés, nagylelkűség)*. Budapest, Typotex Kiadó.
- CARNEGIE, D. (1991): *Sikerkalauz 1. Hogyan szerezzünk barátokat, hogy bánjunk az emberekkel?* 5. átdolg. kiadás. Minerva, Budapest.
- CARNEGIE, D. (1999a): *Sikerkalauz 2. Ne aggódj, tanulj meg élni!* 8. kiadás. Budapest, Gladiátor.
- CARNEGIE, D. (1999b) *Sikerkalauz 3. A hatásos beszéd módszerei :a meggyőzés iskolája*. 6. kiadás. Budapest, Gladiátor.
- CHRISTIE, R. – GEIS, F. (1970): *Studies in Machiavellianism*. New York, Academic.
- DE VITIS, J, R. – RICH, J.M. (1996): *The success Ethic, Education and the American Dream*. State University, N.Y. Press.
- DIENER, E. (2000): Subjective-wellbeing: the Science of Happiness and a Proposal for a National Index. *American psychologist* vol. 55. no. 1. 34–43
- FORGAS, J. – MORRIS, S. – FURNHAM, A. (1982): Lay Explanations of wealth: Attributions for Economic Success. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* vol. 12. no. 5. 381–397.
- FURNHAM, A. (1988): *Lay Theories. Everyday Understanding of Problems in the Social Sciences*. Pergamon Press. 125–150., 189–207.
- FÜLÖP, M. (2004): Economic competition perceived by French and Hungarian Adolescents. In Ross, A. (ed.): *The Experience of Citizenship*. London, CiCe Publications. 325–333.
- FÜLÖP, M. (2008): Verseny a társadalomban – verseny az iskolában. In Benedek A. – Hungler D. (szerk.): *VII. Nevelésügyi Kongresszus. Az oktatás közügy*. 51–74
- GALLUP (1998): Mitől függ a boldogulás Magyarországon? 1993–1998. *Népszava* április 11. [www.gallup.hu/orszagkep.htm](http://www.gallup.hu/orszagkep.htm)
- HILL, N. (2007): *Gondolkodj és gazdagodj!* Bagolyvár Kiadó, Budapest. (*Think and Grow Rich*. Wilshire Book Company, California, 1972. )

- HUNYADY, Gy. (2010): *A társadalmi közérzet hullámverése. 20 Év után*. Napvilág Kiadó, Budapest.
- HYMAN, H.H. (1953): The value system of different social classes. In Bendix, R., Lipset, S. (eds.) *Class, Status and Power: A reader in Social Stratification*. Glencoe, Ill. Free Press.
- ICHHEISER, G. (1970): *Appearance and Reality*. Jossey-Bass. Inc. Publ. San Francisco
- JOST, J.T. (2003): *Ónalávetés a társadalomban: a rendszerigazolás pszichológiája*. Osiris, Budapest.
- KATZ, F. M. (1964): The meaning of success: some differences in value systems of social classes. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 62. 141–148.
- KELLEY, H.H. – MICHAELA, J.L. (1984): Az attribúció elmélete és kutatása. In Hunyady Gy. (szerk.): *Szociálpszichológia*. Budapest, Gondolat Kiadó. 55–116.
- KOLOSI, T. – TÓTH I.GY. (2008): A rendszerváltás nyertes és vesztes generációs oldalnézetből. Tíz állítás a gazdasági átalakulás társadalmi hatásairól. In Kolosi T. – Tóth I. Gy. (szerk.) *Társadalmi riport*. Budapest, TÁRKI. 15–46
- LÉNÁRT, Á. (2007): *Mentális fejlesztőprogram. Módszertani füzet*. Budapest, ÖTM, Sport Szakállamtitkárság.
- LEWIS, A. (1981): Attribution and politics. *Personality and Individual differences* vol. 2. no. no. 1. 1–4.
- MARDEN, O.S. (1908): *“He Can Who Thinks He Can”*. NewYork, Crowell & Co.
- MERTON, R.K. (1980): *Társadalomelmélet és társadalomstruktúra*. Budapest, Gondolat.
- MOSCOVICI, S. (1981): Social representation. In Forgas, J. (ed.) *Social cognition: Perspectives on Everyday Understanding*. London, Academic Press.
- MOSCOVICI, S. (2002): *Társadalom-lélektan. Válogatott tanulmányok*. Budapest, Osiris.
- RIESMAN, D. (1983): *A magányos tömeg*. Budapest, Közgazdasági és Jogi Kiadó.
- SZABÓ, É. (2007): „Sikeres embert faragni” – Pedagógusok véleménye a sikerességről és az iskola szerepéről. *Pedagógusképzés* 5. évf. 1-2. sz. 27–37.
- SZABÓ, É. – VÁRINÉ SZILÁGYI I. (2007): Tanárok sikerképe a rendszerváltás után. *Alkalmazott Pszichológia* 9. évf. 3–4.sz. 123–146.
- VÁRINÉ, SZILÁGYI I. – SOLYMOSSI, Zs. (1999): A siker szociális reprezentációja - értelmiségi rétegeknél. In Váriné Sz. I. – Solymosi Zs. (szerk.) *A siker lélektana*. Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, Budapest. 42–72
- VECCHIO, R. (1981): Workers' beliefs in internal versus external determinants of success. *Journal of Social Psychology* vol. 114. no. 2. 199–207.
- WEINER, B. (1979): A theory of motivation for some classroom experiences. *Journal of Educational Psychology* vol. 71. no. 1. 3–25.

TAMÁSKA, MÁTÉ

tamaskamate@gmail.com

DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.8

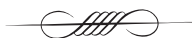
# *The Torockó Myth*

## *Notions to the Sociographic Interpretation of Heritage Space*

**Abstract** The paper shows the development of a myth about Torockó in the literary works (fiction and scientific literature as well). The analysis follows the myth from its foundation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, the paper analyses the symbolic language of monument space as well. Our conclusion is that myth can be interpreted as the basis of cultural heritage space emerging after 1990. The myth fills up the architectural environments with social contents (narratives, memorial images etc.). In fact, the discourses react on the architectural forms as well.

The founders of Torockó myth (e.g. Mór Jókai, Balázs Orbán) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century used a romantic language. They created a picture which influences the view about Torockó until today (for example “lunar landscape”). It is also important to mention that Torockó was a significant site on the “national map” of Hungary. After 1920, as part of Romania, Torockó became the symbol of minority life and the cultural exchange between Hungarians, Germans and Romanians (see the idea of “Transylvaniam”). However, the authors continued the tradition of romantic language. Only the third generation – working during the communist dictatorship in the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century – changed the language tools. They revised some basic elements of Torockó’s history (like the German origin, see by Zsigmond Jakó). The effect of their work is interesting in the sense that it has not decreased, but strengthened the myth. Finally, the paper shows the heritage transformations of the past two decades from the special aspect of the Torockó myth. This means an understanding of how the heritage protection displays the myth, as well as how the heritage space contributes to maintaining the myth. From this point of view, is important to interpret the reconstruction of mining houses of 17-18<sup>th</sup> centuries as an act remembering on myth of “freedom”; the renewing of houses from period 1860-1890 as a representation of myth of “German origin”, and so on. Thus, the monument protection of townscape is not only an architectural intervention but in the same time a creation of space of cultural heritage and a social fact of collective memory and historical identity.

**KEYWORDS** environment and society, social geography, regional studies, sociology of cultural heritage, architecture sociology, ethnic relations in Transylvania, sociology of knowledge.



## **Torockó as Heritage Space**

‘Torockó’s heritage protection is a success.’ – These words started the presentation of Árpád Furu and Iván M. Balasa about the Torockó Value Protection Program at the XVII. Folk Architecture Conference in 2010 (BALASSA–FURU 2011. 43., see also FURU 2006). The program started in 1996 when the outstanding figure of Hungarian heritage protection, Román András’s proposal was accepted by the Fifth District Municipality of Budapest to adopt two small Transylvanian villages, Torockó and Énlaka (Râmetea/Inlăceni RO). The program management was realized

by local NGO, by the Transylvania Trust from Kolozsvár/Cluj Napoca. The aim was to promote the survival of the remaining buildings of folk architecture with a fund of 20-25,000 Euros per year. Of this amount, the owners have received support for undertaking their home maintenance and for renovating their historic buildings. To receive support, the owner has had to accept the recommendations of the heritage experts. The sum spent on building reconstructions during the program was significantly higher than the subsidy from Budapest, because the owners have contributed with their own capital and especially with their work. So far 160-180 buildings have obtained interventions. Another field of activity of the program aimed to save some very ancient monuments from the 17–18<sup>th</sup> centuries. These buildings have been successfully restored with American support. A clear sign of success of the program is that it received the Europa Nostra Prize in 2000 (BALASSA–FURU 2011. 45.)

The aesthetic appearance of an architectural ensemble is a convincing argument for heritage preservation. However, for a sociologist, the question is what cultural-historical antecedents had taken place before a settlement became heritage space? The study below shows one section of an extended sociological research. It presents the theories about the origin and development of the Torockó myth. Firstly, it is important to emphasize that the word myth is not used in the original, literary meaning. Here myth means a historical account, a narrative that is still alive in the local folklore (PÁSZKA 2009). Actually, it is not one sole myth; we can speak of myths, or at least several layers within a myth. I assume that the basis of these layers appear in the literately works about Torockó (fiction and scientific literature as well). Torockó has been present for more than 150 years in Hungarian and Transylvanian public discourses. Its reputation was established by famous persons like Mór Jókai or Balázs Orbán, but the most famous architect of Transylvania, Károly Kós did visit Torockó as well. The following analysis will start from the foundation of myth in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and stop at the scientific revising of the myth in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This revision is interesting, because although the scientific sources refuted some elements of the myth, this fact has not decreased, but strengthened the myth. Finally, the paper will return to the heritage transformations of the past two decades. It reviews the results of heritage protection from the special aspect of the myth of Torockó. That means an understanding of how the heritage protection displays the most important myth layers of the past one and a half centuries, as well as how the heritage space contributes to maintaining the myth.

## From the Biological Space to the Memorial Space

Today, it is obvious that the view of a landscape is not given, but created (HARPER 2012). Take just one extreme example, the birds' settlement view. Here the houses turn into 'cliffs', caves become protected dens, and litter bins come to be valuable feeding sites (LIKER et al 2012). Anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists have been trying to describe the more complex human spatial concepts for decades (DÚLL 2010). The basics for people are also biologic. The finest architectural works in extreme conditions signify no more than cliffs to birds: obstacles, dens and lairs. Space is therefore primarily the depot of biological existence. But, as the human being itself, the built environment is much more than the mere framework of biological existence. The fundamental fault of functional modern urban planning is that it ignores this thesis, and it has not accepted the need for decorations and non-functional elements (MEGGYESI 2005). Modern residential units are designed with optimal conditions for optimal people. The old 'irrational paths' (streets) have been wiped out to let the mechanized circulation of the new settlement

freely flow. “*But it has never come to my mind why to build something different, something new instead of ( ... ) an existing (...) district with a wide range of values, traditions, and intangible atmosphere.*” (GRANASZTÓI 1976. 33.) Space is therefore not only the depot of biological existence, but the depot of social traditions which ensures individuals’ identity and fastens their memories in the spatial reality (BACHELARD 1994, HALBWACHS 1985, PÁSZKA 2009).

“*Its countless alveoli, space contains compressed time.*” – writes Gaston Bachelard (1994. 8.). The ability of memorizing comes from the nature of space. The directions, width and connections of the old streets preserve the way of life of former societies (MEGGYESI 2009). The recognition of the spontaneously preserved spatial structure can be regarded as a spiritual genesis of the heritage space (ROMÁN 2004). In parallel with the discovery of heritage, its preservation has also come on the agenda (MEZŐS 2002). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a few individual buildings, and from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, parts of whole settlements, then landscapes have been successfully placed under protection. Meanwhile, an unprecedented revolution has occurred in architecture creating a huge contrast between the heritage and non-heritage spaces.

However, the heritage space is unique not only in its morphology. The historic built environment almost offers itself as the scene of the collective social memory (Assmann 2006, Nora 1989). The *site of memory*, as Pierre Nora refers to it, is the spatial appearance of social identity. Its main feature is that it inspires the collective memory, encompasses old myths and contributes to creating new myths. The myths as discourses about the heritage space fill up the architectural environments with social contents (narratives, memorial images etc.). In fact, the discourses react on the architectural forms as well.

