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Historical predecessors and current geographical possibilities of ethnic based territorial autonomies in the Carpathian Basin

Károly KOCSIS[1]

Abstract

Despite the ethnic cleansings, deportations, forced assimilation, homogenization and partly due to the immigration of foreign-born population there is hardly any country in Europe which could be called ethnically homogeneous. This is particularly true in the case of the small „nation-states" of the Carpathian Basin (Hungary, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia etc). So, starting from the fact, that in ethnically diverse regions the territorial autonomies are one of the most effective tools of minority protection and conflict solution, and are safeguards for ensuring the cultural survival and protection of collective rights of national minorities, this paper tries to outline the geographic background of existing (and missing) territorial autonomies in Europe (1st part) and, in more details, the historical predecessors and the geographical possibilities of ethnic based territorial autonomies in the Carpathian Basin (2nd part). Although the emphasis is largely laid on the contemporary situation, there are important sections devoted to the historical development of the ethnic based territorial autonomies in this geographic work as well.

Keywords: ethnic based territorial autonomy, ethnic geography, administrative division, Carpathian Basin, Europe

Introduction

The ideal of the builders of the 19th century nation states, the idea of *'one state – one nation' has not come into existence in* hardly *any of the European states* despite the ethnic cleansings, forced migrations, forced assimilation and partly as a result of the mass appearance of immigrants (e.g. „Gastarbeiter/guest workers", refugees). From among the present 703 million inhabitants of our continent, members of titular nations of the individual countries constitute only 85%, historic national and ethnic minorities constitute 10%, while the remaining 5% are immigrants with no

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citizenship. According to census data, from among the European states (except for the micro states) Poland, Portugal, Hungary, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Norway are the closest to the above mentioned nation state homogeneity, where more than 93% of the population count as members of the titular nation. From an ethnic-linguistic perspective (except for Belgium, Bosnia, Cyprus and Switzerland, as well as the micro states that all have unique ethnic-political backgrounds) the most heterogeneous ones are Spain, Latvia and Macedonia, since in their case the joint proportion of minorities exceed one third of the population.

Due to this significant and in some cases increasing *ethnic-linguistic diversity*, the fading of the memories of the second world war and the dissolution of the former Communist federal states the number and intensity of the *ethnic conflicts* within the states has increased since the 1960s. In the background of the conflicts *a rigid rejection of the collective rights of minorities* (including those related to autonomy) and, as a result, the *secessionist ambitions of the minorities* could be observed in most of the cases. Following the civil wars on the territories of the former Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union in the 1990s, efforts were made to settle such conflicts peacefully, via negotiations, moreover, in the case of certain western nation states that had earlier been strictly centralised, a *decentralization, and a movement towards regional self-governance* could be observed (Benedikter, T. 2009). From among the states possessing solid democratic traditions, acknowledging territorial and cultural heterogeneity seeking to avoid conflict, primarily Italy, Spain, Belgium and the United Kingdom pursued the deepening of the various forms of *regional power-sharing*, the most common one of which, along with the system of federal and associated statehood, is autonomy. *Autonomy* can be of non-ethnic (regional territorial) and of ethnic nature. The status of Spain and that of some Italian autonomous regions not populated by minorities (e.g. Andalusia, Madrid, Sicily) stand as examples for the former one. The latter, the ethnic based autonomy (if ethnic-geographical conditions are met) may be territorial (e.g. South Tyrol, Åland Islands, Catalonia, Tatarstan) or local (administrative) and personal (cultural) (Benedikter, T. 2009).

"A territorial autonomy is a geographically defined area, which differs from other sub-regions (like municipalities, federal states, etc.) in a specific country and has received special status with legislative and/or regulatory (administrative) powers" (Ackrén, M. 2009, p. 20). In the past such form of autonomy was considered to be the first step towards separation, a means to disintegrate existing states (Pan, C. and Pfeil, B.S. 2003). Today, based on positive international experiences, we believe that territorial autonomy is *the most developed asset of minority protection and the most modern form of internal self-governance,* which can be considered as a *compromise* between the given state (the titular nation) and the national minorities, which ensures autonomy – a fundamental human right – to the minorities and ensures the preservation of the territorial integrity and the intangibility of the borders to the state.

In order to preserve the state's territorial integrity and to grant the minority collective rights (voluntarily or under compulsion), territorial autonomies have so far been realised in Europe *primarily on Scandinavian, Italian, Spanish and British territories and in Russia (Figure 1).* It is conspicuous, however, that on the territory of France, the ideal of the strongly centralised nation states, and on the territories of the ex-communist East-Central and South-Eastern European countries, such autonomies – because of the fear of the suspected secessionist endeavours of the minorities – could not be realised.

As shown by international experiences, an ethnic based territorial autonomy (disregarding the political conditions this time and concentrating on a pure ethnic-geographical aspect) can only be successful, where the ethnic area of the given minority is (more or less) contiguous and where the ethnic minority constitutes the absolute (demographic) majority (that is in the area the members of the titular nation represent a demographic minority). From this respect, in France Alsace (German speaking Alsatians), Lower Brittany (Bretons), the Northern Basque Country, Northern Catalonia/Roussillon and Corsica should have this form of self-governance. The same is true for some minorities living in the ex-communist countries (e.g. Poles in the joint border areas of Lithuania and Belarus, Turks in Bulgaria, Bulgarians in Serbia and in the Ukraine, Serbs in Northern Kosovo, Bosniaks/Muslims in the Serbian Sandjak area, and the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin).

Historical roots of the territorial autonomies in the Carpathian Basin

The *Carpathian Basin*, accommodating almost 29 million inhabitants, has a situation similar to the European average, since 84% of its inhabitants are members of the individual titular nation. From among the other inhabitants who count fundamentally as national-ethnic minorities, due to state borders drawn after the two world wars and due to migration processes, it is only the Hungarian minority (to be more precise, only two third of them) who possesses a settlement area which meets the prerequisites of a territorial autonomy. All other minorities basically fight for survival on linguistic islands and in diasporas, where the only possibility is to realise local or cultural autonomy.

The period before 1918

It is a little-known fact that the Carpathian Basin can be called the cradle of European territorial autonomies, where the individual regions and ethnic groups had a large scope of autonomy until the middle of the 19th century.

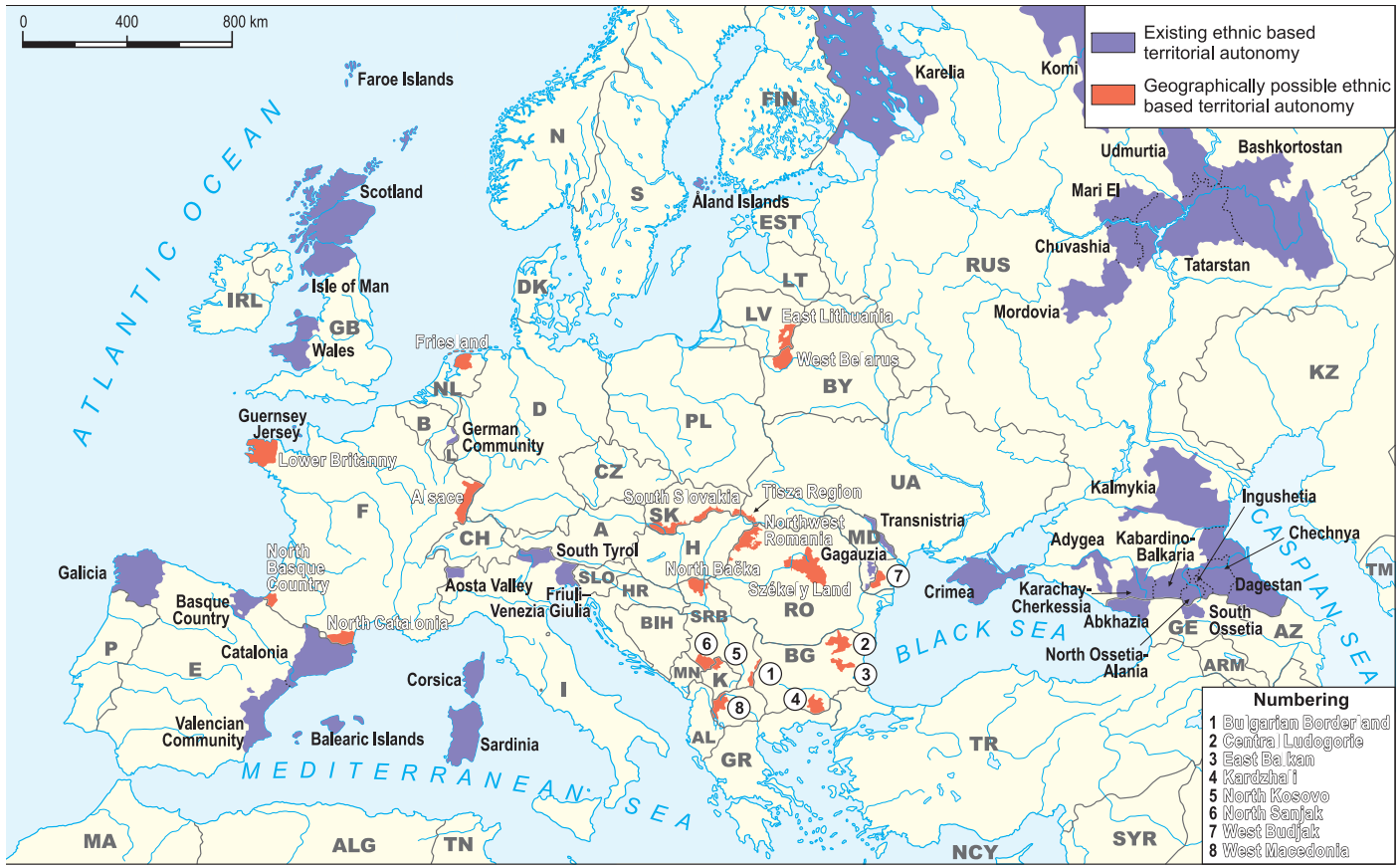


Fig. 1. Existing and geographically possible ethnic based territorial autonomies in Europe

In the Carpathian Basin, *Croatia* – which had become part of the Hungarian Kingdom between 1091 and 1097 as a result of the military campaigns led by the Hungarian kings Saint Ladislaus I and Coloman I – had the longest (lasting almost 800 years) *regional territorial self-governance*, which preserved its territorial separatism, its self-governance in the form of a personal union as regulated by the pact of 1102 (Pacta conventa) between King Coloman and the Croatian aristocracy during the existence of the Hungarian-Croatian state. This territorial separatism and self-governance were also represented by the ban (viceroy) of Croatia-Dalmatia and Slavonia and their national assembly (sabor). *Slavonia* (Hung. *Tótország*, *Szlavónország*) between the Drava river and the Dinaric Ranges permanently became a part of Hungary at the beginning of the 11th century and the foundation of the *diocese of Zagreb* by Saint Ladislaus I in 1091, and was ruled as a duchy by heirs to the throne and other members of the royal family or the bans of Slavonia from the 12th century *(Figure 2)*.

The different degrees of autonomies of Croatia and Slavonia decreased significantly after 1526 under the Habsburg rule and their territories were reduced to approximately to one third of their original size after the Ottoman

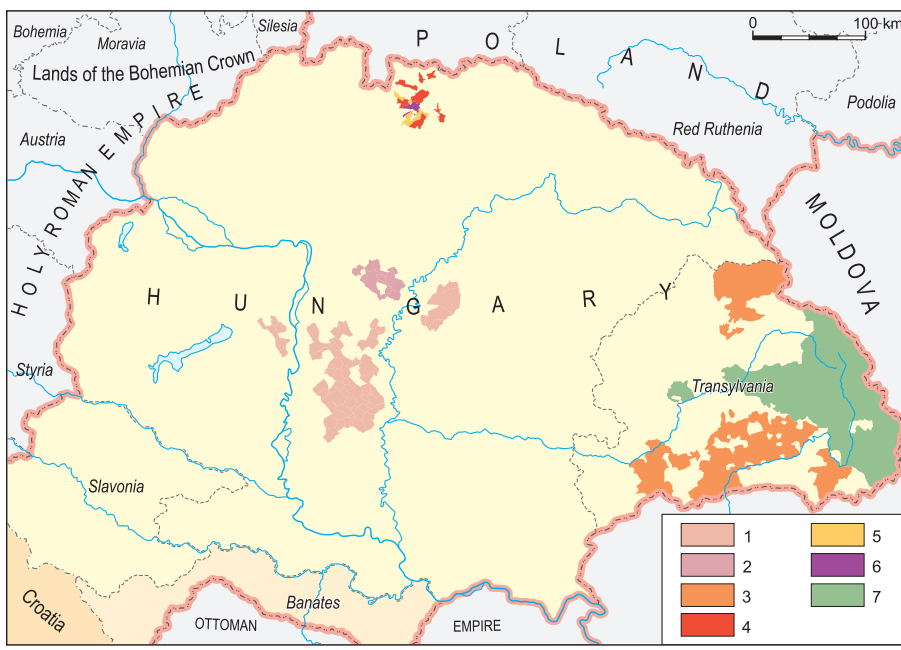


Fig. 2. Territorial autonomies in the countries of the Hungarian Crown (1500). – 1 = Cuman (Kun) seats; 2 = Jassic (Jász) seat (Jazygia); 3 = Saxon seats in Transylvania; 4 = Saxon 16 towns (pawned to Poland); 5 = Saxon 11 towns (in Hungarian Zips, Szepes, Spiš); 6 = "Sedes X lanceatorum"; 7 = Székely seats

(Turkish) invasion. Consequently and as a result of the large-scale migration the centre of the Croatian statehood (and the notion of Croatia) was pushed from the seaside to the northern, Slavonian territories near Zagreb, while the notion of Slavonia was pushed towards the east, to the territories between the Drava and Sava rivers, reconquered from the Ottoman Empire between 1684 and 1688 (Szabó, P.Z. 1945). After 1790 Slavonia is mentioned together with Croatia, as one of its parts. During the Hungarian revolution and war of independence in 1848, the constitutional law relations were discontinued to be only restored in 1868 with the Croato–Hungarian Compromise, which again recognised the *Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia* as a part of the Holy Crown of Hungary with wide autonomy. This commonwealth of states, that is the territorial autonomy within the Hungarian state was terminated by the Croatian Parliament after the fall of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy, on 29 October 1918 and it joined the new born state (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Yugoslavia) later, within the framework of which it could only enjoy the same degree of internal independence that had been established in the Croatian–Hungarian commonwealth of states significantly later (1939–1941, 1974–1991). In today's terms the self-governance of Croatia and Slavonia in the Hungarian state could formally be conceived as a regional territorial autonomy, however, with respect to the fact that the majority of their population was South Slav (until the middle of the 16th century almost the entire population was Catholic South Slav: Slavonian and Croatian), the internal independence of these territories can be understood as an ethnic based territorial autonomy.

Transylvania (Hung. *Erdély,* Rom. *Ardeal,* Germ. *Siebenbürgen*) frequently embodied the different degrees of regional territorial autonomy during the first millennium of the Hungarian statehood, primarily because of its large distance from the core area of the state (Esztergom, Buda, Visegrád, Székesfehérvár) and because of its unique geographical location (Kristó Gy. 2003). From the 11th century the representative of the Hungarian king, named mercurius princeps, and later voivode, ensured the province a regional territorial autonomy to varying degrees, always reflecting the strength of the central power. Following the battle of Mohács (1526) the voivodship of Transylvania became the main territory of the *Eastern Hungarian Kingdom* ruled by John Szapolyai (former voivode, now King John I). Later, as agreed in the Treaty of Speyer (1570), in the following century it ensured the survival of the concept of an independent Hungarian statehood (theoretically as an inalienable part of the Hungarian Kingdom) 'only' as a *principality.* From 1541 this Hungarian state, which counted as an Ottoman vassal, had an extraordinarily wide range of regional territorial autonomy, even a minimally suppressed sovereignty within the Ottoman Empire. This relative independence ceased to exist after expulsion of the Turks.

As a consequence of the Diploma Leopoldinum issued by Emperor Leopold I in 1691, Transylvania became a province of the Habsburg Empire as a country of the Hungarian Crown and with a Hungarian public law status, but with its own statehood as a principality, and as a *grand principality* after 1765. After this, Transylvania and Hungary were first legally reunited by Act 7 of the Law of 1848, and later, after the Austro–Hungarian Compromise by Act 18 of the Law of 1868. As a result of the latter one the relative territorial independence of Transylvania – which continued to exist within the Hungarian state from the Middle Ages – was permanently eliminated in accordance with the goals aimed to be achieved by the united Hungarian nation state.

In the Middle Ages, the Hungarian rulers granted collective self-governance rights prevailing over the whole community and confined to a certain territory, occasionally for periods of centuries to numerous ethnic communities and social groups who were settled on their estates in exchange for their military service. The majority of such privileges were equal to what today we define as *ethnic based territorial autonomies.* The document that is the first one granting such rights in Europe is the charter issued by Andrew II of Hungary in *1224* (*Andreanum*), which granted the *Transylvanian Saxons* territorial based collective rights (Érszegi, G. 204).

The autonomous region of the German settlers called Saxon was established in South Transylvania with its seat in Hermannstadt (Szeben, Sibiu) from the second half of the 12th century. The „Saxons" gradually settled in for the defence of the South Transylvanian border that had been under threat from the attacks of the regular heavy-armed Byzantine troops in the 12–14th century to replace the light cavalry Székely border guard population transplanted to Eastern Carpathians. Apart from the rights typical for territorial autonomies, the larger Saxon settlements were granted market and staple rights, which resulted in an accelerated urbanisation on their territories from the 14th century. The Saxon autonomy in Transylvania became territorially complete in 1486, when king Matthias Corvinus expanded their privileges included in the Andreanum to the entire Transylvanian Saxon ethnic territory (*Königsboden, Nösnerland, Burzenland*), thus establishing the autonomous territorial unit, "Saxonian University" (Universitas Saxonum) (Müller, G.E. 1928; Hanzó, L. 1941). From the time of the Reformation, the Saxons did not only separate from their surroundings as regards their territory, but also their (Lutheran) confession. Their territorial autonomy ceased temporarily between 1785–1791 and 1852–1860, and finally permanently as a result of the public administration reform of 1876 (Act 33).

A territorial autonomy similar to the one of the Transylvanian Saxons' was enjoyed for longer than 600 years by the majority of the *Zipser Saxons (Germans)* settled from the 12th century to the feet of the High Tatra mountains into the valley of the rivers Poprad and Hernád (Hornád). Their privileges

were affirmed by Stephen V in *1271* and he also declared their territory to be a closed autonomous province, independent of the county, with Leutschau (Lőcse, Levoča) as its seat *(universitas seu provincia Saxonum de Scepus*) (Fekete Nagy, A. 1934). Their customary law was affirmed and codified by Louis I (Great) in 1370 (Zipser Willkür). 13 out of the *24 towns of Zips* (Szepes, Spiš) were pawned to Poland in 1412 by King Sigismund, where their autonomy continued to exist until its 1770 (1772) reannexation (Žudel, J. 1984). While the remaining 11 Saxon towns that were not pawned gradually came under the rule of the county, the ones who returned in 1770 – and were joined by Altlublau (Ólubló, Stara Lubovňa), Pudlein (Podolin, Podolinec) and Kniesen (Gnézda, Hniezdne) – could preserve their autonomy until as late as 1876 under the name Province of 16 Zips (Szepes, Spiš) towns.