### “*The Despots Must Be Censured*” (ORBÁN 1985. 369)

So far, it has been pointed out that the heritage space beyond its actual architectural shape has a social content too. Next, the historical roots of a myth will be presented through the example of Torockó. It is clear that nowadays Torockó is an outstanding memorial site of national identity, together with other sites like Kolozsvár (Cluj Napoca RO), Csíksomlyó (Șumuleu Ciuc) or the Gyimes Valley (Ghimeș RO) (ILYÉS 2010). The origin of its function originates in the bloody ethnic conflicts of the freedom fight of 1848-1849. The Romanian-Hungarian conflict took place mostly in the area of the Ore Mountains (Erdélyi-Érchegység HU/Munții Metaliferi RO). The population of Zalatna (Zlatna RO), Verespatak (Rosia Montana RO), Abrudbánya (Abrud RO) and Nagyenyed (Aiud RO) suffered the most. All in all, 4000-6000 Hungarian and 3000-4000 Romanian people died. It means that 70 to 80% of the victims in Transylvania were concentrated here (ABLONCZY 2008). The Romanian rebels also surrounded Torockó, but the town was defended successfully: “... *some forty people collected the drums of the school and silently slipped out to the open Székelykő side, then climbed up the Székelykő slope, and there they started drumming terribly, shooting and marching into the town in immense clamour. A cowardly part of the Vlachs (Romanian) took flight for the noise of gunfire and drumbeat amplified by the echo of the place.*” (ORBÁN 1868. 208.) The writer of the previous citation, Balázs Orbán is perhaps the most famous author in Transylvanian homeland studies. He was a scholar, a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, yet a significant part of his works is not without literary sophistication. Especially the *Description of the Székely Land* (Székelyföld leírása I-V., ORBÁN 1868), which includes the chapter about Torockó, and has an entertaining literary style. His style did not derive from a specific scientific concept of Balázs Orbán, but it was rather the result of the norms of publication language in the period. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, literature, popular science and academic science were not clearly distinguished yet. The emotionally



saturated interpolations, plotting, metaphors and symbols were standard stylistic instruments in scientific publications (LEDERER 2002). Incidentally, it is worth noting that more than a century later, it became clear that scientific publications of the 20<sup>th</sup> century used literary tools as well, in spite of the fact, that they aimed to be neutral like the papers of natural or technical sciences (WHITE 1978, GYÁNI 2000).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, only few readers verified the scientific language of natural or technical papers in social studies, like history, geography or sociology. The authenticity of a text did not lie in the proofed methods, but in the person presenting the history. Therefore, we can say from today's point of view that the book of Orbán Balázs is a sociographic work containing numerous personal emotions and intuitions. The mining town of Torockó is in his concept the symbol of the 'Hungarians' who rebel against feudal oppression, who fall again and again, but never give up their rights and desire for freedom. The history of the town formulates a warning message to Hungary which embraced the ideas of 1848/49 by the Compromise of 1867 only partially: *'the people impatiently carried the yoke forced upon them. (...) All along they were true to the sacred cause of the homeland.'* (ORBÁN 1985. 367. 373). From this perspective, Torockó represented the national mythology of the generation of 1848/49 on a micro level, which means that it was an example for 'the moral winner of lost battles'. This generation created the myth of a defeated nation, based on historical events like Mohács (1526) and Rákóczi's independence fight (1703-1711), but first of all on their own experience of the lost revolution in 1848/49 (GYURGYÁK 2007, LEITHA 2004). Balázs Orbán also details the struggles of miners of Torockó against Rabutin and Tige's soldiers in the early 1700s, to the event of the forged charter of freedom (intended to evade the feudal obligations of Torockó citizens), and the legendary history of 1848/49. Meanwhile, he ignored the problem that the 1848/49 revolution and the miners in 18<sup>th</sup>-century who rebelled against feudal obligations had fundamentally different freedom ideals. Torockó's history by Balázs Orbán, the town with a crushed rebellion and tenacious struggles becomes an allegory of the 1848/49 revolution and war of independence, as well as the subsequent decades of quiet resistance (This pattern appears likewise in Rózsa Ignác's novel in connection with 1956.)

The contrast of the massive Székelykő cliff and the wooden houses that easily catch fire offers a perfect setting for a historical drama about the centuries of fight between the people struggling for their rights and the oppressive tyranny. Thanks to Balázs Orbán's linguistic inventiveness, we feel as if we were reading a great historical novel. However, it seems more authentic than a fictional novel as he prepared the manuscript of his works with scientific consistency. Balázs Orbán was a pioneer explorer. Reading his works makes us see the yellow donation letters, not yet in archival collections but in town or aristocratic libraries, or even in lofts. Later he descends to the depths of the mine, from where, as an early David Attenborough, he reports live: *'The rumble of horrifying moans, mournful growls you hear, and you feel to be in the damned hell'* (ORBÁN 1985. 380.). The epic arc of the discovery makes the description of Torockó one of the best chapters written by Balázs Orbán. The text served as an inspiration to further authors, first of all to Mór Jókai. Jókai published the most famous fiction novel about Torockó, 'God is One' (1877). The influence of Balázs Orbán was not limited to the story but it affected the style and the atmosphere of the text of Jókai as well.

### **'Lunar Landscape'**

As in the 19<sup>th</sup> century national ideas were born, Torockó was one of the first to be placed on Hungary's symbolic map (KEMÉNYFI 2013). This was primarily due to Jókai's novel, 'God is One' (1877). The effect of his works on the contemporary public opinion can be hardly overestimated.

Jókai had the unique talent to create regional 'minor homelands', towns and landscapes, so that they did not serve the particularity, but the case of the 'greater homeland' of Hungary. While he was a master of landscape descriptions, from the islands of the Danube, through Pest-Buda to the Transylvanian mountains, his works have no trace of regionalism. *'He spoke a highly idealized and universal language of the Hungarians at each site, like a folk song of a new style wherein geographical names vary freely.'* (SZERB 1978) In his novels, fiction was not separated from history and geography, emotion from science. In his villa in Buda, in Svábhegy he actually compiled books about the Hungarian landscape, and diversity and regionalism were part of the ideas of national ideology: *'This unity has never been achieved, alone in Jókai's work'* (HAMVAS 1996. 95.)

Jókai was not yet the kind of a modern novelist who passed internal details of his own mental life to the reader. He was more like an anthropologist. Before writing his novels, he organized data collecting journeys, he read scientific papers and took notes on slips of paper: *"Jókai wrote to the poet Sándor Teleki on 26 July 1876 to Koltó: 'If God is willing, this year I'll indeed get to meet You. Truly, on 3 August night I am going to Kolozsvár, from there to Torockó on 8<sup>th</sup>. I must take measure of the Unitarian brothers, because I want to tailor a novel on them...'"* (MIKÓ 1975. 231.). The inhabitants of Torockó prepared for the visit of the prince of Hungarian literature literary, and they made their best to show themselves in the best possible way during the two-day visit. They showed Jókai their church and their school; they wore their most beautiful clothes, so Torockó marched into Hungarian literature in its 'Sunday best'. *"Every suit was snow-white, even the sleeveless frock made of fine lamb leather too (...) and their shoulder corsets, aprons, gowns (viganó) were laden with laces, so much that even a fashion lady would envy them, their belts were interlaced with gold, and pinned into them, loose silk wedding shawl hung to the ground"* (Jókai 1966 : 40). Not only the costumes, but the scenery obtained its image from Jókai. However we have to mention that Jókai also used Balázs Orbán's descriptions who had taken over details from Kővári (KŐVÁRI 1853).

It has to be noted that people had not considered mountain regions beautiful until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the centuries of scarcity, beauty and utility had meant the same, therefore the more fertile the land was, the more beautiful it was considered. To admire barren landscapes required a particular scale of value. The time of romantic literature was a period when wildness and untouched nature became more interesting than cultivated agricultural lands. Thus, the romantic literature rejected the "agriculture orientated" taste while creating national ideology (T. SZABÓ 2008). The landscape discoveries of the 19<sup>th</sup> century guided people to barren lands, mostly to the mountains or to non-cultivated plains. The fashion for desolate landscape was so strong that it could overwrite the suggestions of the biggest poets, they could not ignore the spirit of the era. Sándor Petőfi for example had described the fertility of the Hungarian Great Plain, but soon after him the people turned to the wild parts of this region, namely to the Hortobágy (SZABÓ 1988. 81.). The almost deserted Hortobágy became the synonym of the nomad Hungarian traditions of the 9-10<sup>th</sup> centuries (KOVÁCS – SALAMON 1976).

However, the horizontal view of Hortobágy was not the landscape with which the Hungarians in Transylvania could have identified themselves. Beyond the pass of Királyhágó (Pasul Craiului RO) closed basins follow each other instead of the endless steppe. The atmosphere of the Transylvanian landscape appears compressed in Torockó as to be just a counterpart of Hortobágy. There, the sun has an exceptionally long path on the horizon, while in Torockó it rises twice because of the high mountains, and in the evening, long before dusk the valley is already darkened in shadow. No romantic taverns (csárda) invite us, no horses ride. In contrast to the

well-known romantic images of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Hortobágy, Torockó provided an exceptional experience for Jókai Mór: *'This land possesses a likeness to a lunar landscape which the great telescopes bring to us; and on that island everything is so singular, as if originated from a foreign star'* (JÓKAI 1966. 39.).

The truth is that Torockó's lunar landscape is as anthropogenic as natural. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, a significant portion of Székelykő was still covered with woodland. The uncontrolled use of wood by the mines and iron works led to an almost complete shearing of the hill-side, and resulted in the bizarre and astounding sights that make all visitors wonder. To this wonderment, Jókai created the most enduring words. The novel *'God is One'* created a captivating atmosphere that defined the forthcoming generations' view. When Károly Kós, the founder of regional architecture of Transylvania, visited Torockó in the early years of 20<sup>th</sup> century, he noted the following in his diary: *"just tolling the bells. One-on- one ... the ding-dong sounded, just like Jókai writes –in a real Unitarian manner"* (Kós 2008. 5.).

## The Literature of Titles

Jókai has indisputable merits in the development of the Torockó myth. But he actually did not borrow the inspiration from Torockó. The characters of the novel are foreign persons; the average figures of Jókai's are nearly the same everywhere. They are novel heroes in the strictest sense of the word. They could have lived anywhere. The love story and the chevalier adventures detach the novel from the actual site. One has not the faintest feeling that all this can just happen here and just to these people. *"The great sensations of primitive life, love and murder set in different environments vary in Jókai's novels."* (SZERB 1978. 374.). Yet the title is one of the best in Hungarian literature. *'God is One'* promises a perfect novel, compact sentences, but first of all, a binding to the location.

The later historical novels about Torockó convey the spirit of the site, but they have unforgettable titles as well. In 1926, Domokos Gallay published the *'Vaskenyéren/On Iron Bread'*. Some decades later Rózsa Ignác wrote *'Torockói Gyász/Sorrow of Torockó'*. Rózsa Ignác was born in Kolozsvár but lived in Budapest, and she used the case of Torockó as an allegory of the Hungarian anticommunist revolution of 1956. Ignác and Gallay guide the reader to the very beginning of the 1700s, when Torockó fought for its feudal autonomy, and then it was spectacularly punished, burned, looted, and the resistance fighters were executed. The story offers the artificial dramatic tone for the novels: *"they gravely looked after carriages. Those disappeared in the valley one after the other. Their rumble resounded in the turns time to time like a sinister threat ..."* (GALLAY 1996. 58). *"That summer was not only the time of grief but the happy time of unwise hope as well. Even I hoped for the impossible."* (IGNÁCZ 1970. 142.). The artificiality is not just the fault of the authors, but also of the literary genre. Historical novel is not a genre for the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The historical tales have too many lessons, too many theatrical gestures which awake to much mobilization of collective power. Furthermore, they abound in factual descriptions. The detailed descriptions of geography, ethnography or historiography appeared in Jókai's time as requirements for a successful novel, but seemed to overexposure education a few decades later. For example, the fictional diary writer, Kata Kriza in the *Torockói Gyász/Sorrow of Torockó* introduces her house with words of an amateur ethnographer. Of course, there are some evident fictional elements in the house presentation, like the runic writing. The mixture of facts and fiction makes her work a real myth *"they all have wood wall of scarf-joint. (...) t the wooden frame around the window in*

*a good palm-size is plastered all around, and whitewashed like snow. (...) The gates do not have the present Latin writing, but old runic one.*" (IGNÁ CZ 1970:57–58)

The Torockó novels written by different authors have played an essential part in the development of the myth. Although their literary value may be questionable, their atmosphere – particularly in Jókai's work – has defined the emotional attitudes to Torockó. To verify this, let me recall György Beke's sociographic report that aimed to portray the social reality of the changing rural conditions of the 1970s: *"My first experience was like everyone else's in Torockó: a romantic dream, the imagination overwrites my vision and my hearing, my thinking. The pathetic words of Jókai prepared me for a perception of such kind."* (BEKE 1979. 117.).

## Symbol of Transylvania

Although Torockó was apt for expressing the 1848 generation's identity, it had some drawbacks in reality. It had a declining mining industry at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the accompanying social problems. The decline fitted in no way in the era 1867-1920 that advertised steady development. But the First World War and the subsequent collapse of the Hungarian Kingdom produced a new situation in Transylvania. The case of Torockó could serve as a new historical symbol for the Hungarian population now under Romanian rule. *"But the people of Torockó remained Unitarians and Hungarians. As if the Székelykő's cliff had transformed their souls, their character became firm, as a rock."* (BORBÉLY 1927. 140.). The sentence cited here belongs to the literary historian, István Borbély who published a new book about Torockó history. Like Balázs Orbán, Borbély presents Torockó as the allegory of the Hungarians too. It was nevertheless a new element that the allegory represented the situation of the Hungarian minority in the Romanian Kingdom. In the introduction of his work he mentioned: *"This small mining town presents the oldest Hungarian history of Transylvania."* (BORBÉLY 1927. 5.). As compared to Balázs Orbán, Borbély's tone is less dramatic. For him, the act itself carries the drama, right from the Hungarian conquest which had – as Borbély argues – a very different meaning in Transylvania than in the valley of the Danube and Tisza rivers. While the latter region was the centre of Hungarian kings, Transylvania was an occupied territory. This thesis fits perfectly into the new conception of 'transylvaniam'. *Transylvaniam* was a regional ideology and literature school of three Transylvanian nations: Romanians, Hungarians, and Germans. In fact, it was reserved against the Hungarian ideology before 1920 and the national state of new Romania. It emphasized regional identity, the social interdependence of intellectuals and other social classes against the logic of national politics, which were based on authority, homogeneity and central power (KÓ S 1998, K. LENGYEL 2007).

Torockó represented at that time a special spirit for the Hungarian minority. Its history had predestined it for this role. The people of Torockó lived in continuous commercial and cultural relationship with the neighbouring Romanian villages. In addition, the culture of Torockó could be interpreted as a result of cooperation of Germans (Saxon) and Hungarian nations in housing, customs or painting. Therefore, the ideology of transylvaniam updated the results of former ethnographic researches. These had drawn attention to the German origin of the folk art of Torockó: *"The soil from which sprouted its art is German and do not deny it; but the Hungarian spirit has indeed printed its stamp in it; it has somewhat softened its hard, stern lines and enlivened its colours"* (KÖRÖSFŐ I 1909.). Thus, the myth was enriched with the new hue of the symbol of ethnic coexistence.

## Scientific Language

Because transsylvaniaism could never become a leading political idea, it maintained its innocence which is very important to the further developments of the Torockó myth. During the decades of communism, Torockó was reduced from a little town to a village, so it lost its administration character. It became a place for Hungarian intellectuals to escape from the towns, both in a physical and ideological sense. The cliff of Torockó was the symbol of survival in all times of hardship. Meanwhile, the Torockó myth became restrained at this time. The emotional overflow of Jókai which still had an influence between the two World Wars disappeared from the Torockó discourse. Under the conditions of the communist dictatorship, writing became a dangerous power (KENDE 2013, PÁSZKA 2006). Perhaps this explains why scientific texts had a renaissance in the Torockó literature in these decades. A professional tone could provide some protection against censorship. The scientific elaborations enriched the Torockó myth with a new image emphasizing the specific character of the site. This character was analysed through many aspects of life, such as the pre-modern mining technologies, the ambitions of a town to get autonomy during late feudalism of the 18-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, or – after 1990 – through the architectural heritage (FURU 2006, IFJ. Kós 2010, JAKÓ 1974).

The scientific analyses were able to enrich the myth of Torockó with new elements. What particularly indicates the flexibility of the myth of Torockó is the fact that it has been able to survive its own refutation. Moreover, it could create new reference layers from these refutations. The best example is Zsigmond Jakó's study which aims to review some basic theses of the former local history of Torockó. As seen before, an important element of the Torockó myth is the ethnic synthesis involving Germans. But as Jakó points out, the German origin of the residents is only a legend based on a 'medieval liberation charter' forged in the 1700s. Based on the forgery, historians believed that the people of Torockó were descendants of Styrian miners settling here in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In reality, the economic-political struggles of the 18<sup>th</sup> century explain the 'Germanization' of the miners' ancestors. The 'medieval liberation charter' appeared when the Viennese court intervened in the conflict between the miners and the landlord. The court hoped to extend its mining taxes by giving the town independence. Thus, the aim was primarily to prove not the German origin, but the autonomy. Probably, Vienna directly instructed Adam Hüttenmeyer, a gold exchange officer who made up the mining town's liberation charter to include the Styrian origin. The false charter did not reach its original goal, thus Torockó remained feudal possession of landlords. However, the unintended effect of the "German origin story" influenced the folk art.

Jakó's briefly described study puts the ethnic interactions of the myth in a new, even more interesting light. As long as the German origin was accepted, the German material culture could be well explained (see by KÖVÁRI 1853, IFJ. Kós 2008, KÖRÖSFŐI 1909). But in fact, the cultural exchange was more complex. First of all, the people of Torockó accepted the false charter and the identity of the Styrian origin at the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century. (In fact, some German immigrant families did live in Torockó, but their origin is unclear). To underline the German origin, they began to adopt cultural elements from Transylvanian Germans, from the Saxonland. (This adaptation ignored that the Saxons did not have a Styrian origin.) Parallel to the development of "German origin", the population of Torockó took part in the revolution in 1848/49, and later the people accepted the modern national identity of Hungarians. Thus, the cultural change had

a double trend: an increasing number of artefacts with German origin and the strengthening of Hungarian national identity in spirit. Such a complex and fascinating phenomenon makes the case of Torockó very special. In conclusion, the refutation of the myth did not put an end to the myth itself, but enriched it with a new aspect, with the issue of the interaction of myth and reality.

### ***Myths in the Heritage Space***

In order to position the myths in modern heritage space, the initial thoughts should be recalled and compared with the layers of the myth. Thus, it was assumed that the heritage space is a space filled up with layers of myths. In other words, the architectural elements may be of interest not only because of their aesthetics, but also because of their symbolism. Within the myth layers, the following concepts have arisen from Balázs Orbán to Zsigmond Jakó: (1) allegory of freedom which derived from the projection of the anti-feudal nature of 1848/49 on the past; (2) national allegory which emphasizes communal loyalty and endurance after the suppression of the freedom movement (the losers' moral victory); (3) specific landscape that includes the mountainous environment, the relics of mining and iron crafts and the Unitarian religion; (4) Transsylvaniam and the different interpretations of the ethnic synthesis.

The heritage space as a memorial site keeps – either in an indirect or direct manner – the narrative elements of the myth alive. The concluding part of the paper raises some possible interpretations. At first, we should interpret the restoration and the partial reconstruction of the ancient mining houses from 17-18<sup>th</sup> century. These buildings can hardly meet modern requirements, so people used to demolish them. The heritage protection saves them, but at the same time it provides a strong spatial display of the memorial culture of the mining town's struggles in the 1700s. The red painting on the windows becomes visible again, and it serves as a memory site. As known, the red window frames reminded the people of Torockó on the bloodsheds of 1702 and 1704 carried out by Austrian generals (ORBÁN 1868). Perhaps the interpretation of the red window frames as memorial action is only a legend. The fact is that this interpretation was not a considerable part of the local memorial culture at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As Rózsa Ignác wrote: “*Not even the oldest miners would claim that the sign would be a message to call for resistance*” (IGNÁCZ 1970. 309.). Ignác spent a lot of time in Torockó, so we can assume that she had right in this case.

Next, we are going to interpret the second layer of the myth, the national allegory. While it is hard to define any ethnic character in the architecture, the myth has a lot of ethnic interpretations. The Torockó myth interprets first of all elements and decorations of folk art and make them treasures of national symbols. This idea originates in the works of Körösfői (1909), who mentioned that the Hungarian decoration would make the ‘hard German forms of houses’ milder and softer. The protection of folk art on facades awakes this interpretation again. The logic of myth does not request the verification of the thoughts of Körösfői. It is enough to have the morphological form.

The third level of the myth of Torockó is the landscape. It is full of symbols like hillsides cultivated in terraces, the bare rocks and the remaining entries to the mines. The view is very similar to the view of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, at least there are no signs of modern urban planning. This fact offers the symbol of ‘lunar landscape’ described by Jókai, in the scene of the novel ‘God is One’. Spatial correspondence to the literary text makes the landscape concretely readable, revealing not only the past of Torockó, but symbolizing an entire era of urban and social development as well.

Finally, without the claim to completeness, we should attempt to place the heritage preser-

vation of the historic houses on the marketplace in the symbolism of the myth. The house type represents the ideas of Transsylvaniaism and in general, the interethnic relationships. The form goes back to the cultural exchange, as the people of Torockó took over the idea of German origin. In the years of 1860–1870, they built houses in ‘German-Saxon style. But latter, the Saxon influence greatly weakened during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the buildings began to lose their original character after a series of extensions, paintings and window replacements. However, this process has stopped and even reversed thanks to the heritage preservation program, and thus the ‘Saxon origin’ of Torockó has again become strongly perceptible in the view.

But the interaction between space and myth is not only one-directional. The heritage program has refreshed the narratives, texts and myths about Torockó. First of all, the value of historical data increases simultaneously with the heritage investigations. The idea of authenticity requires the knowledge of the socio-historical context of the buildings. For example, ifj. Károly Kós’s study, which explores the 19<sup>th</sup>-century mining town’s occupational socio-topography, is the basis for settlement structure investigation. Also the literary contents of the myth have a great importance in the process of emotional reception of the architectural experience. Consequently, the heritage space becomes a terrain of discourse maintained by professionals, locals and tourists. Still, the operation of specific knowledge transfers should be the subject of another study. \*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ABLONCZY BALÁZS (2008): *Sérelem, jogfolytonosság, frusztráció. Alsó-Fehér vármegye menekült törvényhatósága Budapesten, 1919–1921.* [Grievance, Legal Continuity, Frustration. Alsó-Fehér County Refugee Municipality in Budapest, 1919–1921.]. *Kisebbségkutatás* 2. 248–260.
- ASSMANN, AIDA (2006): *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit – Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik.* München, C. H. Beck Verlag,
- BALASSA M. IVÁN – FURU ÁRPÁD (2011): Torockó. In Balassa M. Iván – Dobosyné Antal Anna (szerk.): *A területi védelem színe és fonákja.* Budapest, ICOMOS Magyar Nemzeti Bizottság. 43–48.
- BACHELARD, GASTON (1994): *The Poetics of Space.* Boston, Beacon Press. (Becker, L. Carl (1958): What Are the Historical Facts? In Bachelard Gaston (ed.): *Detachment and the Writing of History.* Cornell University Press, Ithaca.
- BEKE GYÖRGY (1979): *Torockó romantika nélkül* [Torockó Without Romanticism]. In Beke: *Nyomjelző rokonság.* Bukarest, Kriterion Kiadó.
- BORBÉLY ISTVÁN (1927): *A régi Torockó* [The Old Torockó]. Cluj-Kolozsvár, Minerva Rt. Kiadása.
- DÚLL ANDREA (2010): *A környezetpszichológia alapkérdései - Helyek, tárgyak, viselkedés.* [Basic Issues of Environmental Psychology – Places, Objects, Behaviors]. Budapest, L’Harmattan Kiadó.
- FOUCAULT, MICHEL (1999): *Eltérő terek.* [The Other Spaces] In: Foucault M (szerk.): *Nyelv a végtelenhez – Tanulmányok, előadások, beszélgetések.* Latin Betűk, Debrecen. 147–157.
- FURU ÁRPÁD (2006): *Műemlékvédelem Torockón.* [Heritage Protection in Torockó]. Kolozsvár, Utilitas Kiadó.
- GYÓRBÍRÓ PÁL (1971): *Torockói emlékek és feladatok.* [Memories and Tasks in Torockó]. *Művelődés.* 24. évf. 6. sz. 44–45.
- GYURGYÁK JÁNOS (2007): *Ezzél lett magyar hazátok. A magyar nemzeteszmé és a nacionalizmus története.* [This Has Your Hungarian Land become. The Hungarian National Identity and History of Nationalism] Budapest, Osiris.
- HARPER, DOUGLAS (2012): *Visual Sociology.* New York, Routledge.
- HALBWACHS, MAURICE (1985): *Das kollektive Gedächtnis.* Frankfurt am Main.
- HAMVAS BÉLA (1983): *Az öt genius (The Five Geniuses).* In Hamvas Béla (szerk.) *A magyar Hüperion és más vonatkozású esszék* (The Hungarian Hyperion and Other Related Essays). Medio Kiadó, Budapest. 7–175.