In connection with the *Zips* area, one of Hungary's oldest autonomies, the *'Sedes X lanceatorum*' (county of the ten lance-bearers), needs to be mentioned. The privileges of its border guard inhabitants were affirmed by Béla IV in *1243* (Fekete Nagy, A. 1934). From the 16th century the population of the territory had a Slovakian majority. Later, its more than six-century long autonomy ceased in 1802 when it was merged into the county of Zips (Szepes, Spiš).

In the 12th and 13th centuries there was a close correlation between the settling in of the above-mentioned Transylvanian Saxons and the migration of the border guard *Székely population*, and the subsequent creation of their autonomous territories, what later became Székely Land (*Székelyföld*, Szeklerland). The Székelys of Bihar County were settled over to the southern region of Transylvania in the 11th century, which they gradually had to leave because of the Saxons moving in to their territory in the 12th and 13th centuries in order to find their final homeland as the defenders of the eastern border in the Eastern Carpathians. In their new home, similarly to the Saxons, Cumans and Jassic people, they established territorial units (authorities), so-called "Seats" („Szék" districts) with judicial, administrative and military scope in the 14–15th centuries (Szádeczky Kardoss, L. 1927; Endes, M. 1935). The privileged situation of the military society of the Székelys remained intact until the 16th century, for the restoration of which – after serious conflicts – the Transylvanian princes in need of the military force of the Székelys made several efforts after 1601 (Egyed, Á. 2006). The Székely territorial autonomy (similarly to other administrative units in a similar situation) was terminated and merged into the newly created counties of Csík, Háromszék, Maros-Torda and Udvarhely by the „county reform" of 1876 (Act 33) that aimed at establishing a modern, centralised Hungarian nation state after half a millennium of existence.

The foundations of the ethnic territorial autonomy of the *Cumans* (Kun people) invited into the country in the middle of the 13th century were laid down by the so-called Cuman laws (constitutional charters) issued by Ladislaus IV. (the Cuman) of Hungary in *1279* (Bánki-Molnár, E. 2005). The

original clan organization of the Cumans settled in Central Hungary (*Little Cumania* in the Danube-Tisza Interfluve and *Greater Cumania*) was converted into a territorial organisation, into a seat-system, in the 15th century based on the Saxon model. The privileges of the *Jassic (Jász) people*, who settled in later, granted for similar military services, can be connected to their charters of 1323 and *1407* (Gyárfás, I. 1870–1885). Their ethnic area along the Zagyva river (today *Jászság*, Jassic Land) became an autonomous administrative unit ("Seat") around 1480 (Fodor, F. 1942; Pálóczi Horváth, A. 1989). The Ottoman Power respected the local self-government of the Cumans and Jassic people during their authority (1541–1686), however, their autonomy was intermitted several times for different reasons under the Habsburg rule: 1702–1745 (selling), 1787–1790 and 1850–1860 (administrative rearrangement) *(Figure 3)*.

The autonomous territory consisting of the – from the 17th century administratively more and more intertwined – Jassic and Cuman seats, the Jassic-Cuman District (Jászkun Kerület) with Jászberény as its seat, ceased to exist in 1876 when it was merged with the newly created Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok and Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun county. The *Pechenegs* (Besenyők) who were settled

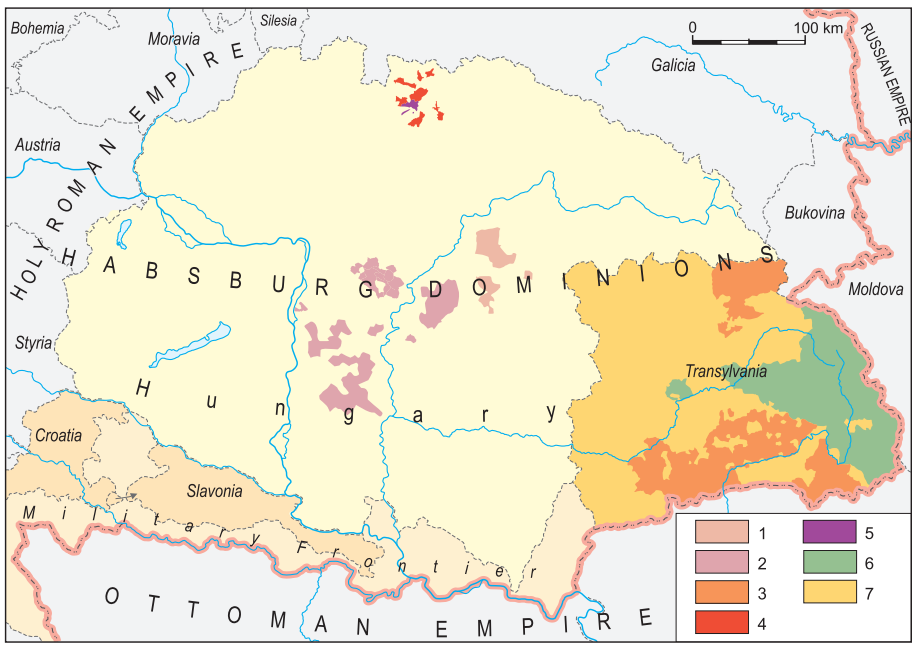


Fig. 3. Territorial autonomies in the countries of the Hungarian Crown (1780). – 1 = Hajdú District; 2 = Jassic-Cuman (Jászkun) District (Jazygia-Cumania); 3 = Saxon seats in Transylvania; 4 = Saxon 16 towns; 5 = "Sedes X lanceatorum"; 6 = Székely seats; 7 = counties of Transylvania

scattered in the country in the 12th and 13th centuries only had a territorial autonomy in the border area of Fejér and Tolna counties (*Sármellék* area), and even there only for a short period (1321–1352) (Györffy, Gy. 1939).

The immigration of the *Romanians* (Vlachs, Rumanians) into the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom (mainly in the Southern Carpathians, Máramaros/Maramureş and in the Apuşeni Mountains), who differed from the great majority of the country's inhabitants both regarding their religious affiliation (Orthodox) and language (Romance), following the Mongol invasion (1241–42), became significant mainly from the 14th century (Fekete Nagy, A. and Makkai L. 1941). In the 14th and 15th centuries under the rule of their heads (cneaz, vaida, boer), in the Fogaras/Făgăraş Land, Máramaros/Maramureş county, Hátszeg/Haţeg and Szörény/Severin district, they acquired a territorial self-governance to a certain degree. This Romanian autonomy, however, decayed because their leaders became nobles and because they turned Hungarian (and Catholic), and therefore it never reached the same levels as those of the Saxons' or the Székelys' (Fekete Nagy, A. and Makkai, L. 1941).

The *Serbs*[2], populating the devastated southern territories abandoned by the Hungarians in the 16th and 17th centuries, strove more and more overtly for territorial self-governance – beyond their self-government provided by their Orthodox Church. Beyond the privileges issued by Leopold I between 1690 and 1695, they already had a certain degree of territorial autonomy over the territories with a Serbian majority (Regiment of Petrovaradin, Illyrian section of the Banat General Command, Šajkaš district) in charge of the *Military Border* (Militär-Grenze) ruled from Vienna, between 1700 and 1873. The Serbian national congress in Temesvár (Timişoara) addressed a plea to Leopold II on 4 November *1790* about the Serbian territorial autonomy to be created on the territory of South Hungary, but it was rejected by the Emperor a few months later.

At the time of the 1848–49 Hungarian revolution and war of independence, after the Hungarian government had refused the Serbs' demand for a territorial autonomy, the Serbian national congress of Sremski Karlovci proclaimed the autonomous *Serbian Vojvodina* within the Austrian Empire on 13–15 May 1848, which would have included Bács-Bodrog county, the western part of the Banat, the Szerémség (Srem, Syrmia) and the south-eastern corner of Baranya. After the fall of the war of independence, on 18 November 1849, emperor Franz Joseph I created the province called the "*Serbian Vojvodina and Banat of Temesvár*" out of the parts of Bács (Bač), Torontál (Torontal), Temes (Timiş), Krassó (Caraş) and Szerém (Srem) counties that had a civil administration, and which he re-annexed to Hungary on 27 December 1860. The province,

[2] The Serbs arrived in Hungary (mainly to the southern regions and along the Danube) in the largest numbers in 1690 following Leopold I's invitation, who, in exchange for their military service received them as a political nation (natio rasciana) with autonomy (Czoernig, K. 1857, pp. 157–158.).

which had a short life but encompassed large territories (nonetheless it was Serbian mostly in its name), did not satisfy the requests of the Serbs, since their nation only constituted a mere 20.4% out of the total population of 1.5 million, preceded by the Romanians (28%) and the Germans (24.5%) (Hegedіš, A. and Čobanović, K. 1991).

The disappointed Serbs at the national congress in Sremski Karlovci on 2 April 1861 once again demanded the establishment of the *Serbian Vojvodina*, an autonomous province with Serbian as the only official language, however, this time the territories were adjusted in a way that they matched areas with an approximate Serbian majority (Szerémség/Srem, Western Banat and the southern half of Bácska/Bačka) (Đorđević, J. 1861) *(Figure 4)*.

In the same year, on 6–7 June 1861, the *Slovak* national congress in Turócszentmárton (Martin) also demanded an ethnic based territorial self-government based on Hungary's integrity for the *Upper Hungarian Slovak District* (Kemény, G.G. 1952). The claimed Slovakian autonomous territory would have



Fig. 4. Claims of the largest national minorities of Hungary for ethnic based territorial autonomy (2nd half of the 19th century). – 1 = Croats, Bunjevci, Šokci; 2 = Hungarians; 3 = Romanians; 4 = Serbs; 5 = Slovaks; 6 = other ethnic groups; 7 = border of autonomous Croatia–Slavonia; 8 = border of Vojvodina claimed by Serbs (March 24, 1861); 9 = border of Upper Hungarian Slovak District claimed by Slovaks (June 7, 1861); 10 = border of autonomous Transylvania claimed by Romanians (since 1867)

comprised the counties with Slovak majorities and the Slovakian majority areas of the neighbouring counties and its borders would have adjusted to the Slovakian ethnic territories.

The concept of territorial autonomy adjusted to their ethnic areas did not become known among *Romanians* at this time. Their political struggles primarily concentrated on the *autonomy of Transylvania,* that had by the middle of the 17th century been populated by a Romanian majority (59.5% in 1850) (Mester, M. 1936).

On 11 February 1867 the representatives of the different ethnic minorities promoted a bill that would have recognised six political nations within Hungary (Hungarian, Romanian, Serbian, Slovakian, Russian /Rusyn-Ruthenian/, German) and that would have demanded – among several other requests – the adjustment of the borders of the counties and electorates to the ethnic areas (Keméný, G.G. 1952). This latter proposal would have created a cluster of adjacent autonomous territories of the ethnic minorities on the peripheries of the country.

Following the Austro–Hungarian Compromise of 1867, Act 44 of the Law of 1868 (On the subject of the equal rights of the nationalities), the first law on national minorities of the world was, in fact, "a compromise between doctrinal liberalism, minority programmes aiming at domesticating the system of national autonomies and the supporters of a unitary Hungarian nation state" (Szász, Z. 1988). Similarly to the Hungarian government of 1848–49 and following the French nation state concept, the law only recognised the *existence of one and indivisible Hungarian (political) nation* in Hungary, irrespective of the ethnic and linguistic affiliation of its citizens (Katus, L. 1993, 2002). Consequently the Hungarian state, which had a territorial autonomy within the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy (except for the *Croatian–Slavonian self-governance*), emphatically refused any ethnic based territorial autonomy requests initiated by its minorities, since these were viewed as a first step of their separation and thus as one of the gravest dangers threatening the country's territorial integrity.

The period between 1918 and 1945

After the First World War, during the Romanian, Serbian and Czech occupation of Hungary and at the times of a military and economic chaos, the representatives of the different national minorities proclaimed their separation from Hungary one after the other. Mihály Károlyi's government, who came into power as the result of the "Aster Revolution" (25–31 October 1918), made a historically *belated* attempt *to federalise* Hungary *on an ethnic-territorial basis* and to compromise with the national minorities in order to preserve its territorial integrity (Szarka, L. 1990, 2008a). After failures to compromise with

the Romanian and Slovakian national councils, the main emphasis was laid on retaining the smaller ethnic groups of the Hungarian territories not yet occupied by the Czech, Romanian and Serbian troops constantly advancing in November 1918. On 21 December 1918, the territorial autonomy of the Rusyns (Ruthenians) (Act 10) was enacted (the autonomous region called "*Ruska Krajna*" on the Ruthenian majority territories of Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa and Máramaros counties). The *Germans* were granted a similar right (Act 6) to establish a territorial autonomy on 28 January 1919 (Kemény, G.G. 1952). The third nationality law of the Károlyi government on 11 March 1919 (Law 30 on the self-government of ***Slovakia*** –Slovenská Krajina) was completely anachronistic, since by that time the territory referred to by the law was under Czech military occupation and was de facto a part of new-born Czechoslovakia recognised by the Entente powers.

After the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic (1 August 1919), following an almost complete military occupation of the country, the *Treaty of Versailles (Trianon)* on 4 June 1920 confirmed with the means of the international law the dissolution of the historical Hungarian state territory that had started to dissolve as early as at the end of 1918. This resulted in annexing 67.1% of the country's almost 283 thousand square kilometres of territory and 33% of its ethnic Hungarian population to the neighbouring states (Lőkkös, J. 2000). As a result, the ethnic homogeneity of the population, that is the proportion of the ethnic Hungarians living within the borders of the Hungarian state increased (from 54.6% in 1910 to 89.6% in 1920) and thus, because extended territories with non-Hungarian majorities were annexed to other countries, the question of the ethnic based territorial autonomy practically ceased to exist for the Hungarian state.

With the Treaties near Paris (1919–1920), the decision-makers created (along with Hungary and Austria that were also shrunk into small states with a nearly homogeneous population) *medium-sized*, but *multi-ethnic countries* (e.g. Czechoslovakia, Romania, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes [S.H.S.]) on the ruins of the large, multi-ethnic Austro–Hungarian Monarchy and the historical Hungarian state. The aggregate figure of the non-Germans and non-Hungarians was 57.1% in 1910 in the Monarchy that had 51.4 million inhabitants, while the joint proportions of the non-ruling nations and minorities in the new (and enlarged) states around 1921 were as follows: non-Czechs in Czechoslovakia: 49.8%, non-Romanians in Romania: 28.1%, non-Serbs in the Kingdom of S.H.S.: 62.3% *(Figure 5)*.

The fact that about 20 million people with minority background were annexed to the states governed by the Czechs, Romanians and Serbs sheds light on the fact that the strategic, military and economic interests of the Entente and their allies surmounted the principle of people's self-governance, the ethnic principle, when drawing the borders of the aforementioned states (Macartney, C.A. 1937).

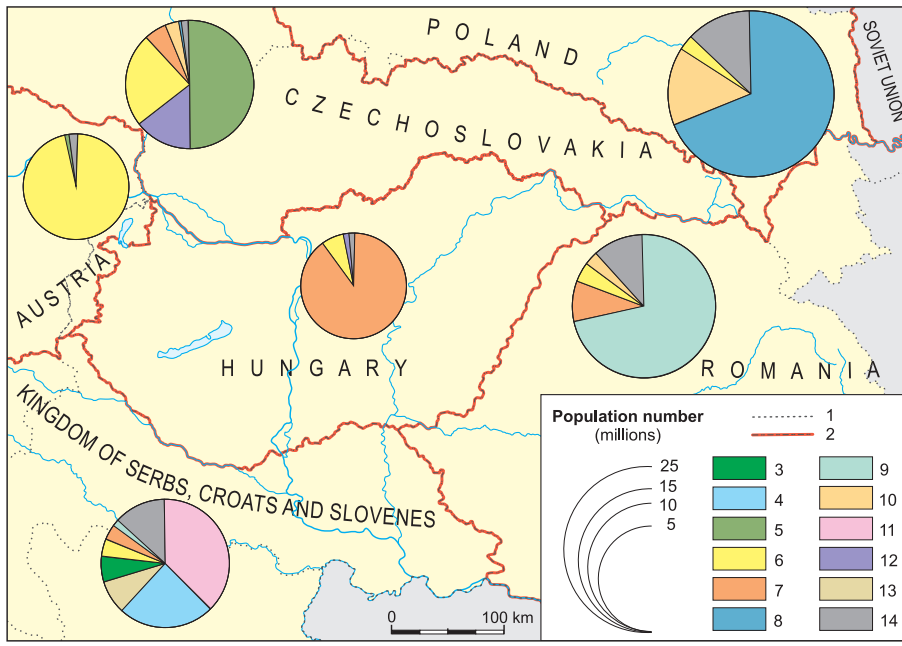


Fig. 5. Ethnic structure of the population of the successor states of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy (1921). – 1 = state border (1914); 2 = state border (1924); 3 = Bosniaks; 4 = Croats, Bunjevci, Šokci; 5 = Czechs; 6 = Germans; 7 = Hungarians; 8 = Poles; 9 = Romanians; 10 = Rusyns, Ukrainians; 11 = Serbs; 12 = Slovaks; 13 = Slovenes; 14 = other ethnic groups

When marking the *new borders of* the defeated *Hungary*, language boundaries (apart from the Croatian and Austrian neighbourhood) played no role whatsoever. The principle of ethnic self-governance was only important from the perspective of the decision-makers to the extent that they intended that as few non-Hungarians as possible should remain under Hungarian supremacy and that the vast majority of Slovaks, Romanians and South Slavs of the Carpathian Basin should become citizens of Czechoslovakia, Romania and the Kingdom of S.H.S. Beyond these principles it was *the economic and military interests of the neighbouring states* that determined the marking of the new Hungarian borderline: the plain regions populated primarily by ethnic Hungarians which played a decisive role in supplying the Slovakian, Ruthenian, Romanian and Serbian highland population with food (mainly bread-grain); the annexation of railroads that were of vital importance in the winners' communication among each other (avoiding Hungary); the creation of a state border that was aligned to natural objects (e.g. rivers, ridges) and was militarily defensible; marking the state border far away from the capital (e.g. Belgrade) (Edvi, I.A. and Halász, A. 1920). The *"Hungarian issue"* in the Carpathian Basin that played an important role after

1920 from the perspective of our current topic was born as a result of asserting these criteria in the course of the dictated peace in Trianon (the annexation of 3.3 million ethnic Hungarians and their homeland, among others the Székely Land and an almost homogeneous Hungarian ethnic territory in the width of 10–60 kilometres from Bratislava [Pozsony] to Subotica [Szabadka] among others).

The successor states, that united in the alliance called *"Little Entente"* in 1920–21 against the Hungarian revisionism, declared themselves to be unitary and indivisible nation states in their first constitutions and because of the fear of a disintegration of their multi-ethnic countries they denied the minorities' collective rights of any kind (primarily the ones related to an ethnic based territorial autonomy). As a result of their centralising, ethnically homogenising and assimilating policy, they started to rearrange the administrative territorial structure (province, county and district borders) inherited from the (mostly Hungarian) past in a way that the "unreliable" (mostly Hungarian) minorities should become (also numerical) minorities in the new administrative units everywhere (or at least wherever possible). Such ethnically manipulative administrative reform (that disjointed the Hungarian ethnic areas administratively) was enacted in Czechoslovakia in 1923 and 1927, in the Kingdom of S.H.S in 1923 and 1929, in Romania 1925 and later in 1938 (Kocsis, K. 1993, 2002; Molnár, J. 1992).

The leaders of Hungary and those of the Hungarian minorities of the successor states were hoping to solve the problem of the annexed Hungarian ethnic territories of the border regions primarily with a territorial revision (reannexation to Hungary), the change of the state borders, and, in the period between the two world wars there were even plans by Hungarians for an ethnic based (Hungarian) territorial autonomy (Rónai, A. 1937; Szvatkó, P. 1937; Bárdi, N. 2004; Molnár, M. 2009).

The wide-scope territorial autonomy promised to the "fellow-nations" in the centralised Czechoslovak and South Slav states was not realised between 1918 and 1938, in spite of the fierce political struggles of especially the Slovaks and the Croats. Although the *Rusyns* were not considered to be a fellow-nation by the Czechs, the new *Czechoslovakia* needed their territories from a strategic point of view, therefore, in the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (10 September 1919), it even promised a wide-scope territorial autonomy to *Subcarpathia* (Podkarpatska Rus, today Transcarpathia in Ukraine) (Pop, I. 2005). Czechoslovakia postponed the establishment of the *Slovakian and Rusyn territorial autonomies* (for two decades) until the last minute, until the October of 1938, after losing the German majority Sudetenland in the Munich Agreement on 29 September 1938, and later losing the Polish majority Zaolzie area in Czech Silesia on 2 October 1938.[3]

[3] The autonomy of Slovakia was proclaimed in Žilina on 6 Oct. 1938, and the Prague government consented to appointing the government of the autonomous Subcarpathia on 11 Oct. 1938 (Fedinec, Cs. 2002).

After the attainment of the Slovakian and Rusyn territorial autonomy, the annexation of the German- and Polish-majority territories to Germany and Poland – the unsuccessful Hungarian–Czechoslovak negotiations in Komárno (Komárom) – the *First Vienna Award* took place on 2 November 1938, where Czechoslovakia returned to Hungary a 11,927 square kilometres large territory inhabited predominantly by Hungarians (84.4%) that it had occupied in 1919. The Slovaks and the Rusyns, who were disappointed by the Czech in the course of their two-decade-long conflict over the question of autonomy, were not contented with a territorial autonomy any longer. In line with the aggressive foreign policy of Hitler's Germany that unleashed the world war with Germany's support, the independence of the *Slovak Republic* and *Carpatho-Ukraine* was proclaimed on 14 March 1939, which resulted in the dissolution of the Czecho-Slovak state, and, on the following day, the occupation of the remaining Czech parts of the country by the Nazi Germany (Fedinec, Cs. 2002). In the subsequent two weeks the 12,146 square kilometres large Carpatho-Ukrainian and eastern Slovakian territories (that were occupied by the Czechs in 1919) were reoccupied by the Hungarian Army and a Hungarian–Polish joint border was created (Thirring, L. 1939).

The *Croats* lost their wide-scope territorial autonomy (Croatia–Slavonia) that they possessed in the Hungarian half of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy (Transleithania, Hungarian Empire) in the Serbian ruled *S.H.S. Kingdom* which was founded on 1 December 1918. Consequently, they fought fiercely against the Serbian supremacy between the two world wars in order to regain their lost territorial autonomy and coequality (Csuka, J. 1995). After the annexation ("Anschluß") of the neighbouring Austria by the Germans (12 March 1938), the dissolution of Czechoslovakia (14 March 1939) and the seizure of Albania by Italy (7 April 1939), on the eve of the second world war, in the last minute, the increasingly isolated regime in Belgrade managed to come to terms with the Croats (Cvetković-Maček Agreement, 24 August 1939) and granted them the autonomous *Banate of Croatia* (Banovina Hrvatska, 65,456 square kilometres, 4 million inhabitants) including also Dalmatia and West Herzegovina, which comprised 88% of the Croats of Yugoslavia. The Croats, who, after two decades of desperate political struggle, were bitterly disappointed with the coexistence with the Serbs, were no longer contented with the territorial autonomy, which they considered to be the first milestone on their way to a total independence.

In the course of the second world war, after the occupation of France by the Germans and the seizure of Bessarabia by the Soviets (28 June 1940) a *casus belli* was created over the *issue of Transylvania* between the strategically weakened *Romania* and Hungary that regained some of its strength as a result of the territorial revisions. After the failure of the negotiations at Turnu Severin (16–24 August 1940), in order to avoid a war between Hungary and

Romania, the Nazi Germany and Italy volunteered to arbitrate, which was accepted by both the Romanian and the Hungarian parties (Rónai, A. 1989). The *Second Vienna Award* compelled Romania to return a territory of 43,104 square kilometres ("Northern Transylvania") to Hungary from among the territories occupied in 1918–19 (Thirring, G. 1940). As a result of the division of Transylvania, Hungary gained 2.6 million inhabitants (with almost 1.3 million non-Hungarians), while Romania kept a Transylvanian population of 3.3 million (with 1.1 million non-Romanians) (Varga, E.Á. 1992).

On 27 March 1941, after the coup d'état overthrowing the pro-German Cvetković Government that had joined the Tripartite Pact, Hitler ordered the *occupation of Yugoslavia* with the involvement of its neighbours. On 6 April 1941 German and Italian troops started a relatively fast invasion of the politically extremely unstable country, which was officially terminated by the capitulation of the Yugoslav Army led by Serbs on 17 April. In the meantime, on 10 April, Ante Pavelić, the supreme leader (poglavnik) of the Croatian Ustasha movement, proclaimed in Zagreb the *Independent State of Croatia* (NDH),[4] which meant that Yugoslavia became dissolved. On the day when the Germans occupied the Srem, Banat and Serbia (11 April), the Hungarian troops entered Baranya and Bačka, regions with a relative Hungarian majority, which had been occupied by Serbian troops in 1918 and which now practically became a no man's land.

The Axis Powers divided the territory of the occupied Yugoslavia on 24 April 1941 at the Vienna conference. Hungary was allowed to keep the reannexed Bácska (Bačka) and Baranya, and was additionally given the Slovenian majority Prekmurje, that it lost in 1919, and the almost entirely ethnic Croatian Muraköz (Međimurje). This resulted in Hungary's regaining 11,475 square kilometres with a population of one million (39% Hungarian) from the former Yugoslavia (Schneider, Á. 1941; Fogarasi, Z. 1944).

As a result of the territorial revisions between 1938 and 1941, the *Kingdom of Hungary* succeeded in regaining 41.5% of its lost territories and this meant that its territory grew to 171,753 square kilometres and its population rose to 14.7 million. Together with the increase of the territory, 95.2% of the Carpathian Basin's 12 million Hungarians became residents within the Hungarian state, however, in exchange, the proportion of the minorities increased from 7.9% to 22.5% (equalling approximately 3.3 million inhabitants) between the censuses of 1931 and 1941 in Hungary (Fogarasi, Z. 1944) *(Figure 6)*.

[4] The territory of the Independent State of Croatia encompassed 102,725 square kilometres (and primarily included the historical Croatia-Slavonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and parts of Dalmatia unoccupied by the Italians). Out of the total population of 5.6 million 52.5% were Roman Catholics (predominantly Croats), 32% Orthodox (Serbs) and 13% Muslims (Bosniaks) (Klemenčić, M. 1992).

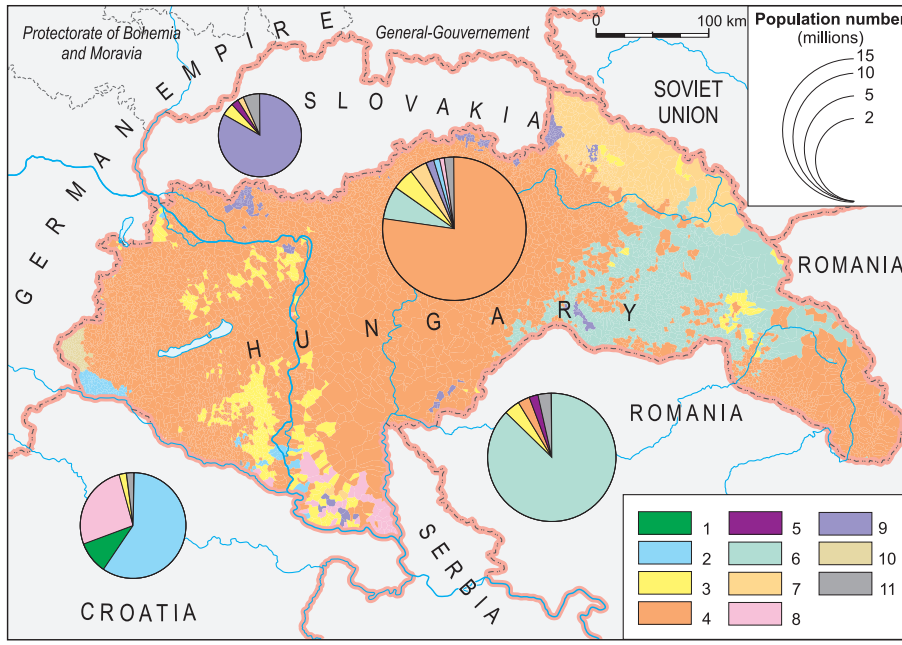


Fig. 6. Ethnic structure of Hungary and her neighbours (1941). – 1 = Bosniaks; 2 = Croats, Bunjevci, Šokci; 3 = Germans; 4 = Hungarians; 5 = Jews; 6 = Romanians; 7 = Rusyns; 8 = Serbs; 9 = Slovaks; 10 = Slovenes; 11 = other ethnic groups

It was only the *Rusyn* minority who considered (due to historical and geographical reasons) to establish an ethnic based territorial autonomy (Voivodeship of Subcarpathia) within the Hungarian state. This was proposed by Prime Minister Pál Teleki as a legislative bill, however, he was later forced to withdraw it on 5 August 1940 because of internal political and military interests (Fedinec, Cs. 2001). On the territory of the *Government of Subcarpathia*, administrative units independent of the Hungarian counties were created instead of an absolute autonomy, where Rusyn ("Hungaro-Russian") was declared the second official language after Hungarian (Botlik, J. 2005).

The period between 1945 and 1989

At the end of the Second World War, after the changes of state power, the territorial revisions between 1938 and 1941 were annulled. This was finalised from the Hungarian aspect on 10 February 1947 in the *Paris Peace Treaty*. During the war, the Czech-ruled *Czechoslovakia* was revived and *Yugoslavia* was

turned into a federal state in 1945 at the cost of ceasing the independence of Slovakia and Croatia. The Ukrainian (Rusyn)-majority *Transcarpathia* (formerly called Subcarpathia) was annexed to the *Soviet Union* as ruled in the Czechoslovak–Soviet agreement of 29 June 1945. The Hungarian–Romanian state border drawn in 1920 was resorted, and later the Romanian administration was restored in *Northern Transylvania*, which had become the subject of Soviet political blackmail and which had been under Soviet rule between 12–14 November 1944 and 9–13 March 1945 (Vincze, G. 1994).

As a consequence of the changes of power, large-scale *forced migrations* took place. The *German* and *Hungarian* population in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania, decimated by evacuation, flight and blood-revenge were considered to be war culprits, the servants of the occupants and were looked upon as collectively guilty and thus their total or partial elimination (expulsion, deportation) began immediately, especially from the strategically important border areas (Kocsis, K. 1992, 1999).[5] Taking advantage of the "favourable" historical moment, to replace the Germans and the Hungarians, an organised colonisation of the *members* of the given country's *titular nation* – mainly embedded into the framework of agricultural reforms – began immediately, which resulted in a fundamental change in the ethnic structure of the (mainly borderland and urban) population, served national-social purposes and aimed at making any prospective Hungarian claims for territorial revision impossible (Kocsis, K. 1999).

As a result of the general anti-minority atmosphere as well as the endeavours of the "mother-countries" to reach an ethnic concentration and homogeneity, there was a boost in the migration of minorities into their nation states, which caused a significant increase in the proportion of the titular nation in each country and, at the same time, a considerable ethnic "dilution", a mass mixture of the *autochthonous and allochthonous (new-comer) population* and hence an increase of the interethnic tension. In spite of the forced migrations, a *Hungarian minority of about 3 million* still remained on the territories of the countries neighbouring Hungary, half of whom lived in the borderland, and the settlement area of whom became ethnically more mixed, but theoretically still allowed for a potential realisation of an ethnic based territorial autonomy.

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[5] After 1944 about one million Germans "disappeared" (fled, were evacuated, deported or killed) from the Carpathian Basin: e.g. 336 thousand from Vojvodina and Croatia, 274 thousand from Transylvania (in broader sense), 255 thousand from Hungary and 120 thousand from Slovakia (Kocsis, K. 1992; Czibulka, Z. *et al.* 2004). The number of Hungarians who fled, moved or were deported to the present territory of Hungary between 1944 and 1950 from the neighbouring countries is an estimated 230–300 thousand (Stark T. 1989; Kocsis, K. 1992).

In the countries of the Carpathian Basin (except for Austria) under the influence (mostly military control) of the Soviet Union, *Soviet-type communist regimes* were forcefully created between 1945 and 1948, which made it impossible in the following decades to realise any ethnic based territorial autonomy. Independently from this, it should also be mentioned that Yugoslavia, reborn as a "federal people's republic" in 1945, ruled by Josip Broz Tito – as opposed to the centralised, Serbian-ruled Yugoslavia between the two world wars – guaranteed radically different life conditions to all non-Serbian ethnic groups of the state by practicing territorial decentralisation, maintaining an autonomy of Yugoslav republics, recognising and granting in principle the identity and equality of each South Slav nation (Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Muslimans/Bosniaks, Serbs, Slovenes).

On 29 November 1945, at the time of the creation of the communist Yugoslavia, *Vojvodina* was granted the autonomous province status, which was promised as early as the national liberation war (in 1943). "Vojvodina" (called South Hungary or Délvidék/Southern Region until 1918) was granted a *regional autonomy* because of the historical past and ethnic diversity of this Central European territory and the strong regional identity of local Serbs. This, of course, did not mean that the minorities of Vojvodina (especially the 429 thousand Hungarians living there) could realise an ethnic based self-governance, since owing to the forced migrations, after 1945, the majority of Vojvodina's population was ethnic Serbian (1948: 50.6%, 2011: 66.8%). The regional autonomy itself could also be completely realised (almost up to the level of the self-governance of the Yugoslav member republics) after the new constitution of 21 February 1974 (Strugar, V. 1976).

In the Carpathian Basin an ethnic based territorial autonomy in the 20th century was realised only for a short period (between 1952 and 1960/68) in the middle of *Romania.* What the Soviet Union (that is Stalin, to be more precise) did not realise on the annexed Transcarpathia and what it did not expect Czechoslovakia to do, it requested (the non-Slavic and his 1941 and 1944 war opponent) Romania to do: the realisation of the Hungarian territorial autonomy (Bottoni, S. 2008). The new Romanian constitution enacted on 24 September *1952* called into existence (acting upon Soviet order) the *Hungarian Autonomous Region* (MAT), an administrative unit comprising 13,550 square kilometres, with a seat in Târgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely), consisting of 10 rayons and 731 thousand (77% Hungarian) population. The territory of the region basically encompassed the historical Székely Land. The MAT included 565 thousand Hungarians, however, 63.7% of the Transylvanian Hungarian population (almost a million people) remained outside the borders of the MAT, whose minority right (exactly because of the existence of the MAT) were violated to greater and greater extents, and whose Hungarian language usage was repressed. The Romanian communist nation state increased the political pressure and

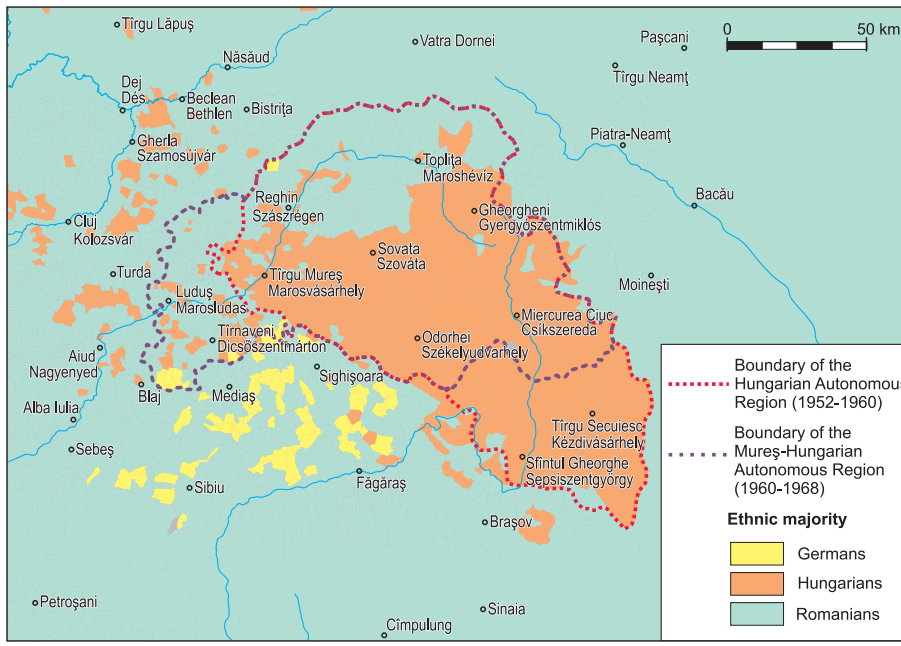


Fig. 7. Ethnic map of the Mureş-Hungarian Autonomous Region and its neighbourhood (Romania, 1966).

restricted the power of the MAT due to a decrease in the Soviet pressure following Stalin's death (1953), the Transylvanian Hungarian sympathy with the defeated Hungarian revolution and war of independence of 1956 and the Hungarian national solidarity reaching over the borders. On 24 December *1960*, in the course of reorganising (and renaming) this administrative unit *(Mureş-Hungarian Autonomous Region/MMAT),* the southern rayons (Sfântu Gheorghe/Sepsiszentgyörgy, Târgu Secuiesc/Kézdivásárhely with Hungarian majority population) were adjoined to the Braşov Region (absolutely dominated by Romanians) on alleged economic grounds, and, at the same time, rayons with a Romanian majority (Luduş/Marosludas and Târnăveni/Dicsőszentmárton) were annexed to the MMAT (Elekes, T. 2011) *(Figure 7)*.