- IGNÁCZ RÓZSA (1970): *Torockói gyász*. [Sorrow of Torockó]. Budapest, Móra Ferenc Könyvkiadó.
- GALLAY DOMOKOS (1996): *Vaskenyéren*. [On Ironbread]. Bukarest.
- Gergely Ernő (1998): *Torockó* (Régi magyar bányavárosok 2). [Torockó. Old Hungarian Mining Towns 2]. Budapest, MTA Földrajztudományi Kutatóintézet.
- GRANASZTÓI PÁL (1976): *Városaink sorsa*. [The Fate of Our Towns]. Budapest, Magvető Kiadó.
- GYÁNI GÁBOR (2000): *Emlékezés, emlékezet és a történelem elbeszélése*. [Remembering, Memory and Narration of History]. Budapest, Napvilág Kiadó.
- JAKÓ ZSIGMOND (1974): *A torockói legenda születése*. [The Birth of the Torockó Legend]. *Korunk*, 12. sz. 1241–1246.
- JÓKAI MÓR (1966): *Egy az Isten*. Budapest. [God is One]. Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó.
- JÓKAI MÓR (szerk.) (1887): *Segítség! Eperjes, Nagykároly, Toroczkó tűzkárosultjainak fölségelésére*. [Help! Help the Victims of Fires in Eperjes, Nagykároly, Toroczkó] Budapest.
- KEMÉNYFI RÓBERT (2013): The Notion of Ethnic Space: Sacred Ethnicity and Territory. In: Judit Pieldner, Zsuzsanna Ajtony (ed): *Discourses of Space*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing Cambridge. 186–197.
- KENDE PÉTER (2013): *A kommunizmus és a magyar társadalom*. [Communism and the Hungarian Society]. Pozsony, Kalligram.
- KÓS KÁROLY (1998): *Kiáltó szó* (Scream). In K. Jakab Antal (szerk.) *Magyar irodalom Bánffy Miklóstól Szilágyi Domokosig* (Hungarian Literature from Miklós Bánffy to Domokos Szilágyi). Kolozsvár, Stúdium Könyvkiadó. 101–106.
- IFJ. KÓS KÁROLY (2010): Bevezetés. Vasművészet (Introduction. Ironworks). In Ifj. Kós Károly. et al (szerk.): *Torockói népművészet* (Folk Art in Torockó). Kolozsvár, Kriterion Könyvkiadó. 9–18.
- KÖRÖSFŐI-KRIESCH ALADÁR (1909): *Torockó*. In Malonyai Dezső (szerk.): *A magyar nép művészete 2*.
- KOVÁCS GERGELYNÉ, SALAMON FERENC (szerk.) (1976): *Hortobágy - a nomád Pusztától a Nemzeti Parkig*. [Hortobágy –From the Nomadic Steppe to the National Park]. Budapest Natura.
- KÖVÁRI LÁSZLÓ (1853): *Erdély földje ritkaságai*. [Rarities of the Transylvania Land]. Tilsch János Tulajdona, Kolozsvár.
- K. LENGYEL ZSOLT (2007): *A kompromisszum keresése. Tanulmányok a 20. századi transzszilvanizmus korai történetéhez*. [Search for a Compromise. Studies for the Early History of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century Transylvaniam]. Csíkszereda, Múltunk Könyvek.
- LAJTA L. LÁSZLÓ (2004): *Nemzetkép az iskolai történelemoktatásban 1777–1848. A nemzeti történelem konstruálása az első magyar történelemtankönyvekben*. [National Image in History Education from 1777 to 1848. The Construction of the National History in the First Hungarian History Textbooks]. Pécs – Budapest. Iskolakultúra könyvek.
- LÉDERER PÁL (2002): *A szociológus, a módszerei és a szövege*. [The Sociologist, His/Her Methods and Texts]. Budapest, Új Mandátum Kiadó.
- LIKER ANDRÁS ET AL (2012): Urbanization, Nestling Growth and Reproductive Success in a Moderately Declining House Sparrow Population. *Journal of Avian Biology*. 43. 403–414.
- MÁRKUS GYÖRGY (1992): Tudományképünk változásai. [Changes in Our Vision of Science]. In MÁRKUS GYÖRGY (szerk.): *Kultúra és modernitás*. Budapest. T-Twins. 275–355.
- MIKÓ ISTVÁN (1975): *Jókai Torockón*. [Jókai in Torockó]. *Keresztény Magvető*. 4. 231–234.
- MEGGYESI TAMÁS (2005): *A 20. század urbanisztikájának útvesztői*. [Labyrinths of the 20th-century Urban Design]. Budapest, Terc.
- MEGGYESI TAMÁS (2009): *Városépítészeti alaktan*. [Urban Architectural Morphology] Budapest, Terc.
- MEZŐS TAMÁS (2002): *Elmélet és gyakorlat a magyar műemlékvédelemben (1949–1999): Vita-tézisek a műemlékvédelem elméletének és gyakorlatának értékeléséhez*. [Theory and Practice of the Hungarian Heritage Protection (1949–1999): Discourse Theses of the Evaluation of the Theory and Practice of Heritage Protection]. *Építés Épitészettudomány* 30. 1–2. 173–203.
- NORA, PIERRE (1989): Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire. *Representations*, No. 26. Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory. 7–24.
- ROMÁN ANDRÁS (2004): *487 bekezdés és 617 kép a műemlékvédelemről*. [487 Paragraphs and 617 Images of Heritage Protection]. Budapest. Terc.



- ORBÁN BALÁZS (1868): *A Székelyföld leírása I-V. Történelmi, régészeti, természetrajzi s népismeai szempontból.* [Description of the Székely Land. From the Aspects of History, Archeology, Natural History and Ethnography]. Pest, Nyomatott Panda és Frohna Könyvnyomdájában.
- ORBÁN BALÁZS (1985): *Székelyföld* [Székely Land]. Budapest, Európa Könyvkiadó.
- PÁSZKA IMRE (1984): *Struktúrák és közösségek.* [Structures and Communities]. Bukarest, Kriterion Könyvkiadó.
- PÁSZKA IMRE (2006): *A fordított folyamatok struktúrái.* [The Structures of the Reverse Process] Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale.
- PÁSZKA IMRE (2009): *Narratív történetformák.* [Narrative Story Forms]. Szeged, Belvedere Meridionale – Szegedi Egyetemi Kiadó.
- SONKOLY GÁBOR (2001): *Erdély városai a XVIII–XIX. században.* [The Towns of Transylvania in the 17-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries]. Budapest, L'Harmattan – Atelier Füzetek.
- SZABÓ ZOLTÁN (1988): *Szerelmes földrajz.* [Loving Geography]. Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó.
- SZERB ANTAL (1978): *Magyar irodalomtörténet.* [Hungarian Literary History]. Budapest, Magvető Könyvkiadó.
- T. SZABÓ LEVENTE (2008): *A tér képei: tér, irodalom, társadalom.* [Images of Space: Space, Literature and Society]. Kolozsvár, KOM-Press Kiadó.
- WHITE, HAYDEN (1978): *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism.* Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press.

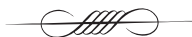
BOROS, LAJOS – NAGY, GYULA

borosl@geo.u-szeged.hu gynagy@geo.u-szeged.hu DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.9

# *The Long-term Socioeconomic Consequences of the Tisza Flood of 2001 in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Hungary*

**Abstract** The extreme weather conditions caused by the climate change have strong impact on the everyday life of people. This study aims to analyse the changes in the life quality of those who live in the villages and towns affected by the 2001 floods in north-east Hungary. The study is based on statistical data and a survey conducted in nine settlements of the afflicted area. The floods had strong impact on the built environment and on local communities as well. According to our results, the majority of locals have experienced the negative effects of floods and had their homes ruined or damaged. The respondents experienced flood-related migration in the studied area and their impression was that mainly poor and unemployed people immigration to the studied area.

**KEYWORDS** quality of life, environmental inequality, floods, Tisza, disaster



## **Introduction**

The effects and impacts of climate change and natural disasters on society – including floods – are considered and discussed in details by international studies, such as CLEMENS-HIETALA (1999), CLUTTER et al. (2003), WALKER et al. (2003). Every natural disaster has various and severe consequences in human health – physically and mentally – and in the quality, health and completeness of built environment. Natural disasters endanger both the quality of life and the well-being of locals. The growing frequency and the effect of weather extremities in precipitation highlight the importance of floods and flood-borne inequalities.

The aim of our paper is to examine how and how much the great flood of 2001 changed

the quality of life in the affected region. The paper also ponders what kinds of intervention for indemnification were done and whether there were any life-threatening health risks or injustice in the compensation process. As the study area is situated in the least developed regions of Hungary (Figure 1), inequalities caused by geographical and environmental features have to be taken into account as well. In addition to the socio-economic status, the settlement structure is unfavourable; the vast majority of the settlements are small or tiny villages. In the first part of the paper, we give a short overview of the physical geographical features of the flood explaining what threats and risks a flood causes in the built environment. In the second part, we will analyse the results of a survey introducing how the locals adjudge the events.

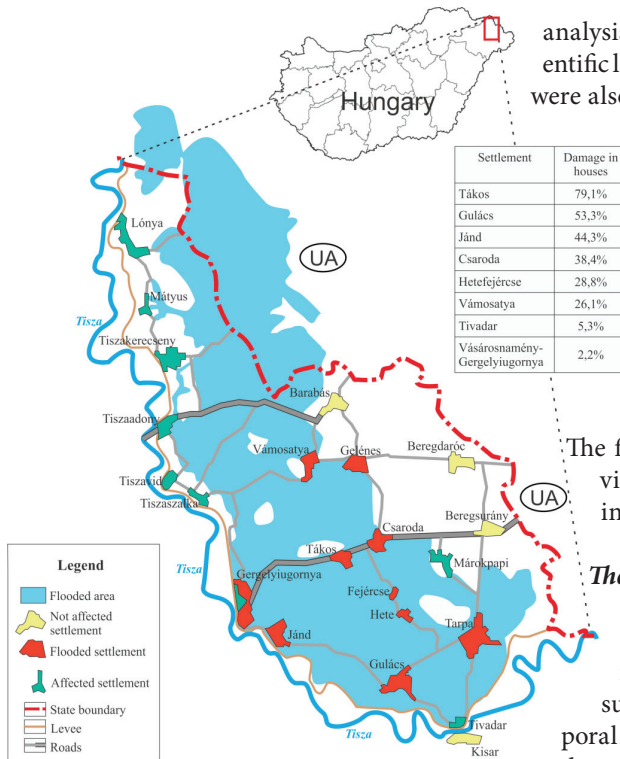


FIGURE 1 ❖ The flooded study area and the damage in the settlements caused by the flood. (edited: Nagy, Gy. based on KONECKSKY 2004)

**Study Area and Methods**

In 2001 nine settlements were partly or completely flooded and circa 1000 houses were destroyed in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County’s Bereg part. Thanks to the immediate response from the government, the damaged houses were rebuilt rapidly. Standard-design house plans were applied which offered better life quality for the locals, but resulted in conflicts.

The research used mixed methods to explore the long-term consequences of the flood and the governmental intervention. Content

analysis was made on media articles and scientific literature. Furthermore, statistical data were also analysed to reveal the outcomes. In the nine most severely affected settlements a survey was carried out (N=411) in the autumn of 2011. No specialised sampling method was applied; nevertheless, we focused on the most affected parts of each settlement. We had limited opportunities to draw comparisons between the settlements due to the small sample size in each location.

The first table shows the number of interviewed inhabitants and their proportion in the entire sample (Table 1).

**The Flood of 2001 in Bereg**

One of the many consequences of global climate change is the growing frequency of extreme weather events, such as the changing amount and temporal distribution of precipitation. Suddenly and rapidly pouring rainfalls lead to serious rise in the rivers’ water level. The shape of the catchment area can also augment the risk of floods which is unfavourable in the case of the Upper-Tisza, especially during sudden and heavy rainfall. As the catchment area is rather wide and short, tributaries should drain the flood from a sizeable area to a small section of the Tisza. Confluence of the main stem increases the water level easily and rapidly. In addition, the situation becomes worse, if the main river floods and the water of

the tributaries bloat which causes floods on the upstream. Because of the river control of the Tisza, the period of flooding shortened, but the water level increased. The water level can reach 8-11

Settlement	Sample size (N)	Share (%)
Csaroda	42	10,2
Gergelyiugornya	63	15,3
Gulács	61	14,8
Hetefejércse	17	4,1
Jánd	42	10,2
Tákos	20	4,9
Tarpa	115	28
Tivadar	15	3,6
Vámosatya	36	8,8

TABLE 1 ❖ Sample size and share by settlements (Source: survey)



PICTURE 1 ♦ Dam break in Tarpa. (Photo: [www.tarpa.eu](http://www.tarpa.eu))

m (MEZŐSI 2011) which also strengthens the negative effects of the unfavourable shape of the catchment area. Between 1998 and 2006 several water level records broke (RAKONCZAI 2000, 2002, 2011).

Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg are the most affected counties by floods in Hungary: after a heavy rainfall, the floods reach these counties in 12 to 36 hours (KONECSNY 2004), thus appropriate and quick response is needed which is not always possible.

In the last few decades several major floods took place: in 1970, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2001 and 2011. The flood of 1970 was caused by the Szamos river and ravaged the right bank of the Tisza. The flood of 2001 affected Bereg region (see Figure 1), caused nearly 15.1 billion HUF damage and the total recovery cost nearly 25 billion HUF (1025/2001. (III. 23. Government Decision). The damaged houses were

rebuilt and the morphology, the traditional folk architecture blueprints of the villages were preserved. Some settlements, e.g. Tákos were entirely rebuilt and renovated (see Fig. 2). The flood did not only hit the settlements and destroy the built environment, but it caused nearly 6 billion HUF loss in agricultural production as well.

The Bereg region is one of the peripheral regions of Hungary characterised by low income and low employment rate, fragmented and decentralised settlement structure with small villages. The vast majority of the flood-affected settlements do not have strong persistent power which is proved by decades of population decrease (BAJMÓCY et al. 2012, CSORDÁS 2001, KUN 2004). The affected area is part of the Vásárosnamény micro-region which is one of the 33 least developed micro-regions in Hungary as far as infrastructural,



**PICTURE 2** ❖ *Reconstructed house in Tákos*  
(Photo by Györki, A.)

socio-economic and employment indices are concerned. The rise from this unfavourable situation is impeded by floods that reduce touristic potentials by damaging infrastructure, cultural and built heritages, and causing negative image that decreases attractiveness. Not only the decreasing touristic potential, but the concomitant GDP loss is a burden for the whole region. These accelerate the underdevelopment which afflicts especially the lower socio-economic groups.

Several months before the flood of 2001 – the entire year of 2000 until February of 2001 – were characterised by deficient precipitation and low water level on the Tisza and its tributaries. However, the quantity of several months' rain fell in the upstream of the Tisza in early March of 2001. At the time of the flood the soil was still frozen, so neither infiltration, nor foliage reduced the amount of the water on the surface; the precipitation flew directly to the

tributary streams and to the Tisza. A sudden heatwave melted the snow in the Carpathians which raised the level of the flood. As a consequence, the water level growth reached 12 m within days in some gauging stations (KONECSKY 2004). In Ukraine several dam broke, and also in Hungary between Tarpa and Tivadar (Picture 1) the levee was unable to keep the rapidly increased amount of water. The flood level broke the record height, so the inhabitants of Bereg were evacuated (AMBRUSZ 2011).

After assessing the damages, the government decided to rebuild the settlements and to modernise the dam system. The houses were rebuilt following 17 traditional folk architecture blueprints (Picture 2.). In addition, the government offered compensation for the farmers, but the quality and the amount of help provoked fierce criticism (KUN 2004). The combined costs of defence against the flood, the reconstruction and the compensation were estimated to 60 billion HUF.

### **Flood-related Risks**

The flood does not only destroy built and natural environment, but it is also dangerous for the society, because it is a source of complex human health risk. For example, the poor drainage system can be biggest threat for the settlements: floods might wash out excrement from cesspits. Even if the remediation is carried out fast after the floods, the sporadic bacteria or nematode eggs are can survive for 100 days in the soil. At the time of the flood of 2001 only 63% of the homes in Vásárosnamény and 21% in Tarpa were connected to the drainage system; this index was 0% in the case of the other settlements (KUN 2004).

The poor quality of houses also causes disorders in human health. The sick building syndrome (SBS) (KREISS 1990) is mainly caused by the bleak environment, inadequate lighting, and overcrowded environment which affect the physical, as well as the psychical well-being of the inhabitants (PÁL – TÓTH 2007). Floods worsen the condition of poorly built houses with sodden walls which are perfect place for mildew. Lower class people often live in one-room houses where the air circulation is insufficient. The crowded rooms and steam from cooking increases humidity, air humidity over 70% of leads to mildew formation on the colder parts of the wall. The results of a previous study demonstrated that because of the combined effect of floods, inland waters and mildew growth the houses become uninhabitable, but the owners – due to their poverty – are compelled to live in the life-threatening buildings (NAGY – BÁN 2012). The mildew inside the houses doubles the prevalence of bronchitis and asthma (EMBER 2007, RUDNAI 2007). As it has been mentioned earlier, the research area is one of the least developed regions in Hungary according to socio-economic and infrastructural data. Health condition was also one of the worst in this region which is caused by the inadequate life circumstances due to peripheral position, unequal socio-economic

structure, and the unequal transition to capitalism (ILLÉS 1996, UZZOLI 2001).

Despite the fact that psychical conditions might influence physical well-being, this aspect is less emphasised in catastrophe-related researches, because it is less conspicuous than the spreading of illnesses or epidemics. In fact, the shock of a natural disaster is a lifelong trauma which can even worsen the situation of deprived social groups on the periphery; children, for example, might become aggressive due to such shocks. The trauma might contribute to the (re)production of the exclusion of disadvantaged social groups (ÚJVÁRINÉ HANDÓ 2009). Earlier researches prove that flood significantly increased the susceptibility to depression (REACHER et al. 2004, AHERN et al. 2005, MORGAN et al 2005).

In other words, it is not enough to examine the damage and reconstruction of the built and natural environment, or the socio-economic status (SES), but flood researches have to give a complex assessment of life circumstances and quality of life, and to focus on psychical well-being of people in the affected area as well.

### **Results**

Population decline was the main demographic feature for our study area after the flood during the period from 2001 to 2011. The flood had a major effect on the housing stock, as approximately 5% loss was observable in the Vásárosnamény micro-region. The destroyed house stock had a rate over 20% in several settlements; the highest rate was found in Csaroda (BAJMÓCY et al. 2012).

Results of the survey present even higher rate in the study that concentrated on the most affected parts of the settlements. More than two thirds of the respondents affirmed that their houses had been affected by the flood of 2001 or later. In most cases (57%) only small, repairable damages occurred, but in more than 40% of the cases the houses were destroyed or

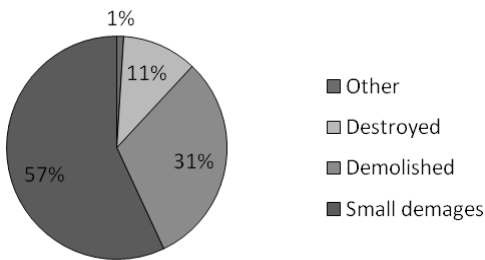


FIGURE 2 ❖ Type of damage in the housing stock  
(Source: survey, N=411)

had to be demolished due to the severe damages (Figure 2). Eighty-nine % of the harmed received help (financial or other aid) in reconstruction or renovation from the state, the local administration and in some cases from charity organisations, and the majority of the interviewed were satisfied with the quality of the service. Those respondents were the most satisfied who received help from the churches (it has to be noted that this was the smallest subgroup in the sample). The state-aid was rated above average, while the work of charity organisations was ranked lower.

As a result of the reconstructions following the flood, three quarters of the respondents lived in houses of the same or better quality than earlier. Thus, there is a sharp difference between those whose houses were rebuilt and those whose had been renovated. The former group thinks more positively about the housing stock, 70% of them rated housing conditions better than they had in 2001, while the latter group is less satisfied. Only 25% of those whose house were renovated and only 15% of those respondents who were not affected by the flood live in better housing conditions. Reconstruction and renovation improved the image of the settlements, two thirds of the respondents agreed with this statement.

In those villages that were mostly hit by the disaster, 29% of the respondents considered moving away, but their situation is complicated due to the low prices on the housing market. The houses are unmarketable at such a price that would be sufficient for buying another

one in a nearby city or in the capital. Therefore, some of the inhabitants are in a real estate trap. The construction of a new house in the study area costs approximately 15 million HUF nowadays, but they sell for 4-5 million HUF (BAJMÓCY et al. 2012). Therefore, some citizens own some houses as second homes. In addition to financial reasons, the most important reasons for staying are rootedness and familiarity with the surroundings.

Even if the majority did not move, many respondents knew someone who has moved away since the flood. According to our survey, the most popular destination was Budapest, followed by Nyíregyháza and Fehérgyarmat (the urban centres of the region). However, migration processes can be measured only by statistics, since the population structure has changed after the flood (Table 2). The participants think that mainly lower class people, poor and unemployed moved in. The most significant number of migrants comes from the neighbouring flood-affected villages.

According to self-assessment of the respondents, the majority of the sample belonged to average or below average income group (Fig. 3) and nobody in the two top categories which is not surprising, if we examine the socio-economic situation. The lowest mean can be detected in accordance with the income (Fig. 4).

Answer	Respondents (%)
Totally agree	49,4
Rather agree	13,4
Rather disagree	15,3
Disagree	15,3
No response / Do not know	6,6

TABLE 2 ❖ Do you agree or disagree that the flood had changed the population composition of the settlement?  
(Source: survey, N=411)

The self-assessment of health condition showed average values. One-ninths of the respondents ranked their health condition as the best, but almost all categories have the same proportions. Most of the interviewed ranked their conditions as average (5) on a ten-

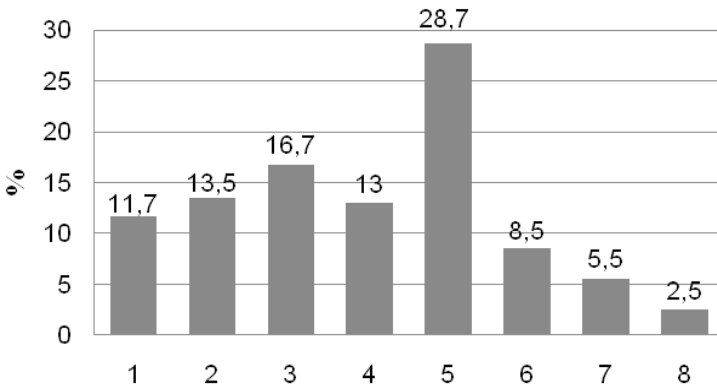


FIGURE 3 ❖ Please assess your income position in the society! (Source: survey, N=411)

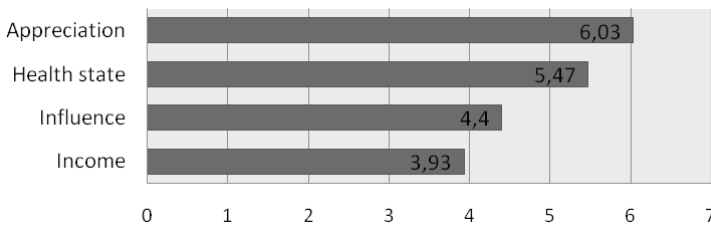


FIGURE 4 ❖ The results of self-assessment, position in the society (Source: survey, N=411)

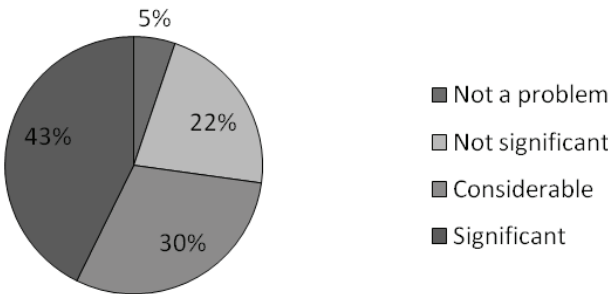


FIGURE 5 ❖ How significant threat is flood in the region? (Source: survey, N=411)

grade scale (15%). The income self-assessment has significant, but weak-medium correlation ( $r=0,335$ ) with the health condition assessment, mainly because the respondents rate their health condition better as their income level. Most of the interviewed (87%) did not recognise any floodborne illnesses or disorders, neither on themselves nor on their neighbours.

The disadvantaged social status can be

measured through social indicators, such as being beneficiary of aids or state funds. More than 40% of the respondents receive some kind of aid, most of them regular social care and disability pension. The high proportion of these two items might derive from the fact that the survey focused on the most flood-affected, thus the cheapest lands where people with the lowest social status live.

We also examined whether users – a common problem of poor and small villages – have appeared or gained influence, but the majority of the respondents gave negative answers. Yet, 26% confirmed that there are users in their villages. The usury increases the vulnerability and dependency of locals which reduces their social status and their chance of social mobility.

Although most of the participants thought that flood is a great risk in the region (Figure 5), they do not see a connection between the labour market and the flood (no significant correlation can be found between the answers). This means that the flood is rather a natural threat and not a complex issue from the locals' point of view.

Most people think that unemployment is inevitable and even if they searched for a job, they would not find one. Seventy-three % of the respondents think that flood is a danger for



everyone and they are vulnerable and exposed. Most of them expect solution from outside, 55% think that the state alone is responsible for preventing flood-threat and damage. In addition, people have positive experiences with cooperation, since most of them underlined their neighbours' role in prevention, reconstruction and other flood-related works during or after the flood.

The controversial approach to environmental issues can be observed in the answers for the question whether man can change or influence environmental processes. Eighty-five % believed it is possible, but only one third thought that human can control nature.

## Summary

As it has been mentioned earlier, floods have a complex effect on human well-being as far as health, life circumstances and quality of life are concerned. Moreover, floods have an impact on the real estate market, society and everyday life. However, respondents considered floods only as natural disasters and not as a potential threat to their physical and psychical health.

The peripheral position and centerless nature of the Bereg region is characterised by considerable outmigration, high unemployment rate and low labour activity. The lack of cooperation with Ukraine – as it is not an EU member in the present and it is not about to become one – reduces the chance for job creation. Social indices also affirm the disadvantaged situation of the region, since the proportion

of those who receive some kind of social care or aid is above the national average. More than 40% of the interviewed depends on state or local aid or found which proves the high social vulnerability. In addition, this region shows the worst health condition indices nationwide.

Despite the fact that reconstruction and assistance was immediate after the flood – and the actions taken were considered satisfying by the majority of the respondents, numerous locals decided to move away. The reasons for staying were the frozen housing market and low prices.

As a consequence of its low SES, the study area depends on external help. Flood prevention and modernisation of the dam system is financially demanding which the local authorities cannot finance. In the last decade the locals' exposure to natural disasters did not decrease, the vulnerability is permanent; moreover people are sometimes not aware of the threats and consequences. According to the results of the survey and the scientific literature, local residents are in a deprived and marginal position without the chance of social mobility. The environmentally unequal circumstances are some of the main causes of this unfavourable situation. \*