This reorganisation did not only mean that the Romanian nation state altered the territory and ethnic composition[6] of the area in a way that was extremely disadvantageous for the Hungarians, but it also accelerated the

[6] The proportion of Hungarians in the region, the territory of which changed because of the reorganisation at the end of 1960, decreased between the 1956 and the 1966 censuses from 77.3% to 60.2% (while the proportion of the Romanians rose from 20.1% to 36.8%).

process of diminishing the institutional background of the Hungarian territorial autonomy, that had thus far had the effect of a "cultural greenhouse" (Bottoni, S. 2008). The autonomous region (considered by many to be a mere ethno-political showroom, a Hungarian ghetto anyway), which was turned into a formal entity as one stage of the less and less concealed Romanian nation building policy aimed at an ethnic homogenisation, *was terminated* with the enactment of the law restoring the county system on 19 December 1968.

The federalist restructuring of Yugoslavia in reality, the shrinkage of the possibilities of defending Serbian interests directly, the decrease in the former Serbian dominance – especially after Tito's death (1980) – immensely increased the dissatisfaction of the Serbs, who were accustomed to their privileged situation. They were especially indignant about the fact that from among the territories that had unique ethnic or historical backgrounds, only the provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina in Serbia were granted autonomy, whereas the Serbian-majority territories in Croatia (e.g. Krajina) were not. This was conceived as a great exasperation for the Serbs, considering themselves to winners of the war, but losers of the peace. As a result, there were fiercer and fiercer Serbian attacks on the constitution of 1974 from the middle of the 1980s. After artificially rousing the feeling of being threatened, under the leadership of Slobodan Milošević, an *"All-Serbian" movement* was started, as a result of which in the course of the so called "anti-bureaucratic revolution" serving the Serbian concentration of power, in *1988–89* the *autonomy of Vojvodina* and *Kosovo* was restricted to exist merely on paper (in fact it was *terminated*).

The period after 1989

In the former socialist countries of Europe, a political, economic and social transition *(change of regimes,* changing of the regime) began in 1989, in the course of which the demolition of the communist regime was started, and the foundations of the western-type parliamentary democracies and the market economy were laid. The most important milestones of this process were the free, multiparty parliamentary elections of 1990, which brought about the success of the parties with strong national (often nationalist) rhetoric (Weilguni, W. *et al.* 1991).

The events taking place in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, pointing in the direction of a change of regime and also fortifying each other (e.g. revolutions, multiparty elections, starting to change the political-economic system, endeavours of federal member-states to become independent) had a great impact on the political behaviour of the *Yugoslav* nations and nationalities. The formerly communist circles suddenly changed their internationalist guises into national ones and started a politics aimed at "saving the nations". The new Croatian constitution of 1990 recognised the Croats as the only titular nation and treated the former fellow nation, the Serbs, as a national minority

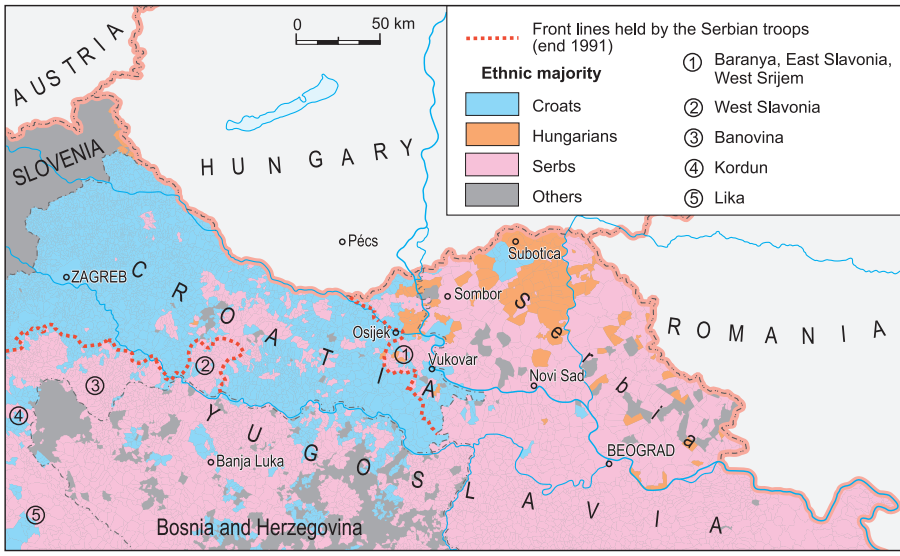


Fig. 8. Ethnic map of Pannonian areas of Croatia and the front lines (1991). – 1–5 = parts of the „Republic of Serbian Krajina"

and did not allow them (either) to establish an ethnic based territorial autonomy (Silber, L. and Little, A. 1995).

The outraged Croatian Serbs, manipulated by Serbia, after their referendum on the issue of autonomy on 30 September *1990*, proclaimed the *Serbian Autonomous Oblast of Krajina* (SAO Krajina) with its seat in Knin, within the territory of Croatia, belonging in those days to Yugoslavia. Along with the escalation of the Serbo-Croatian conflict into a war, the Serbs proclaimed their independence from Croatia and joined Serbia on 2 April 1991, and later on 19 December they proclaimed the independent *Republic of Serbian Krajina* (RSK) (Dakić, M. 1994). The internationally unrecognised Serbian state formation encompassed more than a quarter (approximately 15,000 square kilometres) of the territory of Croatia including not only Krajina in a narrower sense (North Dalmatia, Lika, Kordun, Banovina/Banija having a Serbian majority population until then), but also certain western parts of Slavonia and areas along the Danube in Croatia (Baranya, West Srijem/Srem) (Baletić, Z. *et al.* 1994) *(Figure 8)*.[7]

As late as at the end of 1992, Croatia offered the Krajina Serbs the status of territorial autonomy (expanding to the districts/kotars of Glina and Knin), however, since by then the Serbs had this territory in their possession, they

[7] The territory under Serbian control had 549,083 inhabitants (52.4% Serb, 37.1% Croatian) in 1991. According to the Serbian authorities of Krajina there were only 433,595 inhabitants (91% Serb, 7% Croatian) in the June of 1993 (Republika Srpska Krajina [specijalni prilog], Vojska [Beograd], Br.11. mart, 1994).

did not find this status satisfactory. The Croatian-Serbian frontline remained basically fixed until the beginning of May 1995, when the Croatian army first reoccupied the Okučani area in West Slavonia, then between 4 and 8 August the areas of North Dalmatia, Lika, Kordun and Banovina (Banija), from where more than 200,000 Serbs fled to Serbia, a small proportion of whom settled down in Baranya, East Slavonia and in West Srijem (that remained under UNO-Serbian control until 1998).[8] This put an end to the existence of the RSK and the ethnic area of the Croatian Serbs became completely decomposed because of the forced mass emigrations and thus their hope for a prospective ethnic based territorial autonomy diminished.

The Milošević regime in Serbia attempted to compensate the fact that it reduced the federal autonomies to have mere nominal statuses by "deconcentrating" the state power in a way that in 1991 districts *(*okrug*)* governed by leaders appointed by the prime minister were created (Jordan, P. 2010). There were seven "okrugs" (districts directed from Belgrade) established in *Vojvodina* in a way that the Hungarian ethnic territory near the Tisza was subdivided into three parts (annexed to the districts of Novi Sad, Subotica and Kikinda). Incidentally, the same method was applied also with the ethnic area of the Muslims and Bosniaks in the Sanjak region. After the loss of Kosovo and the fall of Milošević, the Serbian governments gradually started to restore Vojvodina's autonomy that had been lost after 1988. The constitution of Vojvodina that has six official languages was enacted on 1 January 2010 and has been effective up to this day. Restoring the autonomy of the province that had a 2/3 Serbian majority following the 1995 mass Serbian influx also served though the interests of the Vojvodina *Hungarians*, who (the Democratic Fellowship of Vojvodina Hungarians, VMDK), nevertheless, had created a three-level self-governance model[9] that includes the ethnic based territorial autonomy in 1992 (Gerencsér, B. and Juhász, A. 2001; Surányi, Z. 2001).

The Hungarian parties forming an electoral coalition continue to have as their aim to create – along with the personal self-government – a regional self-governance for the eight Hungarian-majority municipalities (opština) near the Tisza *(Hungarian Autonomous District)* (Surányi, Z. 2001; Gábrity Molnár, I. 2009). This prospective autonomous district, that would comprise almost 60% of the Vojvodina Hungarians, would have 327 thousand inhabitants, out

[8] Due to migration and assimilation, the proportion of the Serbian population in Croatia dropped from 581,663 (12.2%) in 1991 to 186,633 (4.4%) in 2011.

[9] According to the „Memorandum on the self-government of Hungarians living in the Republic of Serbia" worded at the congress of the VMDK in Kanjiža (Magyarkanizsa) (25 April 1992): 1. Personal self-government (with the Hungarian National Council as its executive body), 2. Territorial self-governance (partnership of the Hungarian-majority municipalities/opština: Hungarian Autonomous District), 3. Local self-government (self-government for the representation of Hungarian-majority settlements outside the ethnic bloc).

of which 53% would be Hungarians, 24.4% Serbs, 5.5% Bunjevci and Croats and 8% of unknown ethnicity (2002). The territorial autonomy has not yet been established, but a wide-scope cultural (personal) autonomy was created by the Vojvodina Hungarians mainly owing to the work of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (VMSZ) (Gábrity Molnár, I. 2009; Korhecz, T. 2009, 2010).

After the fall of communism the populous Hungarian minority communities established their independent (cultural and political) organisations not only in multi-ethnic Yugoslavia, but also on the territories of states considering themselves to be unitary nation-states, such as the present-day Ukraine, Slovakia and Romania. These organisations articulated their various self-governance and autonomy concepts almost immediately (Ríz, Á. 2000).

Transcarpathia was still a part of the Soviet Union, when in 1989 the *Hungarian Cultural Federation in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ)* expressed its commitment to creating a Hungarian autonomous district with its seat in Berehovo (Beregszász) (Botlik, J. and Dupka, Gy. 1993). At the same time, the autochthonous Slavic population of the region, the *Rusyns*[10] (to be more precise, the Society of Carpathian Rusyns), whose independent national existence was eliminated under the Soviet supremacy, started their seemingly hopeless struggle for the restoration of the autonomy that Transcarpathia (Carpatho-Ukraine) had enjoyed in 1938–39, and this evoked extremely heated debates even locally. At the referendum held on 1 December 1991 primarily on the issue of Ukraine's independence, the vast majority of the local population in Transcarpathia supported the special self-governance status of the region (78%), and, moreover, the foundation of the Hungarian Autonomous District in the *Rayon of Berehovo* (Beregszász) (81.4%). All this, however, had no political consequence, since Kiev (pressurized by nationalist forces) sternly rejected both endeavours (Osztapec, J. 2010).

The unity of the young Ukrainian nation state was declared by its constitution enacted on 28 June 1996, which was forced to acknowledge the existence of only the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (Krym) due to Russian pressure. Because of Ukraine's rejection of the ethnic based territorial autonomy, starting from 2000 KMKSZ has initiated the formation of a *Rayon of Tisza-region* (Tisza-melléki járás) with its seat in Berehovo (Beregszász), where the Hungarians would constitute the majority of the population (72%) in a way that it would also include three quarters of the Transcarpathian Hungarians. Only a prospective future Ukrainian administrative reform would potentially allow for the changing of the district borders that had been marked in the Soviet period and that have been unaltered in the past half a century, and even then on the condition that the ethnic perspectives are observed from a point of view that is favourable for Hungarians.

[10] At the 2001 census only 0.8% of the Transcarpathian population (10,090 people) declared Rusyn ethnicity (in 1941 58.9%, 502 thousand Rusyn mother tongue).

The Hungarian parties *in Slovakia* proposed several autonomy concepts and drafts in the 1990s; the earliest (in 1991) and most articulated claim for a territorial autonomy was expressed by the *Coexistence-Együttélés* Political Movement. These endeavours reached their summit and were devoted a wide scope national publicity at the *Congress of Komárno* (Komárom) of the Hungarian members of Slovakian parliament and of the Hungarian mayors of Slovakia (8 January 1994) (Az önkormányzat… 1994; Gerencsér, B. and Juhász, A. 2001; Molnár, M. 2009). The territorial autonomy draft presented and approved depicted two scenarios (one contiguous or three Hungarian-majority regions). Had the first scenario been realised, it would have resulted in creating a region of 8,245.3 square kilometres, adjacent to the Hungarian–Slovakian borders, with approximately 824 thousand (61.5% Hungarian) inhabitants (Oriskó, N. 1993; Duray, M. *et al.* 1994; Kocsis, K. 2002).

The second scenario, as presented above, would have resulted in three Hungarian-majority regions: 1. In the west between Bratislava (Pozsony) and Šahy (Ipolyság) (525 thousand people, 63.1% Hungarian), 2. In the middle, between Šahy (Ipolyság) and Košice (Kassa) (239 thousand people, 54.2% Hungarian), 3. In the east (59 thousand people, 77.3% Hungarian). Both the Slovak politics and wide masses of the Slovak society reacted with plain rejection, sometimes even almost hysterically to the Hungarian plans concerning an ethnic based territorial autonomy and administrative reform (Bakker, E. 1997; Fazekas, M. 2009).

Among the Slovaks (partly similarly to the Rusyns and Ukrainians), who had been fighting for their autonomy and independence under the Hungarian and the Czech supremacy for more than a century, the word "autonomy" meaning the endeavour to achieve an internal territorial self-governance, equals with the first milestone on the way to independence, an overt civic disloyalty and secessionism. Therefore, it did not come as a surprise that the Slovak Parliament in its Act 221/1996 "On Territorial and Administrative Division" enacted such – still effective – administrative order which represents the exact opposite of the conceptions of the Hungarian parties. The new region (kraj) and district (okres) borders completely partitioned the Hungarian ethnic area in South Slovakia in a way that Hungarians were in minority in almost all medium- and higher-level administrative units so that the Hungarians' endeavours to achieve territorial self-governance would be prevented (Kocsis, K. 2002; Hamberger, J. 2008; Szarka, L. 2008b).

The *Party of the Hungarian Coalition* (MKP), that became a government party in 1998, gave up the idea of the ethnic based territorial autonomy under these new circumstances as a result of political negotiations, although initially it strove to reconsider the law of public administration referred to above. As opposed to the Coexistence-Együttélés draft mentioned above, they made vast allowances proposing the creation of a western *region* called "*Podunajsko/Dunamente (or Komárno/Komárom)*" with 602 thousand inhabitants comprising a 55.2% Hungarian majority between Šamorín (Somorja) and Šahy (Ipolyság). The plan of this Hungarian majority region was considered "professionally unfounded" and "endangering

the territorial integrity of the Slovak nation state", thus it was sternly rejected by the Slovak government (as well as by the nationalist parties of the opposition). Since then the apparently hopeless issue of the Hungarian territorial autonomy has receded in the Hungarian parties' politics, and the initiative was taken over by civil motions (Comorra Aula).

The largest Hungarian community beyond the borders of Hungary, with more than 1.6 million Transylvanian Hungarians at the time, founded a unified organisation for protecting their interests, called the *Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania* (RMDSZ) at the end of the Romanian revolution, on 25 December *1989*. By 1992 within this multi-faceted movement, a political stream articulately requesting Romania to grant minority rights, overtly demanding autonomy and relying on favourable effects of exercising pressure from abroad came into prominence, which was also reflected in requesting a fellow nation status for the Hungarians in Romania, as well as requesting autonomy and a minority law (Bárdi, N. 2008). This was when the first three-step autonomy models were drafted, which included the demand for a territorial autonomy (the "Region of the Hungarian National Community" based on the free partnership of the local Hungarian-majority self-governments) (Csapó, I.J. 2003; Gerencsér, B. and Juhász, A. 2001; Bognár, Z.).

By 1996, there were two wings within the RMDSZ, that in the meantime became a governing party: the "moderate" wing considered the process of arriving at an autonomy to be a longer one, as opposed to the "more radical" ("autonomist") wing. By 2003, the inner conflicts between the two wings led to the foundation of the civil organisation *Hungarian National Council of Transylvania* (EMNT), and with a similar goal, but primarily with the Székely Land in focus, the „*Székely National Council* (SZNT) by the prominent figures of the "more radical" wing.[11] The statute of the autonomy of the Székely Land elaborated on in 2003 by the SZNT was emphatically rejected by the Romanian Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The modified bill on the autonomy of the Székely Land was introduced in 2005, by the RMDSZ, as a member of the government, but it was rejected by the Romanian Chamber of Deputies after a few months, and by the Senate on 25 September 2012. The bill proposed the „*Székely Land Autonomous Region*" to be a region encompassing 9,980 square kilometres, with a total population of 809 thousand of which 76% Hungarians. The planned autonomous region would primarily have included the today's counties of Harghita (Hargita) and Covasna (Kovászna) and the south-eastern part of Mureş (Maros) county.

[11] The MNT, fighting for the territorial autonomy overtly and striving to reach results quickly was founded on 25 April 2003 in Odorheiu Secuiesc (Székelyudvarhely), while the SZNT was founded on 16 October 2003 in Sfântu Gheorghe (Sepsiszentgyörgy). Former members of the RMDSZ founded the Hungarian Civic Party in 2008 and the Hungarian People's Party of Transylvania in 2011.

It is a little-known fact in connection with the autonomy struggles of the Transylvanian Hungarians that the EMNT supported the elaboration of a plan of a *Hungarian autonomous region* in *Northwest Romania* (*Partium region)* (Szilágyi, F. and Csomortányi, I. 2010). There have been several plans prepared for the region inhabited by a Hungarian–Romanian mixed population adjacent to the Hungarian border that has been considered by Romanians as a potential irredentist danger. The plan encompassing the largest territory would accommodate 349 thousand people (191 thousand, 54.5% Hungarian and 130 thousand, 37.1% Romanian) and would also include the city Satu Mare (Szatmárnémeti) and towns Carei (Nagykároly), Şimleu Silvaniei (Szilágysomlyó) and Marghita (Margitta). This plan has not become known by the Romanian public. For the time being, the Hungarians in Northwest Romania are getting accustomed to the idea that they might achieve a territorial autonomy on their homeland.

As a consequence of the series of failures regarding plans on territorial autonomy, the RMDSZ proposed the creation of a region uniting the counties Mureş (Maros), Harghita (Hargita) and Covasna (Kovászna) by restructuring the development regions planned in 1998 before the 2007 EU elections (Csutak, I. 2007; Szilágyi, F. 2010). This proposal for restructuring the administration of Romania was kept up until the negotiations with the president's committee of professional experts in 2010 (15 regions, one of them with a Hungarian majority).