## Acknowledgement

This research was supported by the European Union and the Hungarian Government, co-financed by the European Social Fund in the framework of TÁMOP 4.2.4. A/2-11-1-2012-0001 'National Excellence Program'.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AHERN et al. 2005: Global Health Impacts of Floods: Epidemiologic Evidence. In *Epidemiologic Reviews* USA, John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. vol 27. 36–46.
- AMBRUSZ L. (2011): *Megemlékezés a 2001. évi rendkívüli árvízről*. A Magyar Hidrológiai Társaság XXIX. Országos Vándorgyűlése. CD Kiadvány.
- BAJMÓCY P. – BOROS L. – CSATÁRI B. – DUDÁS R. – FARKAS J. Zs. – JURAY T – KOVÁCS Z. – PÁL V. (2012) Managing the socio-economic consequences of the climate change. In Rakonczai J. – Ladányi Zs. (eds.): *Review of the climate change research program at the University of Szeged* (2010–2012). 105–120.
- CLEMENS P. – HIETALA J. R. (1999): Risk of Domestic Violence after Flood Impact. Effects of Social Support, Age and History of Domestic Violence. *Applied Behavioral Science Review* vol. 7. no. 2. 199–206.
- CLUTTER S. L. – BORUFF B. J. – SHIRLEY W. L. (2003): Social Vulnerability to Environmental Hazards. *Social Science Quarterly* vol. 84. no. 2. 242–261.
- CSORDÁS L. (2001): Területi különbségek az Északkelet-Alföld határmenti területein. In Baranyi B. (szerk.): *A határmentiség kérdőjelei az Északkelet-Alföldön*. Pécs, MTA RKK. 94–147.
- EMBER I. (szerk) (2007): *Népegészségügyi orvostan*. Budapest – Pécs, Dialóg Campus Kiadó.
- ILLÉS I. (1996): Az egészségügyi ellátás rendszere. In Perczel György (szerk.): *Magyarország társadalmi-gazdasági földrajza*. Budapest, ELTE Eötvös Kiadó. 500–518.
- KONECSNY K. 2004: Az árvíz hidrológiája. In Bodnár G. et al (szerk.): *A 2001. márciusi Felső-tiszai árvíz*. Nyíregyháza. 298.
- KREISS, K. (1990): The Sick Building Syndrome: Where Is the Epidemiologic Basis? *American Journal of Public Health* 80. 1172–1173.
- KUN I. (2004): *A feláldozott Bereg*. Budapest, Osiris Kiadó.
- MEZŐSI G. (2011): *Magyarország természetföldrajza*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- MICHALKÓ G. (2002): Árvíz és turizmus – A szatmárberegi térség komplex turisztikai vizsgálata a Tisza 2001. évi áradása tekintetében. *Földrajzi Értesítő* 51. évf. 3-4. füzet. 365–383.
- MORGAN et al. (2005): Revisiting the Tsunami: Health Consequences of Flooding. *PLoS Med* vol. 2. no.6. 184.
- NAGY GY. – BÁN A. (2012): A környezeti igazságtalanság egészségügyi kockázatai Boldván, különös tekintettel az allergiás megbetegedésekre. In *Társadalomföldrajzi kihívások a XXI. század Kelet-Közép-Európájában*. Konferencia kiadvány. 332–339.
- PÁL V. – TÓTH J. 2007: *Egészségföldrajz*. Pécs – Gyula, Lomart Kiadó.
- RAKONCZAI J. (szerk.) (2002): *A Tisza vízgyűjtője, mint komplex vizsgálati és fejlesztési régió*. Konferenciakötet. Szeged.
- RAKONCZAI J. 2000: A környezet-átalakítás hidrogeográfiai összefüggései az Alföldön. In Pálfa I. (szerk.): *A víz szerepe és jelentősége az Alföldön*. A Nagyalföld Alapítvány Kötetei 6. 16–26.
- RAKONCZAI J. (2011): Az Alföld tájváltozásai és a klímaváltozás. In Rakonczai J (szerk.): *Környezeti változások és az Alföld*. A Nagyalföld Alapítvány Kötetei 7. Békéscsaba. 137–148.
- REACHER et al. (2004): Health Impacts of flooding in Lewes: a comparison of reported gastrointestinal and other illness and mental health in flooded and non-flooded households. *Communicable Disease and Public Health* vol 7. no. 1. 1–8.
- RUDNAI P. (szerk.) (2007): *Lakás és egészség*. Budapest, Nyilvános kiadvány, Országos Környezetegészségügyi Intézet.
- UZZOLI A. (2001): *A társadalmi környezet hatása a helyi népesség egészségi állapotára*. Geográfus Doktoranduszok IV. Országos Konferenciája. Szeged, Konferencia kiadvány, CD-ROM.
- VÁGÁS I. (2011): A Tisza-völgy árvízmentesítése és mai kérdései. In Rakonczai J (szerk.): *Környezeti változások és az Alföld*. A Nagyalföld Alapítvány Kötetei 7. Békéscsaba. 189–199.
- WALKER G. – FAIRBURN J. – SMITH G. (2003): *Environmental Quality and Social Deprivation*. R&D Technical Report E2-067/1/TR. Bristol. Environment Agency.

VARGA V., ATTILA

attilavarga@email.arizona.edu

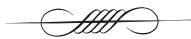
DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.10

# *Changes of Personal Network Composition and Inter-Group Ties from 1987 to 2005 in Hungary*

**Abstract** The following paper presents the changes and stability of assortative mixing, and inter-group ties in Hungary from 1987 to 2005. The demographic categories under investigation are age, sex, and education. The analysis has a special focus on the rearrangement of the context of tie formation, and the inequality of receiving choices into personal networks along social categories. The most substantial change during the period, is the strong decrease in gender homophily, and some strengthening of intergenerational ties. Both of these findings are in line with the observation that personal networks are recruited more often among the members of the nuclear-family. This latter phenomenon is probably due to the shrinking network size. However, this set of finding is prone to the methodological criticism formulated in the US context, that these observations are in fact the result of the interviewer effect. Finally, the study found stable patterns of educational network prestige, and describes the changes of social capital attached to categories of gender and age.

**KEYWORDS** assortative mixing, macro networks, homophily

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** The author would like to thank to Robert Tardos for his suggestions



## **1 Introduction**

The paper investigates the changes of assortative mixing patterns by age, sex, and education in the past twenty years in Hungary between 1987 and 2005. The utilized datasets are nationally representative surveys containing name generator questions to reconstruct personal networks of respondents (CAMPBELL–BARRETT 1991). Assortativity, or homophily, the bias to establish social connections between individuals with the same attributes is a well-studied phenomenon in social networks both at the macro and micro levels (MCPHERSON et. al. 2001). As a determinant of network structure assortativity effects clustering, bridge

formation and for that reason resource flow in networks. The macro structural theory of Peter BLAU (1984) assumed that the changing magnitude of assortative mixing over social ties is the main determinant of the extent of unequal distribution of life chances in modern societies.

Although previous findings in the United States over the same time interval reported no change on assortative mixing (MCPHERSON et. al. 2006), there are some theoretical insights and empirical trends which suggest that some reconfiguration may have taken place. Studies of marital endogamy over long time periods shows that religion, ethnicity, socio-economic background and education have varying effect over marriage ties, and these changes form

stable trends (KALMIJN 1998). Educational homogamy generally increased in developed countries, while in Hungary it showed a strong increase in the second half of the twentieth century (UUNK et. al. 1996). One may argue that education is a strong predictor of individual taste and socio-economic advancement in contrast with religion and ethnicity, which in fact has lost its importance for marriage formation with time (KALMIJN 1998). This individualization thesis suggests that education sustained its importance or at least did not change in the period. One may also assume that generational difference is an important identity generating experience in modern societies (MANNHEIM 1952), and because of which cohort homophily raise its prominence. Another relevant line of research is the study of trust. This literature indicates that social ties reconfigured during the transitional period in Hungary and focused on family ties for a trusted network background (UTASI 2002). UTASI argues that the loss of generalized trust and the need for trusted instrumental help increased the prominence of family connections. This latter trend does not only suggest that personal networks may have shrunk in that period, but also that age and gender heterophily (the opposite of homophily) have increased, because family ties bridge generations and sexes.

In the following section I will present the datasets and the methodological approach. The two cross-sectional datasets that are analyzed are the “Miliök” for 1987, and the “Stilusok” 2005. Log-linear models will be used to investigate the main research question. In the third section I provide the basic background information about the change in the ego networks, such as the change in network size, and the social capital attached to different levels of education, cohorts and gender. This section will also show how the network composition has changed in terms of types of relationships. The fourth section contains the test of the main research question.

## 2 Data and Methods

The dataset from 1987 is created for the Tömegkommunikációs Kutatóközpont (N=2983) by TÁRKI, while the one from 2005 is for the MTA–ELTE Kommunikációelméleti Kutatócsoport (N=1500). Both datasets contain the same set of eight name generators. These questions use the following triggers: 1) discussing important matters; 2) going out together; 3) instrumental help around the household; 4) partners for discussions and hobbies; 5) who can be entrusted for house sitting or keeping an eye on the house at the time of travels; 6) discussing matters of work/school setting; 7) lending money to the respondent; 8) whose opinion is important for the respondent. This list of questions is supposed to monitor both the instrumental and emotional relationships of the respondent. The interview may have gathered information about the maximum of five distinct individuals (alters) that the respondent (egos) mentioned for one name generator, which means that the theoretically largest network is 40 alters.

Both questionnaires contain information about the gender, age, schooling, occupation of the alters (the latter is not investigated here) and their relations to ego, whether they are kin, members of the nuclear family, co-workers, neighbours, friends. The final dataset in 1987 however registered this information in an aggregated fashion at the respondent level (i.e. number of males, children etc. in respondent’s network). Because of this, one cannot perform multi-variable analysis of alter characteristics. Moreover, the occupation of alters is not retained in the final dataset, because FEOR codes are not translatable in this aggregated way.

The variables in question are categorical, and for this reason log-linear modelling is utilized for statistical testing (KNOKE – BURKE 1980). Two types of models are specified. One is for testing the independence of ego (E) and alter (A) characteristics (assortative mixing,

intergroup relations model). Using the marginal notation it is: {A}{E}. The second type of model is testing temporal (T) change: {AE}{AT}{ET}. It has to be noted that these models do not test assortative mixing *per se*, because they test the cell structure of the overall table, not specified regions (see MCPHERSON 1981, 1987 for such long-linear models). Moreover, these models also fail to take into account the phenomenon that some groups are over or under represented in networks as choices of the respondents (this will be analyzed separately in the next section). This latter phenomenon would require that margin A had the same distribution as margin E that is the hypothesis would be that the choices along with social categories have the same distribution as the individual identities (i.e. the number of female egos is the same as the female alters).

The entries in the table are choices of respondent types for alter types, so the unit of analysis is a dyad, not a respondent. This approach would result in a substantial increase of observations, which would unreasonably enlarge the sample for statistical testing. To avoid such a bias the tables are reweighted in a way that the sum of cell entries are added up to the original size of the sample.

### 3 Network Size and Composition

The network size shrank from 1987 to 2005 from 6.11 connections to 3.9 (table 1). The change is substantial, 36%. The magnitude of the change is similar to which MCPHERSON and his co-authors (2006) reported in the US within the same period, however, the proportion of the respondents who did not report any connections is relatively small in Hungary, it increased from 1.6% to 3.8%. This finding can be the subject of the same criticism that is formulated against MCPHERSON's and his associates' results, namely that

it is a result of interviewer effect and fatigue (FISCHER 2009, PAIK-SANCHAGRIN 2013). The pattern of the finding is nevertheless different. In the General Social Survey the number of respondents without discussants was significantly larger, which was the main target of criticism suggesting that some interviewers skipped the name generator entirely during the interview. It is also a difference, that there was only one name generator in the General Social survey, while eight in the datasets under study, but no any other module that would put a lot of burden on the interviewer and interviewee. Although it is hard to apply the same critical argument to the Hungarian case, but one would make a claim that the attitude toward social surveys changed in the 20 year period under study in both countries in a negative way, which may affect the information available in both cases in a similar way.

The change in the types of ties between 1987 and 2005 is in line with the decreasing trust hypothesis too. Respondents in the latter period more heavily rely on the nuclear family, while wider social circles lost their importance (figure 1). Although friendship relations sustain their importance in the period (almost 25% of all connections are friends in both time period), the role of kinship, and especially co-worker and neighbourhood relations is decreased. This finding about the rearrangement of the personal core networks to a focus on the nuclear family at the expense of workplace ties and extended kinships is in line with the findings for the first decade of the transitional period (ANGELUSZ-TARDOS 2001).

ANGELUSZ and TARDOS (1991) found in the 1987 Miliók dataset that alters have higher prestige in terms of educational attainment than their alters. They called this phenomenon the network prestige effect. This can be considered as a form of social capital for those in the favoured

	Max.	Mean	S. Dev.	% of respondents with 0 ties
1987	30	6.11	3.48	1.6
2005	19	3.9	2.52	3.8

TABLE 1 ❖ Network Size

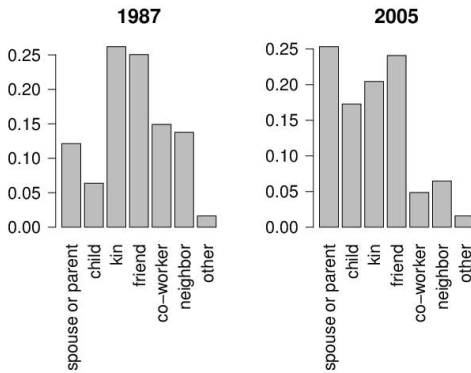


FIGURE 1 ❖ Relationship types

social category. Chosen by many people as a trusted individual accumulate social capital for the focal person. VARGA (2012) found the same pattern in a sample from 2003. In short, the previously mentioned study found that alters with higher levels of education, young middle aged individuals and males appear more often in the networks, while seniors, females and less educated appear less often. The applied name generator technique here differs from

both studies. Previous studies focused on the five most important discussants, and it is quite probable that the approach catches alters that ego considers highly competent, or that show some representative value (SMALL 2013). The study from 2012 utilized a single name generator which was inquired about discussants with whom the respondent discuss “important matters”, while the 1987 dataset used information about a smaller set of individuals who are “especially important” for the respondent beside its “close family”. However, this dataset contains information about a wider selection of connections, including connections with instrumental value and social support. This set of name generator might gather information about those who have more free time to convert into social capital, and those who might have other convertible skills for instrumental help around the household. Therefore, the representative prestige effect, that ANGELUSZ and TARDOS observed (1991) is maybe less pronounced in this context.

Figure 2 reports the differences between

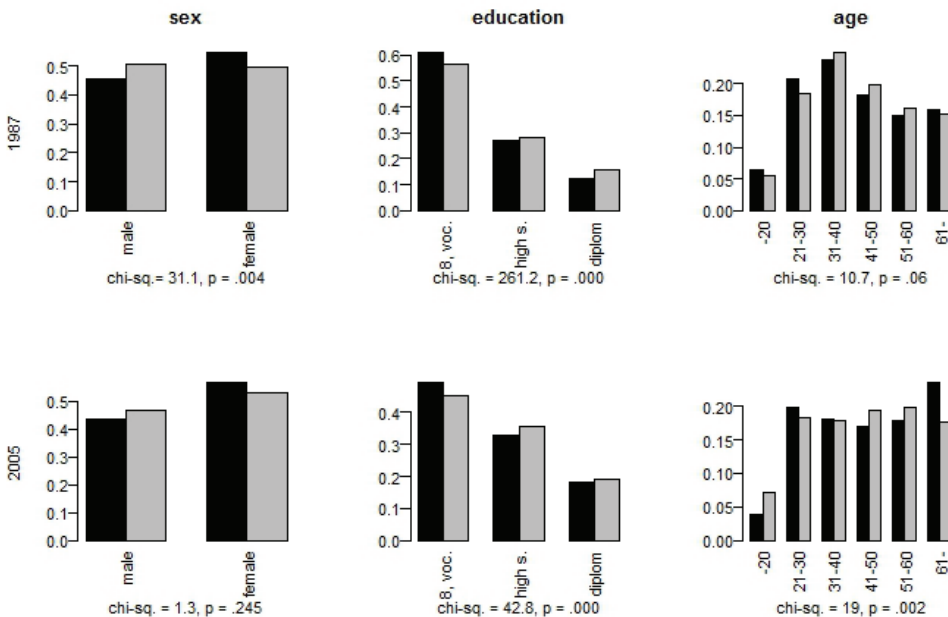


FIGURE 2 ❖ Social Capital of Macro Groups: Percentage of Alters and Egos of the Given Attribute. Test of the same distribution of ego (black bars) and alter (grey bars) attributes are reported under each figure.

<b>sex</b>		<b>education</b>				<b>age</b>												
Temporal change model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 36, df=1, p = .000		Temporal change model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 3.75, df = 4, p = .439				Temporal change model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 26.57, df = 25, p = .3677												
male		8 y. or high-school diploma				-20		21-30		31-40		41-50		51-60		61-		
1	male	0.34	-0.34	0.90	-0.12	-0.78	0.90	-0.12	-0.12	0.90	-0.12	-0.78	0.24	-0.52	-0.22	-0.67	-0.62	
9	female	-0.34	0.34	-0.13	0.24	-0.11	-0.13	0.24	-0.11	-0.13	0.24	-0.11	0.94	-0.04	-0.23	-0.16	-0.71	
8				-0.77	-0.12	0.89	-0.77	-0.12	0.89	-0.77	-0.12	0.89	0.13	0.60	-0.15	-0.16	0.03	
7													-0.42	0.08	0.49	0.02	0.11	
													-0.85	-0.16	0.02	0.09	0.64	0.27
													-0.25	-0.86	-0.15	0.01	0.33	0.92
Assortative mix. model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 303.59, df=1, p=.000		Assortative mix. model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 603.93, df = 4, p = .000				Assortative mix. model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 587.86, df = 25, p = .000												
male		8 y. or high-school diploma				-20		21-30		31-40		41-50		51-60		61-		
2	male	0.14	-0.14	0.91	-0.13	-0.78	0.91	-0.13	-0.78	0.91	-0.13	-0.78	0.39	-0.66	-0.08	-0.63	-0.61	
0	female	-0.14	0.14	0.02	0.18	-0.20	0.02	0.18	-0.20	0.02	0.18	-0.20	0.95	-0.13	-0.07	-0.09	-0.91	
0				-0.93	-0.04	0.98	-0.93	-0.04	0.98	-0.93	-0.04	0.98	-0.02	0.86	-0.47	-0.09	-0.12	
5													-0.01	-0.37	-0.14	0.49	-0.18	0.21
													-0.79	-0.01	0.02	-0.11	0.65	0.24
													-1.05	-0.80	0.05	0.25	0.35	1.19
Assortative mix. model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 26.05, df=1, p = .000		Assortative mix. model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 347.57, df=4, p = .000				Assortative mix. model, log-likelihood ratio s. = 369.86, df = 25, p = .000												

TABLE 2 ❖ Assortative Mixing in Time. Cell entries are interaction effect parameters. Grey scale indicates relative coefficient size within a table.

the respondents' and their alters' distribution along the categories of sex, age and educational levels. Despite the previously mentioned methodological differences, the observed patterns do not differ markedly from previous findings. Educational network prestige and the higher prestige of males follow the same pattern as in the earlier studies, and they are very stable across time. In 2005 the distributional asymmetry of male and female egos and alters is not statistically significant, probably because of the substantially smaller sample size, but it is true that the distribution is more balanced. The cohort differences are much less stable across the ages. In 1987 the individuals under 31 were less likely to be chosen by respondents, while older cohorts except the oldest were more likely to be chosen. However in 2005 the age profile was more complex and the differences between ego and alter age profiles were more extreme. This can be partly caused by the smaller sample size (few observations in the edges of age distribution). The oldest and youngest cohorts are the most and least likely to be in personal networks compared to their relative presence in the sample. This pattern is in harmony with previous findings too for that period (VARGA 2012). Individuals in their forties and fifties (potential parents) seem to be in a bridging position, they were overrepresented as alters in both period.

#### **4 Testing Temporal Change of Assortative Mixing Patterns**

Table 2 reports the temporal change of assortative mixing. The table entries show the association of all categories within the feature of age, sex, and education. Only the tables of sex differ significantly in the two periods. Sex homophily decreased during the examined period, the networks are more mixed in terms of gender. High school degree seems to bridge educational categories, as this one has the smallest homophily coefficient, and the largest off-diagonal parameters. Although the overall ego-alter choice table of education did

not change significantly between 1987 and 2005, one can note that the category of high school educated got closer to primary school and vocational school and farther from those with a diploma. As it has been mentioned earlier, alter choice patterns in terms of age did not change during the period. Homophily seems to have a U shaped curve, where young and old generations exhibit more assortative mixing. Although there was no statistically significant association with time, it seems that in the later period intergenerational ties have been strengthened between the cohorts of 20 year difference in many cells that would be in line with the previously described findings of strengthened family ties.

#### **5 Conclusions**

This analysis suggests that personal networks shrunk from 1987 to 2005, although the possibility of interviewer effect on that matter cannot be ruled out completely. The networks have focused more on the nuclear-family in the latter years rather than on co-worker, neighbourhood or extended kinship ties, and this may explain the few changes in intergroup ties. Gender homophily has decreased substantially, and there is some evidence that inter-generational ties have grown stronger. Both of these phenomena are in line with the changing sources of social ties. The basic structure of assortative mixing patterns did not change in the cases of education and age, which runs contrary to the individualization/modernization thesis, and long term patterns of marriage homogamy. Age has a U shaped homophily structure: younger and older generations are more homophilious than middle aged individuals. Among educational groups high school graduates have a bridging role with smaller homophily. Some social categories are able to collect more choices into personal networks, and this difference between groups exhibit both stable and changing patterns. Higher educational attainment provides more



social capital in that sense in both time period, while being male decreased this sort of benefit across time. However, cohort inequality in that sense grew from 1987 to 2005.

This analysis had many limitations. I do not want to make a strong claim about shrinking network size, because the same observation for the same time period in the US context received a lot of criticism, and deciding this question requires more scrutiny both in terms of analytical sophistication, and data gathering (FISCHER 2009; PAIK – SANCHAGRIN 2013). Moreover, I have suggested interpretations of changing structures even in the absence of statistical validation. I would like to emphasize that the questions of intergroup association patterns could be analyzed in a more nuanced log-linear framework in the future, if someone found this line of research worthy for continuation. Lastly I would like to point out that the problem of smaller networks in 2005 and the described changes in network composition and assortative mixing are interlinked. Either the networks have really become more centred on the family, which would explain the other detected changes, or the smaller network is an artefact, and the previously mentioned changes of assortative mixing is due to an interview bias. The bias would be that interviewees first reported family members, and the interview stopped artificially, and other, extended, and more homophilous ties are muted. \*

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ANGELUSZ, RÓBERT – TARDOS, RÓBERT (2001): Change and Stability in Social Network Resources: the Case of Hungary under Transformation. in Nan Lin-R. Burt-K. Cook (eds.): *Social Capital: Theory and Research*. New York, Aldine de Gruyter.
- ANGELUSZ, RÓBERT – TARDOS, RÓBERT (1991): *Hálózatok, Stílusok, Struktúrák*. Budapest, ELTE Szociológiai Intézet & MKI.
- BLAU, PETER M. – JOSEPH E. SCHWARTZ (1984): *Cross-cutting Social Circles*. Testing a Macrostructural Theory of Intergroup Relations. Orlando, Academic Press.
- CAMPBELL, KAREN E. – BARRETT A. LEE (1991): Name Generators in Surveys of Personal Networks. *Social Networks* vol. 13. no. 3. 203–221.
- FISCHER, CLAUDE S. (2009): Comment on McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Brashears. ASR, June 2006. The 2004 GSS Finding of Shrunken Social Networks: An Artifact? *American Sociological Review* vol. 74. no. 4. 657–669.
- KALMIJN, MATTHIJS (1998): Inter-marriage and Homogamy: Causes, Patterns, Trends. *Annual Review of Sociology* vol. 24. 395–421.
- KLOFSTAD, CASEY A. – SCOTT D. McCLURG – MEREDITH ROLFE (2009): Measurement of Political Discussion Networks. *Public Opinion Quarterly* vol. 73. no. 3. 462–483.
- KNOKE, DAVID – PETER J. BURKE (1980): *Log-Linear Models*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.
- MANNHEIM, KARL (1952): *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- MARSDEN, PETER V. (1981): Models and Methods for Characterizing the Structural Parameters of Groups. *Social Networks* vol. 3. no. 1. 1–27.
- MARSDEN, PETER V. (1987): Core Discussion Networks of Americans. *American Sociological Review* vol. 52. no. 1. 122–131.
- MCPHERSON, MILLER – SMITH-LOVIN, LYNN – COOK, JAMES M. (2001): Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks. *Annual Review of Sociology* vol. 27. no. 1. 415–444.
- MCPHERSON, MILLER – LYNN SMITH-LOVIN – MATTHEW E. BRASHEARS (2006): Social Isolation in America: Changes in Core Discussion Networks Over Two Decades. *American Sociological Review* vol. 71. no. 3. 353–375.
- PAIK, ANTHONY – SANCHAGRIN, KENNETH (2013): Social Isolation in America: An Artifact. *American Sociological Review* vol. 78. no. 3. 339–360.
- SMALL, MARIO L. (2013): Weak Ties and the Core Discussion Network: Why People Regularly Discuss Important Matters with Unimportant Alters. *Social Networks* vol. 35. no. 3. 470–483.
- STRAITS, BRUCE C. (2000): Ego's Important Discussants Or Significant People. An Experiment in Varying the Wording of Personal Network Name Generators. *Social Networks* vol. 22. no. 2. 123–140.
- UTASI, ÁGNES (2002). A Társadalmi integráció és szolidaritás alapjai. Abizalmas kapcsolatok. *Századvég* vol. 2.
- VARGA, ATTILA V. (2012): Makrocsoportok interakciós struktúrájának vizsgálata. Egy lehetséges megközelítés, és eredményei. In Kmetty Zoltán – Koltai Julia (ed.): *Változó képletek, változatos perspektívák*. Budapest, Hatter Kiado.

VERDERY, KATHERINE

kverdery@gc.cuny.edu

DOI 10.14232/belv.2014.4.11

# *An Anthropologist under Surveillance in Ceaușescu's Romania\**

**Abstract** U.S. anthropologists working in Romania in the 1970s and 1980s were under surveillance by the Romanian Securitate, as they probably were in other communist countries as well. This article is based on the author's Securitate file, which a law passed in 1999 made available to anyone whom the Securitate had followed. It discusses similarities between the work of ethnographers and that of the Securitate, the question whether villagers believed that she was really a spy and the effects of the surveillance on the author's own work and on the villagers she studied.

**KEYWORDS** surveillance, secret police, Romania, anthropology



Imagine yourself as the object of the following surveillance report, found in the file the Romanian Secret Police (Securitate) kept on me from 1973–1988. I came into possession of this file in 2008, through the provisions of a Romanian law that gave people access to their surveillance files from the communist period. I had spent more than three years conducting research in Romania during that period.

*"5 January 1985. Katherine Verdery, 36 years old, Professor ... of Anthropology ... Baltimore, USA, [is] identified as being an agent of the American espionage services ... From the surveillance measures undertaken concerning her, the following has resulted: her proposed research theme represents merely a cover for unfolding an intense espionage activity, materialized in collecting socio-political information, studying and inciting certain Romanian citizens' antisocial activity by encouraging their hostile attitudes and manifestations.*

*In collecting information, Katherine Verdery focuses especially on the following themes*

*[long list], [all of which are beyond the scope of her official research project].*

*To obtain the data of interest to her, she makes contact with [various kinds of people]. The discussions carried on with them are written in shorthand or tape recorded. After she gathers and verifies the information, she synthesizes it in numbered daily reports, typed in three copies, which she sends periodically to the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest ... With the help of informers, our organs were able to copy 165 pages of these reports ... We note that she does not keep a single copy for herself, as would be normal if she were using them to write a scientific work...*

*Analysis of the reports demonstrates that she has rich experience in intelligence work ... Thus: The people contacted are called "informers," [for whom she uses] conspiratorial names ...*

*Alongside the information collected, she mentions the place and context of the discussion, the informer's "attitude," the direct and*

*subsidiary questions she asks in directing the conversation toward the subject of interest. [examples ...]*

*Analysis of her reports shows that the information she gathers is exclusively in the category of what can be used in developing hostile propaganda against our country. Likewise, she interprets all the data in a tendentious manner ...*

*With a view to finalizing this case, together with following her via all available professional means, we will act to investigate her contacts, toward the aim of obtaining certain proof necessary to interrupting her activity...<sup>1</sup>*

In response to this report, Romania's deputy Securitate chief (general Iulian Vlad) wrote to his two immediate subordinates:

*"Comrade General Alexie, Comrade Lieutenant Colonel Diaconescu, 1) The case is very important and any negative developments, any proliferation must be stopped immediately. 2) It is urgent that you submit concrete proposals to conclude this case."<sup>2</sup>*

In short, not only was I the object of intense surveillance, but also among those watching me were the country's top-secret police generals. It is almost as if you obtained your FBI file and found documents about yourself signed by J. Edgar Hoover.