Based on the failures of the autonomy struggles of the Hungarian minorities in Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine, it can be argued that both the titular nations and the Hungarian parties should change their approach. The Romanian, Slovakian and Ukrainian decision-makers should see the reasons and understand that a territorial autonomy is not an attack on sovereignty and does not necessarily lead to a separation, but, on the contrary, if it operates successfully, it can be a form of integration and an effective means of overcoming conflicts. Simultaneously Hungarian minority politicians, who are at the moment seriously divided, should realise that autonomy is not a magic potion and it cannot be reached by unilateral declarations, but there should be (among others) a unity of action towards the titular nations, and at the same time, an atmosphere of trust has to be created, and all this takes a long time, patience and political wisdom (Salat L. 2004).

The current geographical possibilities of ethnic based territorial autonomies in the Carpathian Basin

Beyond the necessary political conditions, historical traditions and lucky circumstances[12], some ethnic and geographical-demographical conditions, as proposed above, need to be met (the minority should outnumber the titular state majority;

[12] See Ghai, Y. 2002.

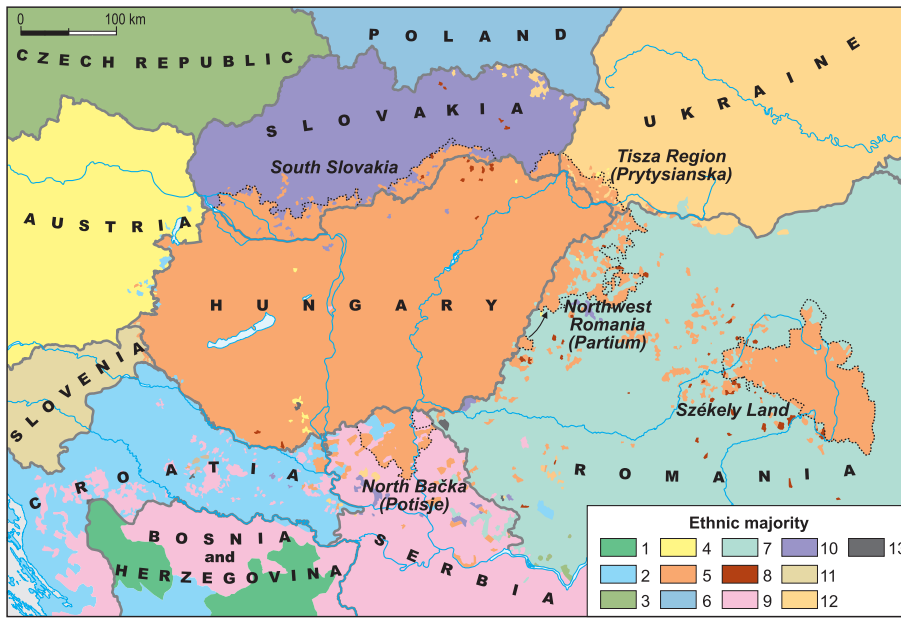


Fig. 9. Geographically possible ethnic based territorial autonomies in the Carpathian Basin. – 1 = Bosniaks, Muslims by ethnicity; 2 = Croats, Bunjevci, Šokci; 3 = Czechs; 4 = Germans, German speaking Austrians; 5 = Hungarians; 6 = Poles; 7 = Romanians; 8 = Romani people; 9 = Serbs; 10 = Slovaks; 11 = Slovenes; 12 = Ukrainians; 13 = other ethnic groups

the settlement area should be relatively contiguous and large enough as well as economically sustainable) in order to reach ethnic based territorial autonomies (or at least regional associations of local self-governments with the minority in majority). These latter conditions are only met in the *ethnic territories of the Hungarians in Slovakia, Transcarpathia, Transylvania and Vojvodina* mentioned in the previous chapter *(Figure 9)*. Although a century ago there used to be several hundred thousand German and Serbian minority inhabitants in the Carpathian Basin, due to the forced emigrations (for the Germans 1944–50 and the Serbs 1991–95), the territorial autonomy is no longer accomplishable for them.

During the last century on today's territory of *Slovakia,* the number and the proportion of people declaring Hungarian ethnicity (or mother tongue) has continuously decreased due to the forced migrations, assimilation processes and the anti-Hungarian climate of opinion connected to the building of the Czechoslovak (then, from 1993 the Slovak) nation state.[13] In spite of this, the vast majority of the Hungarians still constitute a more or less contiguous

[13] Hungarians on the present-day territory of Slovakia (m: mother tongue; e: ethnicity): in 1910 880,851 (m), in 1930 585,434 (e), in 1991 567,296 (e), in 2011 458,467 (e).

Table 1. Ethnic structure of the population on the territory of the possible „Autonomous Region of South Slovakia" (1941–2011)

Year	Total population	Hungarians	Slovaks	Roma	Others	Hungarians	Slovaks	Roma	Others
	Population number					Ratio in per cent			
1941	*571,198*	545,481	18,854	3,433	3,430	95.5	3.3	0.6	0.6
2001	*681,148*	473,912	184,556	10,142	12,538	69.6	27.1	1.5	1.8
2011	*680,493*	432,445	189,719	11,196	47,133	63.5	27.9	1.6	7.0

Sources: Mother tongue data of the Hungarian (1941) and Slovakian (2001, 2011) population censuses.

settlement area in the southern regions of the country, near the Hungarian border, where there was a native Hungarian-speaking majority in 414 towns and villages in 2011. Since the conspicuously anti-Hungarian administrative reforms (1960, 1996), only two (Komárno and Dunajská Streda) of the present 79 districts of Slovakia retained their Hungarian majority. Should natural hinterlands (catchment areas), historical traditions and ethnic relations be considered, there could be 16 districts created in Slovakia with a Hungarian-speaking majority population (Michniak, D. 2006; Halás, M. and Klapka, P. 2012) *(Figure 10)*.

All the seats of these possible districts used to be district or county seats in the past century (Kocsis, K. 2002). Out of the districts lining up near the Slovakian–Hungarian border, 9 in the west, 5 in the middle and 2 in the east could constitute an association *("Autonomous Region of South Slovakia"*), the total population of which would exceed 680 thousand; according to the mother tongue 63.5% (432 thousand) would be Hungarian, 27.9% (190 thousand) Slovak, and 1.6% (11 thousand) Roma (*Table 1*).

Only 15% of the Hungarians would remain outside this imaginary region, the majority of whom live in Bratislava and in the towns of the Slovakian–Hungarian linguistic boundary that used to have a Hungarian majority until 1945, and since then predominantly a Slovakian majority (Senec, Šaľa, Levice, Lučenec, Košice).

In spite of the emigrations in the past half century, the number of Hungarians in *Transcarpathia* (Ukraine) has not decreased dramatically (1959: 146 thousand, 1979: 158 thousand, 2001: 152 thousand). Out of the 13 rayons of the region there is a Hungarian majority in the *rayon of Berehovo* (*Beregszász)* only, constituted by (including the town of Berehovo/Beregszász) a mere 35.6% of the Transcarpathian Hungarians. It would be necessary to reconsider the district borders that had been unchanged for the past 60 years in a way that natural hinterlands and ethnic scenes are considered; thus in the ethnic territory of the Hungarian minority adjacent to the Hungarian–Ukrainian border it would be reasonable to detach a *rayon of Čop* (*Csap)* with 49 thousand inhabitants

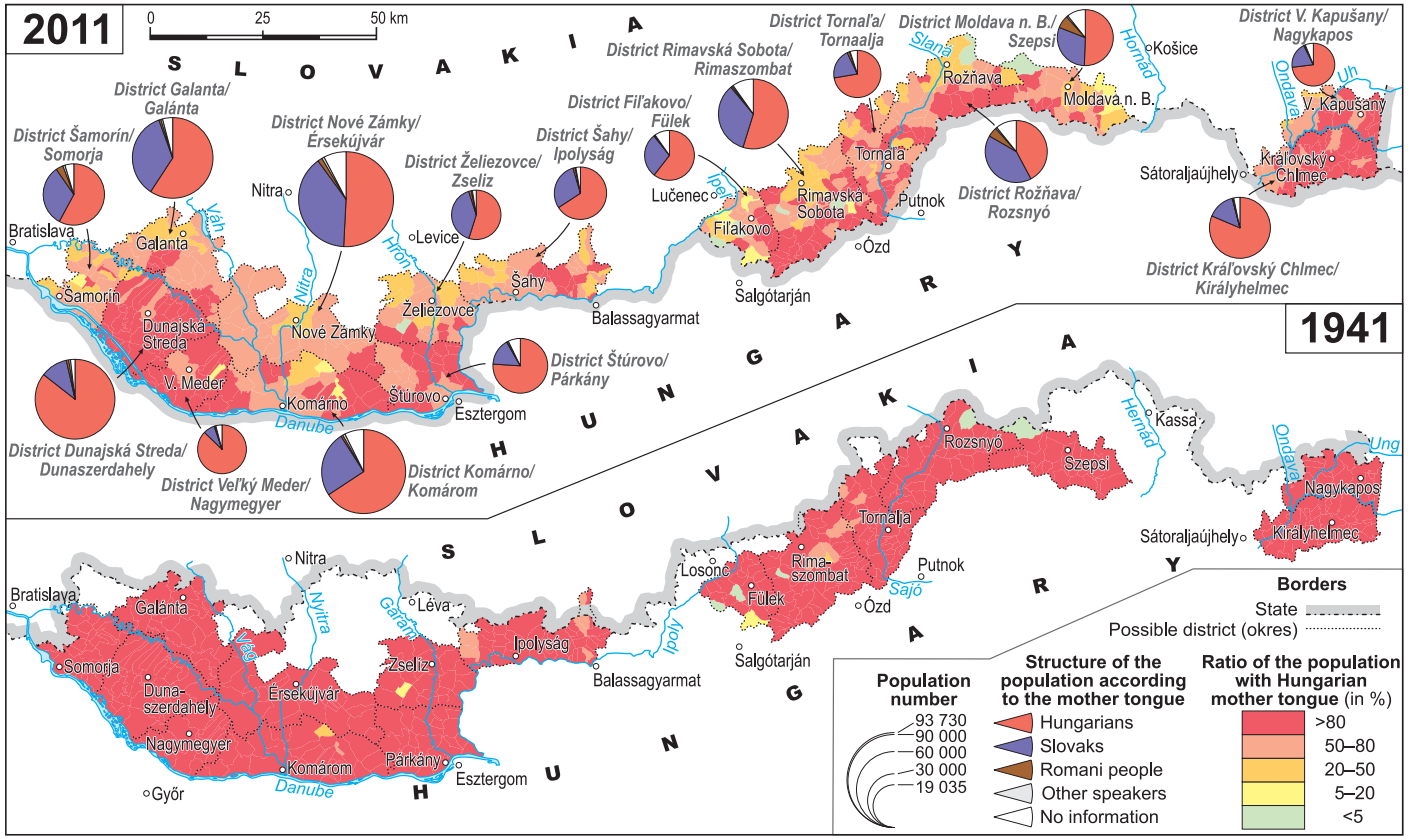


Fig. 10. Ratio of the Hungarians on the territory of the geographically possible Autonomous Region of South Slovakia (1941, 2011)

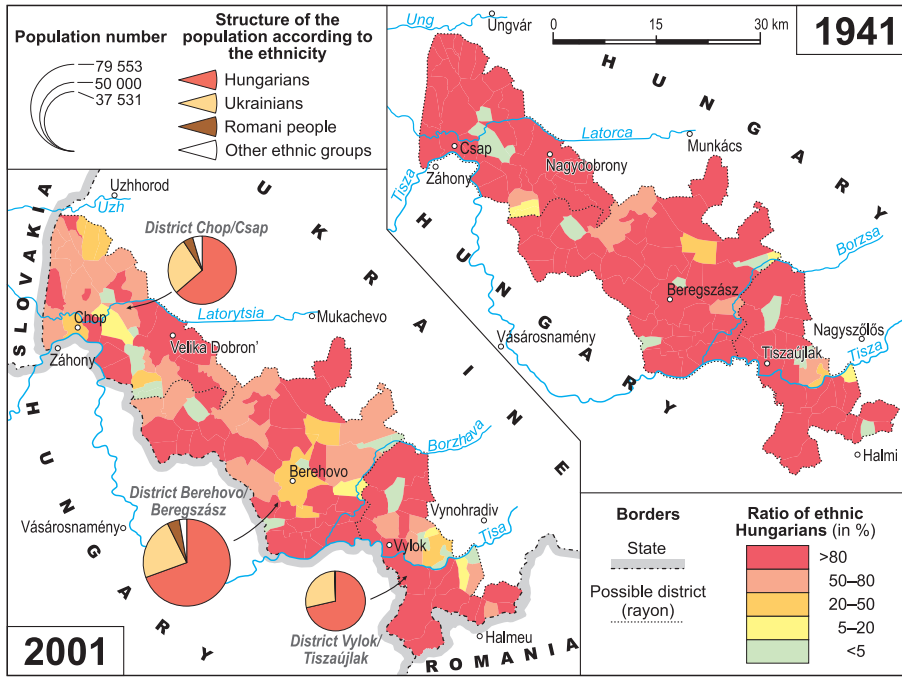


Fig. 11. Ratio of the Hungarians on the territory of the geographically possible Autonomous District of Tisza Region (Prytysianska) in Ukraine (1941, 2001)

from the actual district of Uzhhorod (Ungvár), and a *rayon of Vylok* (*Tiszaújlak)* with 38 thousand inhabitants from today's rayon of Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős) *(Figure 11)*.[14] The three new districts formed this way would have an absolute Hungarian majority and they could join to create an association (*"Autonomous District of Tisza Region", Prytysianska*), the total population of which would exceed 165 thousand, with 68.2% of Hungarian, 25.5% of Ukrainian, 3.9% of Roma and 1.7% of Russian ethnicity (*Table 2*).

Only one quarter of the Transcarpathian Hungarians would remain outside these rayons, especially in the towns near the Hungarian–Ukrainian linguistic boundary (Uzhhorod, Mukačevo, Vynohradiv) and in the Upper Tisza Valley.

[14] The number of inhabitants in these imagined rayons would exceed the population number of today's rayons of Velykyy Bereznyi, Perechyn and Volovets. The new rayons created this way along the Hungarian–Ukrainian border would be: rayon of Čop (Csap) (48,907 inhabitants, 63.7% Hungarian, 27.1% Ukrainian); rayon of Berehovo (Beregszász) (79,553 inhabitants, 69.4% Hungarian, 23.3% Ukrainian); rayon of Vylok (Tiszaújlak) (37,531 inhabitants, 71.4% Hungarian, 28.1% Ukrainian).

Table 2. Ethnic structure of the population on the territory of the possible „Autonomous District of Tisza Region (Prytysianska)" in Ukraine (1941–2001)

Year	Total population	Hungarians	Ukrainians	Russians	Roma	Others	Hungarians	Ukrainians	Russians	Roma	Others
	Population number						Ratio in per cent				
1941	*123,758*	113,466	8,375	–	47	1,870	91.7	6.8	–	0.0	1.5
1989	*169,275*	115,211	42,884	4,648	4,900	1,632	68.1	25.3	2.7	2.9	0.4
2001	*165,991*	113,175	42,377	2,850	6,497	3,657	68.2	25.5	1.7	3.9	0.7

Sources: Mother tongue (1941) and ethnicity (1989, 2001) data of the Hungarian (1941), Soviet (1989) and Ukrainian (2001) population censuses.

Almost all the Hungarians of *Romania* lived on the territories belonging to Hungary until 1918, in *Transylvania* in the broader sense, where their number rapidly decreased in the past almost four decades – primarily because of the accelerated rate of emigration (1977: 1.7 million, 2002: 1.4 million and 2011: 1.2 million ethnic Hungarians). Presently approximately half of the Transylvanian Hungarians live in the Székely Land, almost one fifth live in Northwest Romania (Partium or Crişana-Maramureş), while one third struggles for ethnic survival in enclaves, diasporas. Since the administrative reform of 1968, out of the 16 counties of Transylvania only two, Harghita and Covasna, had a Hungarian majority.

In 2011 out of the present 1,192 Transylvanian cities, towns and communes 214 had a Hungarian majority. From among the territories populated by minorities in the Carpathian Basin a possibility of an ethnic based territorial self-governance seems to be the most obvious in the Transylvanian Székely Land if we consider the ethnic, economic and historical background. The Hungarian (Székely) population living there enjoyed territorial autonomy from the 14th century until 1876 (and from 1952 to 1960/68). The dominantly Hungarian ethnic nature of the historic-ethnic region called Székely Land has remained intact from the 13th century up to recently. Without changing the boundaries of the municipalities, communes, reconsidering the catchment areas, the ethnic structure and the historical background, it would be possible to join the Hungarian-majority towns and communes of the counties of Harghita, Covasna and Mureş to create a self-governance region (*"Autonomous Region of Székely Land"*), which would be home to 750 thousand (76.5% Hungarian-speaking and 21.5% Romanian-speaking) inhabitants *(Figure 12, Table 3)*.

As opposed to the historical Székely seats (Székely Land) existing until 1876, this territory would not include the Romanian-majority areas of Buzău and Becaş, Toplița and its environs, while

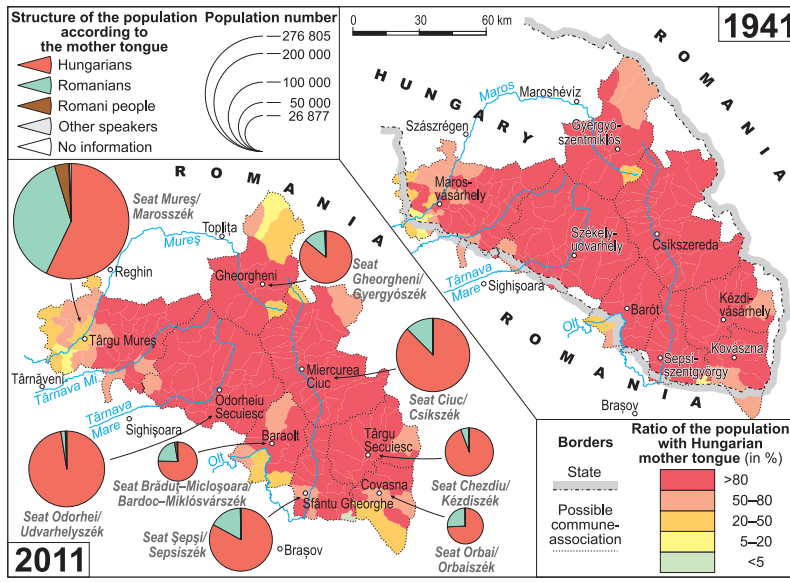


Fig. 12. Ratio of the Hungarians on the territory of the geographically possible Autonomous Region of Székely Land (1941, 2011)

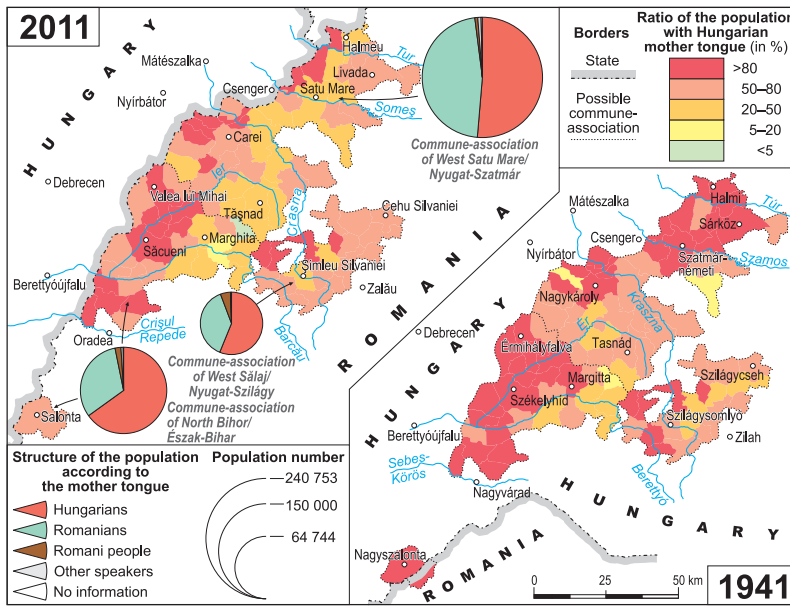


Fig. 13. Ratio of the Hungarians on the territory of the geographically possible Autonomous District of Northwest Romania (Partium) (1941, 2011)

Table 3. Ethnic structure of the population on the territory of the possible „Autonomous Region of Székely Land" in Romania (1941–2011)

Year	Total population	Hungarians	Romanians	Roma	Others	Hungarians	Romanians	Roma	Others
	Population number					Ratio in per cent			
1941	*615,945*	558,911	43,592	8	13,434	90.7	7.1	0.0	2.2
2002	*806,153*	618,753	173,865	12,367	1,168	76.8	21.6	1.5	0.1
2011	*750,117*	573,724	161,357	12,571	2,465	76.5	21.5	1.7	0.3

Sources: Mother tongue data of the Hungarian (1941) and Romanian (2002, 2011) population censuses.

Table 4. Ethnic structure of the population on the territory of the possible „Autonomous District of Northwest Romania (Partium)" (1941–2011)

Year	Total population	Hungarians	Romanians	Roma	Others	Hungarians	Romanians	Roma	Others
	Population number					Ratio in per cent			
1941	*430,790*	324,945	92,839	2,275	10,731	75.4	21.6	0.5	2.5
2002	*470,046*	257,758	196,508	8,656	7,124	54.9	41.8	1.8	1.5
2011	*429,528*	240,671	176,336	8,012	4,509	56.0	41.1	1.9	1.0

Sources: Mother tongue data of the Hungarian (1941) and Romanian (2002, 2011) population censuses.

the adjacent Hungarian-majority communes (outside the historical Székely Land) could be incorporated.

In the north-western part of Romania, in the so called Partium (Crişana-Maramureş) region, on the territories of the counties of Bihor, Satu Mare and Sălaj, an association of 86 (mostly Hungarian majority) towns and communes ("*Autonomous District of Partium"*) would be conceivable based on the catchment area of towns and the prevailing ethnic pattern, where 430 thousand (56% Hungarian-speaking, 41.1% Romanian-speaking and 1.9% Roma-speaking) inhabitants could enjoy a territory based self-governance *(Figure 13, Table 4)*.

This region would approximately coincide with the joint territory of the electoral districts of Chamber of Deputies in which a Hungarian party (RMDSZ) won the majority of the votes on 9 December 2012. One third of the Transylvanian Hungarians would remain outside the above mentioned territories, mainly in cities (e.g. in Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár 49 thousand, Oradea/Nagyvárad 46 thousand, Braşov/Brassó 16 thousand, Timişoara/ Temesvár 15 thousand, Baia Mare/Nagybánya 14 thou-

sand) and in the Transylvanian basin, where an autonomy based on a local and personal principle could help preserve their ethnic identity.

Almost all the Hungarians of *Serbia* (251 thousand people) live on the territory of the *Vojvodina Autonomous Province*, where they are in majority in eight municipalities. These administrative units, located near the Hungarian–Serbian border and the Tisa, in the hinterland of the cities of Subotica/Szabadka and Senta/Zenta, could voluntarily join to form an *"Autonomous District of North Bačka"* with 301 inhabitants, 50.4% of whom would be Hungarians, 25.8% Serbs and 9.5% Bunjevci and Croats *(Figure 14, Table 5)*.

Although 40% of the Vojvodina Hungarians (100 thousand people) would remain outside this territory, their already existing cultural autonomy (based on a personal principle) and their national minority self-government organisation, the National Council of the Vojvodina Hungarians would continue to support the preservation of their national identity.

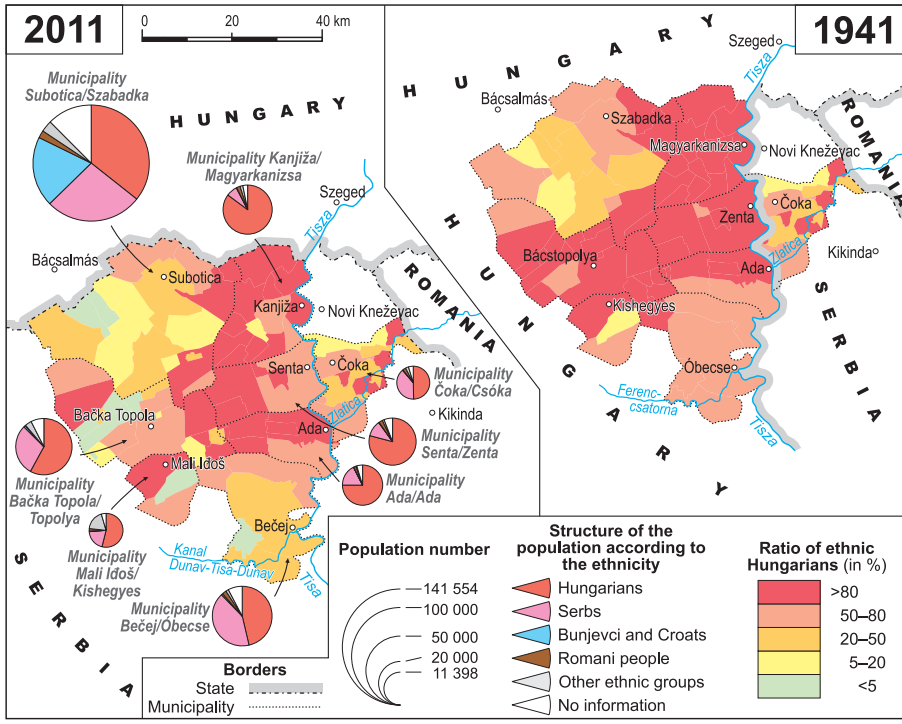


Fig. 14. Ratio of the Hungarians on the territory of the geographically possible Autonomous District of North Bačka (Potisje) (1941, 2011)

Table 5. Ethnic structure of the population on the territory of the possible „Autonomous District of North Bačka (Potisje)" in Serbia (1941–2011)

Year	Total population	Hungarians	Serbs	Bunjevci, Croats	Others	Hungarians	Serbs	Bunjevci, Croats	Others
	Population number					Ratio in per cent			
1941	*327,028*	241,998	32,908	37,658	14,464	74.0	10.1	11.5	4.4
2002	*327,031*	173,279	79,774	34,540	70,524	53.0	24.4	10.6	12.0
2011	*301,305*	151,999	77,679	28,678	42,949	50.4	25.8	9.5	14.3

Sources: Mother tongue (1941) and ethnicity (2002, 2011) data of the Hungarian (1941) and Serbian (2002, 2011) population censuses.

Conclusion

The *territorial autonomies* as *the most effective tools of minority protection* and the *most modern forms of internal self-governance of minorities* that have been created in the past decades one after the other, all over the world, do *not count as novelties* on the historical territory of Hungary, *in the Carpathian Basin*. The Hungarian rulers granted *such territorial self-governance* in exchange for military service *to different ethnic groups* (e.g. Saxons, Székelys, Romanians, Cumans, Jassic people and Serbs) *from the 13th century*, the majority of which remained in existence until the second half of the 19th century.

By the *end of the 18th century*, the *birth of the modern nations and nationalism* and by Joseph II's Germanizing enlightened absolutism, the proportion of ethnic minorities reached 2/3 of the country's population (while until the end of the 15th century only one third of inhabitants were non-Hungarians) due to reasons related to demographic processes and wars that were basically reshaping the ethnic structure of the country from the end of the Middle Ages. Due to the increasing growth of their demographic weight, their political consciousness and their nationalism brought partly about by the Hungarian nationalism (but also further provoked by the Habsburg Empire), the *national minorities started to claim* the recognition and implementation of their existence as independent political nations and their *ethnic based territorial autonomies* more and more articulated from the middle of the *19th century*.

The Hungarian state, following the *Austro–Hungarian Compromise (1867)*, was granted *internal self-governance* within the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy, however, *Hungary denied the same right from the national minorities* (except for the Croats) living on its territory. The reason for this denial was the same as in the case of all

other countries aiming to build an ethnically-politically unitary nation state: a fear of attempts of the minorities to separate, a fear that the territorial integrity of the state should be infringed and that the state borders that were hope to remain ever-lasting should be changed. It is regrettable that the Hungarian state that used to excel at ethnic-linguistic tolerance from the times of St. Stephen until the 19th century, submitting to the spirit of the age and *complying with the illusion of the French nation-state idea*, made a *mistake by denying* (among others) *the ethnic-territorial autonomy requests of the minorities*, that resulted in the estrangement of the minorities followed by their separation after the first world war, and, as a final outcome, in the dissolution of the thousand-year-old Hungarian state.

At the end of *1918*, on the territory of the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire *new multi-ethnic, middle-sized "nation-states" were created*, the borders of which had been drawn in a way that was disadvantageous for Hungary and thus several millions of Hungarians mainly in the border regions fell under their supremacy. In order to protect their territorial integrity the neighbours of Hungary did not only *deny the autonomy requests of the Hungarian minorities* treated as third-rate minorities, but also *those of their "fellow-nations"* (e.g. Slovaks, Rusyns, Croats) considered as second-rate minorities.

In the period between *1938 and 1944*, the *Third Reich* (in order to reach its conquering aims) made use of the desperation of the nations and minorities in the Carpathian Basin that were suppressed between the two world wars and it *successfully applied* the ancient Roman principle of *"divide et impera"*. It repelled the countries of the formerly ruling nations (Czechs, Romanians, Serbs) to their ethnic core areas with the new boundaries, "*donated independence*" to the *Slovaks and Croats* and *allowed the Hungarians to unite their ethnic territory*, that is approved of the *re-annexation* of the territories populated by Hungarians that were lost in 1919.

In the countries of the Carpathian Basin (except for Austria) that came under the *influence (mainly military occupation) of the Soviet Union after the second world war*, *Soviet-type communist regimes* were built, which made it *impossible* for the following decades (in a general anti-minority atmosphere) to establish an actual *territorial self-governance*. The *forced migrations* between 1944 and 1950 already pointed in this direction, which basically transformed the ethnic structure of the region by *removing the Germans* almost entirely, *weakening the Hungarian minorities* and colonising mainly Slovaks, Ukrainians, Russians, Romanians and Serbs in great masses. In the decades of socialism only *Vojvodina* in Serbia (1945–1989) and the *Hungarian Autonomous Region* in Romania (under Soviet pressure, between 1952 and 1960–68) can be mentioned as *examples* of permanent and temporary *territorial autonomies*, respectively.

During the years of the *Yugoslav wars*, there was a short period of territorial autonomy and independence in the case of the *Serbian Krajina*, which

sank irrecoverably into history in 1995. After the years of the political transition, the significant *Hungarian minorities* of the Carpathian Basin have *elaborated on their autonomy concepts* that typically consist of three steps. Within these frameworks they directly articulated and frequently submitted as bills their *notion of territorial self-governance*, which was *immediately* (and in certain cases repeatedly) *rejected by the Slovakian, Ukrainian, Romanian and Serbian parties*.

Because of the *shocking effects of the socioeconomic systemic change* (1990–) and the *world economic crisis* (2008–), the *lack of welfare*, the *increasing social polarisation*, the disappearance of the former strong central power, the *lack of a democratic civil society*, the *existence of populous ethnic and national minorities* and some *bitter historical memories*, the *politics frequently turns to nationalism as a weapon* in the countries of the Carpathian Basin. *Nationalist powers frequently provoke minorities*, especially if they are large in number and live on a relatively continuous ethnic territory in order *to prove that minorities mean a (mostly irredentist) danger*. As a result of the economic and political difficulties, the *governments* in question make *attempts at centralising the state functions rather than at devolution the power* and they, especially, *oppose establishing ethnic based territorial autonomies*, which the titular nations conceive to be overt attacks on the territorial integrity of the state. In this respect the lessons learnt from unsuccessful examples (e.g. Kosovo, Abkhasia, Karabah) are emphasised over successful, positive European ones.

The *geographical and demographical conditions of an ethnic based territorial self-governance are available in the case* of most of the settlements of *Hungarian national communities* in *Slovakia, Transcarpathia, Transylvania (Székely Land and Partium) and Vojvodina (North Bačka)*. It seems, however, that for the time being, due to the reasons outlined above, both short-term and medium-term *political conditions are missing*, even in the case of attempting to realise ethnic based associations of local self-governments (municipalities) of minorities.

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The cultural geographies of landscape[1]

Claudio MINCA[2]

Abstract

The concept of cultural landscape has been at the core of the scientific concerns of generations of geographers and geographical understandings of landscape have also influenced the ways in which modern landscape has been conceived in cognate disciplines. This paper, a modified version of the author's Inaugural Lecture as Professor of Cultural Geography at Wageningen University, will briefly reflect, with the help of some biographical hints, on the nature of Geography and in particular on the 'power of landscape' for spatial theory and spatial analysis. In the final part of the paper a particular attention is given to the relationship between the cultural landscape and tourism and travel, envisioned as key expressions of the spatialities of the 'Modern'.

Keywords: cultural geography, landscape, spatial theory, modern travel and tourism

Introduction: Geography, Cultural Geography

Preparing an Inaugural Lecture is a tricky endeavor, since it is a presentation that tries to do many different things at the same time. It ought to be an academic performance, possibly of high profile, but also a way of introducing yourself and your subject to a broader audience. It should be moderately entertaining but also partially biographical. And being entertaining through an autobiographical account is, indeed, a dangerous exercise as we all know.

Ultimately, it is about how you prefer to read this event as part of your career path: as a moment of arrival, but also perhaps more importantly as a fresh departure. So I decided to write my Inaugural Speech – and the present

[1] This paper is a revised version of the Inaugural Lecture as Professor of Cultural Geography given by the author at Wageningen University, on May 24th 2012. A few passages appeared in Minca, C., 2007a. Humboldt's compromise: or, the forgotten geographies of landscape. Progress in Human Geography 31. (2): 179–193 have been incorporated, albeit in a modified version, in the second part of this paper.

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paper that represents a revised version of it – as a conversation of sorts, a conversation including a few hints about my work and my career, but also a few thoughts about the ways in which I see my own field, Cultural Geography, and its contribution to the study of Landscape(s) at Wageningen University and in broader disciplinary terms.

This paper is organized in two main parts. The first briefly addresses the question of Geography, and in particular Cultural Geography, and how I personally came to it. The second discusses how Cultural Geography is central to the understanding of the field of landscape studies, with reference to some key historical trajectories and to some of my most recent research projects (*Photo 1).*

Maps and images of faraway places have populated my life since my childhood, also as a reflection of the fabulous tales that my grandfather 'nonno Giovanni' – who spent most of his life sailing around the world on board of large mythical (at least for me) ships – would tell me in detail after every return from the Orient. Brought up in Trieste, a border city on the Cold War frontier, geographical imaginations of a potential clash of civilizations – with the Communist Other just beyond the border – colonised my early cultural identity as a reaction to a logic of 'us versus them' that penetrated every space of the quotidian.



Photo 1. The author at a geographical landmark

In the same way and for the same reason, geography and maps have been with me since my first steps into the educational system. People, real people, real subjects are *always* implicated with maps in complicated ways, however, they are neither really *part* of the maps, nor entirely external to them. And this is true for all cartographic readings of the world – a world here intended in the Heideggerian sense of the term; maps as a system of signs, as a spatial language simply cannot include the subject who crafts and reads them, since in their attempt 'to objectify' the reality which they intend to represent, they need to produce an external gaze, an external – and often invisible – watching subject.

This is the fundamental ontological stance guiding what geographers Farinelli, F. (2003), Olsson, G. and (2007) and many others call the 'cartographic reason' or that American historian Timothy Mitchell famously described as '*The Metaphysics of Representation'*, that is, the belief in the possibility of knowing and understanding the world on the part of a subject that must be positioned externally to that same world (Mitchell, T. 1988). Or putting in other terms, the relationship between the modern, grand representations of the world and the world represented is never a simple and linear one; since spatial representations, all spatial representations, are not only inherently 'cultural', sometimes even ideological, but they also entertain an unstable and troubling relationship with the real world, out there, to which they claim to refer to.

The belief in a linear and reliable relationship between representations of places, people, landscapes, cultures and those very same places, people, landscapes, cultures, this belief guided one specific strand of the modern project for so long has been deconstructed and problematised by now. The once apparently peaceful waters of all stable and reassuring mappings of people, cultures, borders, rivers and mountains – put side by side as if they were fixed geographical objects of the same category – have now been shaken up – in geography and elsewhere – by the winds of critical social theory. Two books, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Clifford, J. and Marcus, G.E. 1986), Cliand *Colonising Egypt* (Mitchell, T. 1988), among many others, have been crucial in re-conceptualising culture in Western academia, and also in Geography.

But let me return for a moment or two to my early adventures, to my first steps into the fascinating realm of geography with a story I often tell my students in order to introduce them to some of the arcane rooms of geographical thinking. When a teenager, still living in Trieste, I had a rather colorful map of Europe in my room, on the wall right in front of my bed. On that map, I used to mark my first independent travels – independent from my parents but also from the tour operators, which again was a naïve but genuine political stance of sorts. That map, however, had another, perhaps more important, function: it was a space – not only a representation of space – it was an actual and material

space on which I used to draw my hypothetical future routes, routes loaded with exotic images and promised 'real life' experiences.

That map soon became a plan – all maps are by definition implicit plans, as I said, they all incorporate a spatial ideology of some kind – on which and from which – I learned to draw expectations, self-representations, personal identities, travel fantasies, but also to interrogate the deep motivations which were moving my interest far away and then still mysterious lands.