Coming into possession of one's surveillance file raises both interesting possibilities and a host of questions. The possibilities include the chance to conduct ethnographies of the secret police, using its files as a database. My surveillance file consists of officers' notes and syntheses, informers' reports, as well as reports from my being tailed and from intercepted phone conversations and correspondence.

Very importantly, it also includes the marginal notes of superior officers who read the reports as well as the orders they sent down. Because it was never intended – never *imagined* – that the targets of surveillance would see the notes taken on them, the notes are unaffected by any concerns about intersubjectivity. I believe we can read the notes for the officers' worldviews, their system of knowledge-producing categories, their bureaucratic communication paths, their practices and expectations, and how they projected themselves into a world of imagined capitalist enemies. This database does not tell us much about the officers' private thoughts (nor are they themselves likely to tell us even now), and some content is inaccurate, as is true of our own field notes. But the files do show the discourses and practices that the officers mastered by doing surveillance.

Among the questions raised by these files are: Is the information in them "true" – are the Securitate good ethnographers? How do they go about collecting data and constructing knowledge? Why do they think I am a spy? Then there are more speculative questions, such as, what are the consequences of ethnographers being followed as spies? What are the effects on their social relations, the kinds of information they can gather, and the knowledge they can produce? How does being followed involve ethnographers in a regime's practices and affect respondents' relationships with the regime?

## Ethnographers as Spies

During the Cold War, Romania was the only Eastern European country to include anthropologists on its list of welcome Fulbright scholars. As a consequence, more US ethnographers went there than to any other Soviet bloc country. I was one of about 10 such people to work in Romania between the early 1970s and 1989, when the communist regime fell. From that work, I published several articles and two

<sup>1</sup> Archive of the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives, Bucharest, Romania (ACNSAS), Fond Documentar File 12618. vol. 1. 245–246.

<sup>2</sup> ACNSAS, Fond Informativ, File 195847. vol. 1, 193. Vlad was then deputy head of Romania's Securitate, soon to become its head (1987).

books: *Transylvanian Villagers: Three Centuries of Political, Economic, and Ethnic Change* (California, 1983) and *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (California, 1991).

Despite the Romanian government's welcome, virtually every US scholar or lecturer was under surveillance and has at least a few notes about him or her in the Securitate files. Most have several hundred pages. In the Securitate archive, I consulted a massive 26-volume dossier covering US lecturers, researchers and Ph.D. students. The dossier shows that many if not most of them were suspected of working for US intelligence under the cover of their research. Not one of the US anthropologists whom I know has been left out of this large dossier. It is clear that Romanian intelligence officers assumed there could be no disinterested research, that foreigners were there to stir up trouble, and that we had been trained in counterintelligence.

That assumption was reinforced by the similarity of my ethnographic research methods to the Securitate's. As the excerpt I quoted from my surveillance report makes clear, officers thought they recognized in my ethnographic practices their own norms of professional conduct. They too used pseudonyms for "informers," coded notes, tape recorders, and a comprehensive data-gathering strategy that went beyond the confines of a single project statement. Like me, they generated a wealth of typed data, producing from their observations an enormous body of field notes (their file on me contains 2,780 pages). And like me, they generated interpretations and conclusions: that I am a CIA agent, that I am feeding the US propaganda machine against socialism, that I am fomenting discontent among Romania's minority Hungarians, and that therefore I should be sent home.

I had certainly given them reason for suspicion. During my first visit to the county I planned to work in, in September 1973, I man-

aged to ride my motorbike right past a sign that prohibited foreigners from travelling on that route (it led to a military base). Then, trying to repair the damage, I asked county officials to assign me to a safe area and picked one of its villages, Aurel Vlaicu. But Vlaicu turned out to contain a number of people who commuted to work in an armaments factory 20 kilometres away – a "coincidence" the Securitate took to mean that I was really a spy. The climate of the Cold War made these errors much more serious than they might have been otherwise, feeding the Securitate's belief that I was up to no good.

How did this belief play out in Aurel Vlaicu? A number of my respondents there told me, both before and after the regime fell in 1989, that everyone knew I was a spy, though they did not really know what for. They just knew that everyone said I was one. This was partly the consequence of the Communist Party's efforts to spread information (and disinformation), including through films and literature that, as in western countries, popularized the notion of the spy. A Romanian acquaintance observed to me,

Children in school and everyone else were socialized into the idea of infiltration by foreign bodies as the cause of our problems. Now here you were, parachuting in. After all this abstract attribution, you were palpable. The police could say, "THIS is what a spy looks like. Here she is, in flesh and bone." You were a godsend for the Securitate.

Whereas before, spies were something one saw in the movies, something that might have been made up, now people could point their fingers at one.

I suspect that the Securitate planted the idea that I was spying. They did it first through the local police, as I realized one day in 1985 when a respondent told me that one of the policeman had been telling everyone to be careful what they said to me, since I was a spy and carried a concealed tape recorder. They also

did it through the informers they recruited, who were instructed about how to recognize a spy. (Even people not recruited as informers might receive similar instruction. For instance, because Vlaicu was near an armaments factory, Securitate officers noted the names of everyone in every nearby village who worked in that factory, so as to give them all instruction regarding how to deal with me.) These informers, along with the police, might also have been told to plant rumours that I was spying.

Did villagers believe it? As I already indicated, some of them told me they did, but further evidence comes from a Romanian scholar, Cosmin Budeanca, who is exploring how foreign researchers were received during the communist period. He went to Vlaicu and asked some people there what was said about me and whether they thought I was a spy. One answer he received was:

“Yes, people said she was a spy. But then after that they got used to her. She stayed a long time, and they got used to her.”



This idea recurs in other interviews. Note the respondent’s assumption that I could be a spy only if I remained unknown, hidden. If I kept coming back and talking with everyone all the time, then I couldn’t be a spy.

Another response given to Cosmin Budeanca was:

“People said she was a spy, but if she was one, they wouldn’t have let her into the country. And she didn’t have anything to spy on, ’cause we just talked about the collective farm. So if she’s sent here from Bucharest, why should she be a spy? ... What would she have wanted to do, overthrow our government? No. (So who said this kind of thing? ...) Bad people! I had a brother-in-law ... he was in the army, and he knew she was a spy. People just talked, because they’re bad.”

This respondent sees rumours of my spying as part of local politics and of people’s char-

acter, not as the truth about me. The respondent also has a very narrow understanding of spying: it has to do with military matters and government overthrow. That differs from what Securitate officers worried about in the 1985 report quoted above, which is that I collected “socio-political information” and created hostile propaganda to undermine Romania’s image in the world.

These answers came 20 years after the fall of communism from women who had been my long-time friends. My constant returns had given them ample opportunity to “get used to” me. In contrast, during my shorter stay in another village, Geoagiu, the fact that the police were following me (as I learned after four months of work there in 1985) so disrupted my research that I had to abort it, once I understood why people there seemed so much more reticent than those in Vlaicu. Geoagiu villagers were most likely reticent not from thinking I was a spy, but for fear of police interrogation following my visits, which happened shortly after I began work there. So I left Geoagiu for the city, where I limited my work to reading in libraries and talking with urban intellectuals, who were better able to defend themselves against such police actions.

## Effects on Knowledge Production

During my research in the 1970s, I did not realize the extent of the surveillance I was under but knew I could get people into trouble by what I might write. I was concerned about how I would keep my publications from jeopardizing innocent villagers when I could not anticipate what the government would find offensive, sensitive, or problematic. Even though I gathered ethnographic data on a number of contemporary topics, these dilemmas, combined with the fact that I had always been interested in historical big-picture questions, tilted my first book in a historical direction, away from the ethnography of the socialist period. My in-

terpretations dealt with an earlier time and relied extensively on published and archival material, compromising my respondents less. In the 1980s, surveillance forced the research for my second book even more toward use of published sources supplemented by conversations with urban intellectuals. I was not the only anthropologist of socialism to be caught in such dilemmas. Several other scholars did not publish the books from their 1970s fieldwork until after 1989, if at all.

Although the regime's repression altered my entire research program, I think the knowledge I produced was perhaps of greater validity. This is because it rested less completely on the fragile kinds of face-to-face relationships ethnography normally employs to excellent effect, but my circumstances were not normal. It is disturbing to have to admit that the Securitate not only changed my disciplinary profile away from ethnography and toward history, but also rechanneled my research and possibly improved its accuracy. Still, I believe this paradoxical and unexpected conclusion may be correct. It follows from what the possibility of surveillance did to my personal relationships.

### **Effects of Surveillance on Villagers**

What effects might Securitate surveillance have had on villagers? A man who informed on me in the 1970s is willing to discuss that now, unlike many others who were also reporting on me at the time. The man was recruited at while still in high school. His officer told him that I was a spy and it was his patriotic duty to report on my actions. The officer insinuated that my friend would not get into college, if he refused to cooperate. Although a top student, he was from a modest family and did not have the self-confidence to believe in his own capacities. He agreed to inform on me, because he wanted to have a future, which the officer was threatening. Before every biweekly meeting, my friend told me, he was awake all

night because he was so terrified, and when his roommate would ask what was wrong he couldn't respond, for informers were ordered never to reveal their work to anyone.

The officer would begin their sessions by catching him off guard with some piece of information he was unlikely to have (such as an allegation about my sex life) and then press him for what else he could add. Because, according to the officer, they already knew everything I was doing, he had better tell them the truth: they would know it, if he did not. Thus, the officers used the man's reports as a test of his relationship with them. In addition to catching me conducting espionage, the officer's goal was to use me to forge trust with him so he would report on other people as well. My presence and "spying" had enabled this recruitment.

My files contain reports from about 13 informers from Vlaicu. Of these, several were probably not recruited just to watch me, as this person was. Given the injunction to silence, what they learned through spying did not enter village knowledge except as intentional disinformation. But the villagers knew that the Securitate recruited informers and they knew there were informers in their midst, as did I. Who these were was uncertain, but my constant presence kept the possibility more visible than it otherwise would have been. A cloud of unease swirled around me as I made my way from house to house.

Surveillance substantially shifted the terrain of fieldwork. Underpinning the work of ethnography is that precious and fragile relationship: trust. Although ethnography is possible in trust's absence, our best work rests upon it. In a climate of surveillance, it is much more difficult to establish trusting relations, for there is a constant current of mistrust and doubt. Every interaction was anchored by the presence of a hidden third with whom I could develop no relationship: the Securitate officer. That third maintained a constant drag on the growth of other relationships, pulling each of them off

centre, just as an illicit affair decentres a person's marriage. Sometimes that hidden third was actually involved with my respondents; sometimes he was just a hidden possibility.

By subjecting Romanians to this possibility, we "spies" drew them into a different feeling of relating with others, a feeling based on fear that sometimes isolated them by prohibiting their speech. Although we ethnographer-spies were not the only form of "enemies" that the Securitate controlled this way, we were particularly helpful to them. Anthropologists enabled the Securitate to increase its penetration into rural areas, which had much fewer informers than urban centres did. Thus, we provided unprecedented access to villagers who might

otherwise have remained outside the system of relations the police were trying to create.

It is difficult to avoid the question as to whether ethnography is justified in circumstances like these. One might argue that precisely such revelations justify it, in the name of a freer world. Knowing how the police operate will help people resist the installation of such a system in the future. Perhaps the positive effects of the villagers' exposure to another society (through their connection with me) counterbalanced some of the negative effects of Securitate repression. What is certain is that this example of an anthropologist under surveillance challenges us, once again, to place ethnographic practice in a critical light. \*

# *THE CONTENT OF OUR NEXT ISSUE ON SOCIOLOGY:*

BALOGH, PÉTER

Development trap?

Unequal Territorial Patterns of EU-funds Allocation in Hungary

LENCSES, GYULA

A Hungarian Village in the English Regional Survey Movement.

Dorothea Farquharson's Field Diary in Dudar, 1937

NAGY, GÁBOR DÁNIEL

Social Network Based Approaches in Religion Research in Central-Eastern Europe

NAGY, TERÉZIA

Homeless People's Transition from the Hidden World of Socialism to the Quasi-Welfare Social Safety New World of Contemporary Hungary.

Evidence From Szeged

RÁCZ, ATTILA

Segregation in Minds. Analysis on the Statistical and Mental-based Socio-spatial Segregation in a Hungarian City

SZELENYI, IVAN

Pathways from and Crises after Communism:  
the Case of Former USSR and China

TÓTH, BENEDEK

The Term 'Sense' in Niklas Luhmann's Theory

VINCZE, ANIKÓ

Digital Gaps in School? Exploring the Digital Native Debate