Those real and imagined geographies produced in my room, and other mappings like this one encountered in my early explorations, ended up translating into a life project, into a key element in the construction of my cultural identities, but also of my future professional choices. Perhaps, those rather banal maps were the embryonic sites for the future decision to become a professional geographer and, by default, for spending most of my life trying to make sense of some key questions which began buzzing in my mind precisely in those distant days *(Photo 2).*

One of these questions emerged in full force during my numerous and intense travels already when I was a university student. Despite all my dreams, my thirst for ever new explorations, my interest for different people and cultures, at the end of each trip, I was caught by a vague but pervasive sense of dissatisfaction. I always felt that there was something unaccomplished,



Photo 2. Postcolonial tourist mappings

something missing. Those explorations were never what I expected them to be. So, I guess, in those moments, without even realizing it, I decided to spend the rest of my life trying to understand what that gap – between the representation of places and my actual experience of those very same places – really consisted of. I soon found myself immersed, then, into some of the key questions of modernity.

Modernity is intended here mainly as a specific set of theories about how to understand and represent 'the real'. Modernity is intended as an epistemological battleground, as a way of framing and making sense of the world around us. Modernity is transversed as an epoch by tensions and paradoxes, by romanticism and positivism, by nationalism and cosmopolitanism, by cold and rigid maps but it is also a geography of culture and feelings, both of which are equally crucial elements, for example, in the constitution of the extraordinary spatial formation which we call the nation-state.

Furthermore, in that imbroglio of representations, calculations, explorations, projects, and metaphors that made modern culture as we know it, I encountered a few spatial concepts that catalyzed my own attention and that eventually became key tools of my scientific investigations: the concepts of *landscape*, of *region*, of *cartography*, of *place*, to name a few; but also of *community*, of *environment*, of *population* and ultimately, of course, of *space*.

All these concepts, all these metaphors, have played a key role in the emergence of the Modern project. They have also been at the core of the discipline of geography over the past two centuries or so. And since then, since my first hesitant steps into the intricate but fascinating forest of modern thought, the question of how modern spatial representations are related to real places, the places in which we live, has been at the center of my scientific preoccupations, and of my theoretical and empirical work.

Human Geography is thus not (just) about maps, although for very long maps have been considered as a sort of laboratory for armchair geographers. Human Geography is rather about spatial thinking, about a specific way of understanding reality through spatial theories and spatial categories. It is about thinking in spatial terms of social interactions which determine our respective lives and make our places, our living environment what they are.

"Geo-graphy" literally means geo-writing, the writing of the Earth, an act which includes thought and action, description and prescription at once (Dematteis, G. 1985; Fall, J.J. and Minca, C. 2013). Geography is about the representations of those relationships in space, but also about the actual concrete spaces which shape and are shaped by our thoughts and our everyday practices. Geography is thus also about understanding how power, politics, culture, the social, the cultural, the living environment are inscribed in space, and how they are always the result of specific ways of thinking space, how the social fabric produces and is produced by specific places and landscapes.

The classic German geographer Walter Christaller, for example, famously envisioned in the 1930s – through his central place theory – a spatial grid which, putatively, would adequately describe and help organize some key functions in the production of our living environment: the market, the administration, the transportation system (Christaller, W. 1941, 1966).

He also asked to help Heinrich Himmler to plan the spatial re-organisation of occupied Poland based on his neat and reassuring geometries, fantasizing a perfect new eastern frontier where Aryan families of farmers and soldiers would create ideal communities in a balanced Lebensraum, vital space (see Barnes, T and Minca, C. 2013). Interestingly, his central place theory was adopted with enthusiasm by many geographers and planners after the war, both in the US and Europe, and is still taught in many universities around the world – incidentally, my first lecture ever, at the University of Trieste in 1988, was on Christaller.

Leaving aside the obvious historical and political issues related to his involvement with the Nazis, a key question for contemporary geographers is, for example, what the relationship is between this spatial grid, these plans for new living spaces and more in general, the everyday life and the ways in which people experience their own places. How these people fit in this grid? How these projections represent their actual lives? What is included and what is excluded from these geometries and according to which principle? Indeed, a tricky and fascinating set of questions about the workings of representations and especially of spatial representations (*Fig. 1, Photo 3).*

The perception of too many migrants in a public park, the calculations concerning the relationship between space, resources and population in one region, the reactions of a local community to urban restructuring or landscape planning, the geopolitical imaginations which prepare the ground for the invasion of another country in the name of peace, the decision of millions every year to spend their holidays in Italy – all these issues are founded on some sort of spatial thinking. Academic geography then provides a set of well-consolidated analytical tools which enable us to think critically about the nature and the development of these very spatial practices. This also explains why geography has been such an important science in the shaping of the modern project, especially from the beginning of the 19th century onwards.

From the emergence of the European bourgeois nation state, to the new cartographies of colonialism, from the spatial fantasies of nationalism and empire, to the visible and invisible spaces of the postindustrial city, just to name a few, geography has played an important role in shaping ideas, plans and even resistance to hegemonic projects, trying to privilege certain interpretations of space and society while silencing others.

Cultural geography is today one of the fundamental branches of human geography and in many ways the geographical response to the so-called

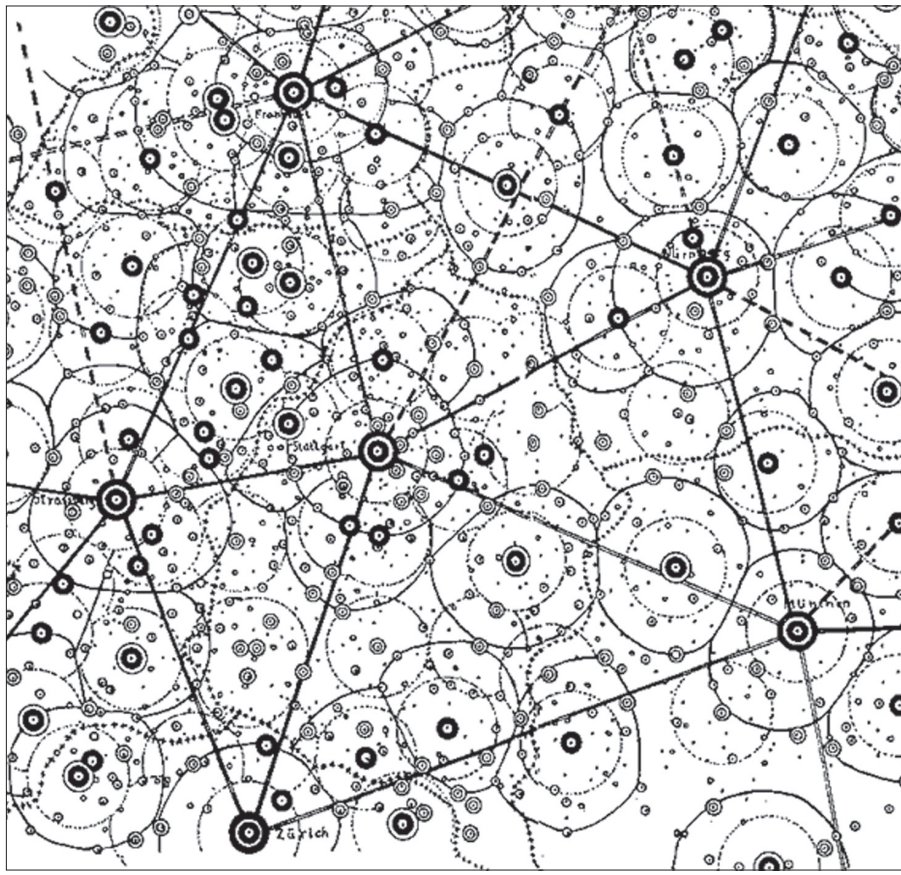


Fig. 1. Christaller's grid... (and see *Photo 3*)

cultural turn that swept all social sciences from the 80's onwards, under the influence of the new-born field of Cultural Studies (see, among others, Anderson, K. *et al.* 2003; Mitchell, D. 2000). The cultural turn in geography has had two important effects: the first one was to align the discipline with cutting edge debates on social and cultural theory; the second was to provide new concepts and methodologies to other fields strongly concerned with the reintroduction of space and spatial thinking into their own analytical categories. This explains why cultural geography has become so central to the discipline today, but also why cultural geography and its conceptualisations have influenced many other cognate disciplines.



Photo 3. …and the everyday

The concepts of landscape and place have occupied center stage in this critical rethinking of the role of culture in geography (see Cresswell, T. 2004). Culture has thus been reconsidered as a *process* instead of something existing out there, waiting to be studied and described like in those anthropological museums so popular in the 19th century. Place has been reinvented as a site of multiple and negotiated meaning – instead of a hypothetical fortress of fixed identity (Cresswell, T. 2004; also Massey, D. 1993). Landscape has been radically re-theorised: as a way of seeing, as a text, as a space of practice and performance, as a multisensorial experience of the living environment (Wylie, J.W. 2007). These last considerations bring me to the second part of this paper, focused on the cultural landscape.

The Cultural Landscape

Landscape is a rather ambivalent and polymorphous concept in popular discourse. But it is often a rather confused and imprecise concept in science as well. For many, landscape seems to be about everything – often treated as

synonymous with place, site, or even space. The conceptual confusion about landscape is so widespread that in some academic circles the idea of simply dismissing the concept all together has gained some currency. Why this confusion? Where does it come from? Is it a weakness or a strength of the concept? Perhaps it is worthwhile, then, to spend a few words on the genealogy of the concept, to see how cultural geography has been trying to make sense of its inherent ambivalence as a scientific tool. Landscape is maybe the only spatial metaphor able to refer to both an object and its description; to recall, at once, a tract of land and its image, its representation (Farinelli, F. 1992; also Minca, C. 2007a).

"We should beware attempts to define landscape, to resolve its contradictions; rather we should abide in its duplicity" (Daniels, S. 1989).

As Denis Cosgrove famously suggested, landscape appeals at once to the material and the representational, to both art and science, and this is what made it such a powerful concept, assigning it such a vital role in the history of Modern European culture (Cosgrove, D. 1984, 2003). More importantly for my argument, landscape, in genealogical terms, lays right in the gap between modern spatial representations and our experience of the world.

"The idea of landscape is the most significant expression of the historical attempt to bring together visual image and material world" (Cosgrove, D. 2003).

The concept of landscape in fact challenges the distance, the separation between a scientific representation of the world and our perception of that same world every time we gaze out of our window (Farinelli, F. 1992).

I believe the *Wanderer above a Sea of Fog* (see *Photo 4*) by Caspar David Friedrich, often used by geographers for teaching purposes is extraordinarily useful in illustrating a crucial passage in the scientific history of the concept of landscape in western thought. Friedrich here describes in very powerful terms what I would call the subject of the landscape. He does so in 1818, in when that act can be considered as an extraordinary romantic gesture. And the date is not irrelevant. Indeed, this is also a very inspiring description of a quintessential passage in the production of modernity, or better yet, of a specific understanding of modernity and its spatial theories.

The subject at the top of the mountain is admiring the landscape – a beautiful sight, for sure, dramatic and inspiring – but also a space with no clear borders, something produced by the very position of the viewer, something subjective and objective at the same time, something in constant change. The watching subject, here, is at once admiring the landscape as an object, as something detached, *and* as something of which he is part.

Friedrich makes the watching subject visible, in all his duplicity of being internal and external to the production of that landscape. However, according to Franco Farinelli (1992) and see also Minca (2007a), from that moment



Photo 4. Wanderer above a Sea of Fog (painted by C.D. Friedrich, 1818)

onwards, by and large, the subject of the landscape will tend to disappear from sight. That individual-who-watches-and-creates-the-landscape will disappear from the landscape painting, but also more importantly, from the scientific understandings of landscape, and landscape will be more and more often depicted as an object void of people, or at best, with people depicted as objects on a stage – the eye will be frozen in space and time, and made invisible.

This is the beginning of a tradition in landscape studies that will travel throughout two centuries and will remain with us up until the 1980s, when

in geography and in the social sciences in general, this episteme will be seriously challenged (see Mitchell, D. 2001; 2002; 2003). In fact, it has been broadly accepted in the academic literature by now that the landscape ideal is based upon the construction of a specific modern subject: a subject who, by virtue of his strategic and perspectivist position, is able to "read" the territory, gazing out upon the space which lies in front of him and assigning absolute primacy to the visual; a subject who, endowed with the interpretative lens of the landscape perspective, is able to grant *meaning*, *order*, *value* to a specific piece of land. The fact that the Modern has been marked by the hegemony of the visual is a broadly accepted claim in today's social sciences (see, among others, Rose, G. 2012).

The dominion of perspective and of the "truth of the eye" was part of the emergence of the new spatial theories that accompanied, between the 1700s and the 1800s, the progressive dismantling of the aristocratic *ancien regime* and its epistemologies; epistemologies that were to be putatively replaced by a neutral and scientific vision of Nature and the world. At the beginning of the 1800s, according to Farinelli, the realm of landscape was no science but was still "that of aesthetic appearance" (in Minca, C. 2007b, p. 435).

It is thanks to one of the "founding fathers" of modern geography, Alexander von Humboldt, that the concept of landscape (1848) is transformed, for the first time, from an aesthetic to a scientific concept. And it is precisely the aesthetic impulse of bourgeois culture, which imposes the transformation of artistic sensibility into a "science of Nature" (Farinelli, F. 2003). This is why it is precisely the concept of landscape that is chosen by Humboldt as the ideal vehicle to convey the protagonists of the emerging and increasingly powerful European bourgeoisie towards the realm of scientific knowledge (Farinelli, F. 1992, p. 203).

The subject of scientific landscape, in its original Humboldtian interpretation, then, was conceived as an ideal projection, a conscious abstraction; yet at a certain point in time, this subject – as I said – disappears from view. With the consolidation of the new academic geography of the nation state, and in particular the German and the French positivistic traditions of the 1800s, which will culminate with Sigfried Passarge's *Landschaftskunde* (1920) and the new *Géographie Humaine* (1922, 1926) inaugurated by Vidal de la Blache, P. at the beginning of the 1900s, the subject is removed from the landscape just as the eye is removed from the field of vision.

As many have argued, with the triumph of the new cartographic gaze, the subject becomes no more than a theatrical spectator. It is within this context that we witness the affirmation of the landscape as an object – as a spatial container of immobile things – in geography and beyond geography (Minca, C. 2007a, p. 191). It is an idea of landscape which will prove immensely useful – indeed, indispensable – to the consolidation of the nation-state and its

progressive (geo)metrical appropriation of the territory and all its living subjects. This landscape-object furnishes the nation state with a useful model for an orderly and meaningful composition of the various "parts" of that same world.

The direct, tactile experience of sites of national "heritage" becomes, from the 19th century onwards, an essential support for a new rhetoric of antiquity and a shared past which emplace belonging within landscape. Landscapes, in the popular perception, become thus icons of the state and the nation, rendering them even more essential to establish a certainty – and to ensure continuity – to their interpretation: quite the opposite intention from that assigned to the landscape ideal by von Humboldt.

Landscape, I shall argue, is an ideological concept. It represents a way in which certain classes of people have signified themselves and their world through their imagined relationship with nature and through which they have underlined and communicated their own social role and that of others with respect to external nature (Cosgrove, D. 1984, p. 15).

The landscape, I would argue, is one of the central elements in a cultural system, for as an ordered assemblage of objects, a text, it acts as a signifying system through which a social system is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored" (Duncan, J.S. 1990)

It is this largely forgotten legacy which accounts for the reason why, still today, landscapes often continue to be represented as objects, as simply a collection of endlessly reproducible images – all the while people and governments expend great time and energy in order to invest those images with meaning, emotions, sentiments and, above all, a sense of belonging. The rather confused use made of the concept of landscape by, for example, the heritage industry, contributes, then, to conflating an object with the process of its production; landscape is often presented both as "a space with some inherent qualities" *and* as a perspective, as a visible tract of land *and* as an experience laden with existential meaning. Most recently, critical landscape studies have begun to challenge and re-think the hegemony of the visual, not only in its central role within the structuring of modern thought, but also in the ways in which landscape has been – and continues to be – conceived. Recent critiques, in particular, 'emphasize the duality and provisional nature of sight: the returned gaze, the capacity of its subjects to manipulate, obscure, subvert or deform visual order' (Cosgrove, D. 2002, p. 265).

Indeed, the predominant focus of landscape studies on visualization has been criticised for having largely ignored landscape's multi-sensorial and embodied qualities. Such recent work is also marked by wider concerns with practice: that is, with what is done in the landscape and what is done with landscapes by people rather than what is represented (Wylie, J.W. 2007). It is such concerns that have paved the way to also rethinking the role of other



Photo 5. People performing landscapes (Venice, Italy)

senses – and other dimensions – in the landscape experience beyond the visual (*Photo 5*). This, naturally, raises a whole series of questions about how to study people's feelings, meanings and values evoked by landscape, how to render into scientific interpretations their practice of landscape (Berque, A. 1995).

What does landscape become when it is performed, put into practice? How do people actually treat such an ambivalent concept? Cultural geographers have thus begun to unravel these questions by investigating what actually occurs in certain "canonical" sites for the observation and reproduction of landscape, by doing "deep" ethnographic work in sites profoundly shaped by the practice of landscape in order to see how people actually perform the landscape (see also Edensor, T. 2001; 2006).

I have personally incorporated these methodologies in several recent projects, together with some of my students. In these projects we explored the practices related to the powerful idea of tourist landscape and tried to make sense of all the striking contradictions which we experimented in different locations around the world: in Asuke (Japan); in Varanasi (India), in Marrakech (Morocco), in the Lake District in the UK and more recently, of course, in the Netherlands where the idea of cultural landscape is so important.

I am now drafting a new research project in collaboration with some Japanese colleagues in order to investigate the role of ideas of landscape and identity in the reconstruction of the coastal areas of Northern Japan devastated by the Tsunami in 2012. What this ethnographic work has by and large shown is that landscape remains an extraordinary powerful project, a powerful metaphor to think the space(s) of culture and the living environment they shape. But also that landscape means many different things in different places that its interpretations – and the practices which it mobilizes – are, indeed, always context-based.

What we have learned is that there is no single definition of landscape valid for all situations and places; landscape, as a concept, has travelled and continues to travel, something our research was forced to incorporate in all empirical cases. Even more importantly, landscape cannot simply be considered as an object, a piece of land with some particular characteristics. Rather, we should ask how we do perform landscape, we change landscapes, we invent landscapes, we destroy landscapes, we qualify landscapes, we embody landscapes. We could say that landscape is a fascinating process through which we translate ideas, perspectives and plans into stone – but also into ways to observe and assess those very stones.

Conclusion

I do believe in geography, in the importance of thinking space critically, in the social relevance of understanding the places and the landscapes which make our everyday life and the theories that produced and continue to produce them. Our own life experience is indeed shaped by spaces that we, as people and scholars, contribute to change and hopefully help improve in the name of social justice and the development of a better quality of life for all.

That is why I believe that we should recover von Humboldt's lesson again and bring the subject back in the landscape. Because the scientific landscape was not originally conceived to freeze people and places in some abstract space, but rather to fill in the untenable distance between the spatial representations of the world which populated modernity and our everyday experience of it. To provide a metaphor is capable of actually including people and their lives in our ways of thinking space.

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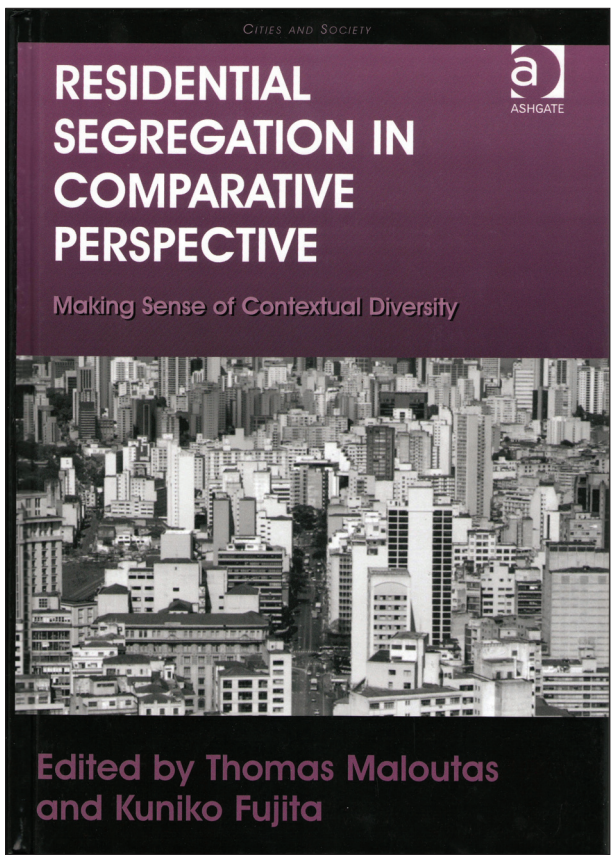
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Maloutas, Th. and Fujita, K. (eds): Residential Segregation in Comparative Perspective. Making Sense of Contextual Diversity. City and Society Series, Ashgate, Farnham, UK, 2012. 329 p.

The main question of this book is whether globalization has increased the spatial segregation in our cities, and if it has, in which respect. Focusing on the last 30–40 years, the authors investigate 11 metropolises worldwide in order to analyze the influencing factors of residential segregation. The case studies describing a Latin-American, six European, and four Asian cities give 11 different answers to the original question. (Though the US cities are often cited as a classic case of segregation, no North-American metropolis was included in the volume.) On the basis of this rich overview of the different urban experiences in social and spatial segregation patterns and rationales, the editor Maloutas, Th. claims that not just globalization is responsible for segregation.



One of the main conclusions is that there is a strong need for a model reflecting contextual diversity in the study of urban residential segregation. The model developed by Fujita, K. emphasizes the relevance of social equality and spatial segregation and it pays special attention to the relation between them.

The cities discussed in the volume are divided into five groups according to the degree of segregation and inequality. The forces which have an impact on residential segregation and institutions and either intensify or counteract social inequality are scrutinized in each group. Three cities (*Beijing, Istanbul* and *Sao Paolo*) belong to the first group in which spatial segregation is combined with high social inequality. The case of *Beijing* shows that the role of the state, namely the centralized distribution of dwellings, contributes to massive spatial segregation (which already

existed in the past). In *Beijing* education, jobs and social services are available only for the registered inhabitants, while the migrants from rural areas (i.e. floating population) who live in the peripheral areas are very much excluded. Logan, J. L. and Li, L. the authors of the study on *Beijing* argue that inequality is maintained by the Chinese bureaucracy and not by market economy or globalization.

The level of segregation in *Istanbul* has not declined over the last few decades, only the characters of the segregated groups have changed: the classic cleavage between the Muslim and non-Muslim groups shifted toward a split between the high and the low income groups in the modern Turkey. Since the non-Muslim population has disappeared, the migrants from rural areas have become the segregated low income groups living in squatters on the periphery of the city. As the author argues, segregation in *Istanbul* is maintained by state clientelism. The property rights remain informal, the patron-client relations overthrow the ineffective laws and rules. Eventually, slum clearance programs give a chance to the population of squatters to move to middle class quarters, but only a very small part of them can participate in these programs, the majority remains in place as Taşan-Kok, T. claims.

Sao Paolo as a typical Latin-American metropolis is traditionally highly segregated: the urban poor live in the periphery, the middle and the higher classes in the center and in the gated communities. The democratic changes in the 1990s broadened the availability of health institutions, but did not result in significant improvements in other segments like education, housing, jobs, etc. According to Marques, E., the separation of social classes is maintained by the patron-client relations; neither democratization nor global process have changed it. Those cases are similar to the classic American pattern, but there is also a major difference: in the United States the welfare system exists and public services are available for everyone at a low level.

The second group consists of two cities: the moderately separated but highly unequal *Paris* and *Budapest*. In *Paris*, the traditional differences between the high status and the working-class quarters have narrowed due to the process of gentrification since the 1980s. As Préteceille, E. argues, *Paris* is far from completely segregated and most of its quarters are rather mixed. Nevertheless, there are some low status areas inhabited by groups of migrants which make a challenge. The welfare state is not effective enough to solve their problems despite the reforms and anti-discrimination programs. The public rental system keeps low income groups in the cheap districts where services and jobs are often not available, thus the inequality is reproduced. In *Budapest* segregation did not start with the change of regime, it existed well before the socialist time and its basic patterns are inherited from the 19th century. According to Kovács, Z., the housing privatization and the radical transformation of the local public administration resulted in significant changes in the socio-spatial structure and increased the level of residential segregation in the city.

Copenhagen, the only city which belongs to the third group, is separated but equal. Similarly to *Paris*, traditional low and high status quarters have co-existed here for centuries. The welfare state itself also contributes to the preservation of the traditional segregation pattern through financing the social rental dwellings. However, due to the highly developed welfare system, the spatial separation is not combined with social inequality as Andersen, H.T. claims. In the Danish capital, public services and the highly developed education lower the level of segregation. The coordinated capitalism and the welfare state can protect the most vulnerable social groups, even if the spatial segregation exists because of the concentration of social dwellings.

The fourth group is the opposite of the previous model; it consists of non-separated but unequal cities, *Hong Kong, Athens* and *Madrid*, According to Yip, N., *Hong Kong* inherited its city structure from the colonial past. The substantial public housing sector attracts people

not only from the lower class, but also from the middle and higher strata. This explains why the different social classes are spatially so mixed (except for the narrow upper-class) in the whole city. The lack of spatial segregation does not mean that differences between the social groups do not exist or are insignificant. The availability of the services is unequal what is true for the Mediterranean cities, as well.

In *Athens*, the low level of spatial segregation is the result of the increasing social mobility combined with low spatial mobility. The explanation of the latter is the Mediterranean family-centered welfare model and the high rate of home ownership. The construction of new residential areas all over the city also makes the neighbourhoods mixed.

The segregation has also declined in *Madrid* where the economic growth and the real estate boom have shaped the city more mixed over the last two decades. Similarly to *Athens*, the young upwardly mobile groups have settled close to their parents in the working class neighbourhoods in compliance with the South European family-centered welfare model. The increasing international migration also has an anti-segregation impact: the newcomers live in mixed quarters due to the lack of social housing as Domínguez, M. *et al*. concluded.

The last group of cities includes two Asian metropolises (*Taipei* and *Tokyo*) where the level of spatial and social segregation is very low. The case of the Taiwanese capital represents the influence of urban policies on segregation. Urban regeneration projects like the construction of a new governmental district, the renovation of old neighbourhoods have turned *Taipei* into a multi-pole metropolis and they have had a considerable effect on social mix in the city. Besides urban planning and policy, the high and increasing proportion of the middle class is another important explanatory factor which is an outcome of the government's economic policy, the state support to the small business networks. Those who cannot afford to live in *Taipei* city usually move to the periphery or other towns, as Wang, C-H. and Li, C-H. claim.

In *Tokyo*, the developmental state is also an important factor, its institutions like the compressed wage system, the companies functioning as communities keep the segregation at a low level. The urban structure of *Tokyo* has also been formed by the real estate booms and busts over the last decades; the central districts have become a very high valued area. The equality in *Tokyo* means that there is no correlation between the land value and the occupation groups. According to authors (Fujita, K and Hill, R.C.), all the quarters are socially integrated, the education and the services are available for all.

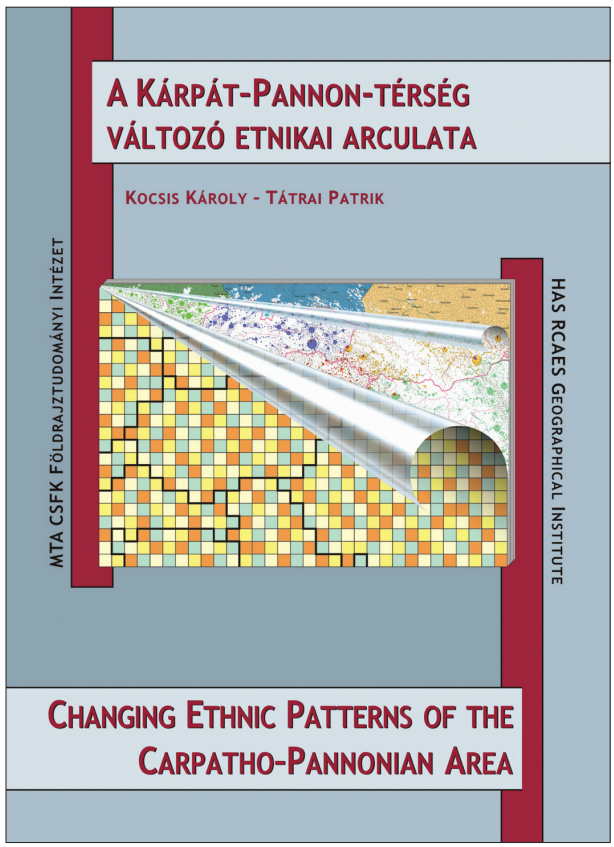
The studies of eleven different cities do not support the central hypothesis that globalization results in similar urban development and segregation pattern all over the world. They rather suggest that the role of the institutions, local and national politics, regionalism have remained important. The basic patterns of segregation are relatively stable everywhere despite the changes which have occurred in the economy and society over the last few decades.

Balázs SZABÓ

Kocsis, K. and Tátrai, P.: Changing Ethnic Patterns of the Carpatho-Pannonian Area. Geographical Institute, Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences HAS, Budapest, 2012. 10 maps (1 x 1:500,000 and 9 x 1:2,200,000) with an accompanying text of 27 pages.

In case of presenting academic results, obviously, there's little place for emotions. Yet, I am convinced that those interested in the topic will browse this unique thematic map series with much enthusiasm. The eye-catching and handy map series is definitely doomed to success. In a way, it is a non-traditional publication. The large-scale map, the map series presenting the historic background and the legend are all in one folder. The editors of the map series and the legend produce an evidence of their thorough knowledge.

The publishing of the map series has its background both in the foreign and in the Hungarian cartography. Nevertheless, having regard to the wide range of related literature, we waive the presentation of foreign publications. The Central Europe Atlas, released around the end of World War II, is one of the most significant publication, which gained a high profile in the Hungarian scientific literature. After a 40-year pause, we can witness the renewal of socio-geographic research based partly on the methods and principles applied during the edition of Central Europe Atlas and partly on Károly Kocsis's investigations carrying out since the 1980's. Besides his scientific achievements, the competent work of the younger generation of researchers (Patrik Tátrai, Anikó Kovács) also contributed to the issue of this high-level publication.



The main map consists of two parts representing more than 380,000 km² territory (1:500,000). It shows the ethnic-nationality distribution of 30,000 settlements in 11 states taking into account the 2001 census data. Besides gathering, standardizing and evaluating the figures, it was also essential to take into account the ever-changing administrative boundaries so that they can present the data on settlement level.

Besides managing the inadequate and uneven dataset, the authors also had to face challenges posed by theoretical problems. Without doubt, there has been special demand for the review of former ap-

proaches, concepts and the applied methods in the recent years. It was an aim of the authors to correspond to those challenges, as well. The publication includes three main parts, therefore it seems appropriate to present the book according to the structure of the map series.

The main map was prepared by using well-established methods adapting to the practise which has been existing for decades. To present the distribution of population according to nationality, pie charts were applied taking into consideration the settlements' locations and their population. The publication is low-key with the aim of presenting evidence-based facts. The carefully selected and displayed geographical factors encourage the readers to think about the subject. The spatial structure of nationality distribution can be examined directly by four factors (settlement structure, hydrology, relief, public administration) and indirectly by two factors (population density, the different versions of place names). For the attractive appearance of the maps, Anikó Kovács cartographer is responsible.

The historic maps present the changes in ethnic spatial structure during the period of 1495–2001. It might be surprising to extend the investigation of regional ethnic relations to a longer period of time, as the recent, modern concepts coming from national ideology have emerged only in the recent years. However, knowing Károly Kocsis's former publishes and the associated demand and intend of the Hungarian literature existing for some time, that approach cannot be controversial. The deficiencies and interpreting difficulties of sources of information might bring up some problems. To compensate that, the authors also depict the suspected extension of deserted areas and the areas with low population density on the choropleth maps. Nevertheless, presenting settlement borders and the indirectly defined or estimated ethnic majority at the same time might result in the disappearance of ethnic diversity and the absence of local minorities, especially, in the contact zones of greater ethnic blocks.

Reading the bilingual (Hungarian and English) legend containing two tables and the references, the readers can have a sketchy feeling in the respect of the amount of information. Nevertheless, the text clarifies every important question and it explains them thoroughly. The authors also express there views on the usage of the concepts of Carpathian Basin and Carpatho-Pannonian Region. Of course, the nomenclature is controversial, however, the authors list numerous arguments to justify their choice. Presumably, the shortness of historic background derives from financial reasons, which put the question of more generous support taking into consideration the significance of the topic and the large work.

Hopefully, the research will continue, to which the unprocessed and still not available 2011 census data can give rise. This map series is impressing not just because of its physical dimensions, but also because it is an important finding of a great scientific research supporting the solid understanding of ethnic relations of our region, besides, it can also become a starting point and measurement for further regional ethnic researches in the field of the Hungarian social and ethnic geography.

György FARKAS

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Report on TRANSMIG final conference

3–4 December 2012, Szeged–Subotica

TRANSMIG *(Integrating transnational migrants in transition states)* is a research project supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) SCOPES Programme which is especially dedicated to the research cooperation between Switzerland and Eastern European countries. It is coordinated by the University of Bern (Switzerland) in collaboration with the Geographical Institute, Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences (GI RCAES HAS, Budapest, Hungary) and the Institute for Regional Studies, Research Centre for Economic and Regional Studies (IRS RCERS HAS, Pécs, Hungary) of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, University of Novi Sad (Serbia) and the Scientific Association of Hungarology Research (SAHR) (Subotica, Serbia).

The research itself was designed to provide a detailed analysis of the effects of migration generated by Yugoslavian wars in selected settlements of Vojvodina (part of Serbia) and in Hungary. It had three main research objectives. The first was the investigation of the so-called integration of migrants and refugees (e.g. relationship between different groups and the disposition to conflict in an ethnically mixed environment in Vojvodina).



Irén Gábrity Molnár (standing) and Doris Wastl-Walter open the conference in Subotica



The audience pay attention to Imre Nagy's presentation



The international team of the TRANSMIG after the successful conference

The second objective was the presentation of the transnational migrant networks: the focus was on the various ways they are constructed and function , their key actors and their social and demographic characteristics. The third objective was the research of migrant policies including governmental discourses and policy in relation with immigration and national policies in both countries. The TRANSMIG final conference held on 3 December in Szeged (Hungary) and on 4th December in Subotica (Serbia) presented the results of the research started in 2010. The language of the conference was Hungarian on the first day, Serbian, Hungarian and English on the second day.

The conference was opened by the coordinator of the project, Doris Wastl-Walter (Department of Geography, University of Bern) who greeted the audience and summarized the importance of the research. The program continued with the scientific presentations which consisted of two parts: first, Monika Váradi (IRS RCERS HAS) and Irén Gábrity Molnár (SAHR), the leaders of the Hungarian and the Serbian research groups outlined the framework of the project and the main research results in Hungary and in Serbia. In the second part, the highlighted topics were focused on the issues which primarily concern Hungary. That part started with Patrik Tátrai's (GI RCAES HAS) presentation about the educational migration from Vojvodina to Hungary. Kata Rácz (IRS RCERS HAS) delineated migrants' stories of welfare and the economic aspects of migration based on semi-structured interviews. Eszter Gábrity (SAHR) summarized her findings about language use experiences among migrants, primarily among commuters, who regularly cross the Hungarian–Serbian state border. Ágnes Erőss (GI RCAES HAS) has a presentation about the memory of place and space in migrant interviews.

During the evening, the program was continued with a literary event which was held primarily for migrants from Serbia who (re)settled in Szeged. The event was organized in cooperation with the Vojvodina Hungarian migrant association (VMDK-Szeged). The program started with a short overview of the research activities and results by the Hungarian teams, and followed by a discussion. The literary event was held by Beáta Verbászi (an artist from Vojvodina living in Hungary, Radnóti Award holder) who presented novels, essays of Vojvodina Hungarian authors regarding experience, explanation and stories of migration.

Next day the conference continued in Subotica with presentations focused on issues concerning Vojvodina and the different cross-border activities in the Hungarian–Serbian border zone. The program was opened by Doris Wastl-Walter again. After that Tamás Korhecz, the president of the Hungarian National Council of Serbia, outlined the effects and the legal circumstances of the dual citizenship in Serbia (focusing on the case of Hungarians living in Serbia). The history of migration and its impacts on the ethnic demographic changes were presented by Károly Kocsis (GI RCAES HAS). Béla Filep (Department of Geography, University of Bern) who had a presentation with the title of 'The Politics of Good Neighbourhood: State, Civil Society and the Enhancement of Cultural Capital in the Serbian–Hungarian Border Region'.

Irén Gábrity Molnár outlined the relationship between the cross-border connections and the new regional consciousness of the Vojvodina Hungarians. Imre Nagy (University of Novi Sad) also focused on the border zone; he examined cross-border cooperation networks in EU projects. Saša Kicošev and Dušan Ristić (University of Novi Sad) researched the cultural identification and the social integration of refugees settled in Temerin. The last presenter of the conference was Zoltán Takács who studied the cross-border institutional networks with a special attention to the higher education.

All in all, it was a real cross-border conference as the research itself. The presenters managed to cover most of the important types and fields of migration system concerning Vojvodina and Hungary. The final conference does not mean the end of the research; the results will be published during this year.

Ágnes ERŐSS and Patrik TÁTRAI

Remembering Dr. József Tóth

(1940–2013)



On 7th February 2013, Dr. József Tóth passed away at his 73rd year of age, after a short, severe illness. He was an emblematic personality of Hungarian human geography, a professor having created his own school of discipline. He had the opportunity to learn also from the greatest figures of his profession such as Gyula Prinz, or Gyula Krajkó starting him on his career, and László Jakucs. He renewed classical pieces of knowledge in an innovative way, believing that geography is not only a subject, discipline or field of science, but a kind of perception as well. This is how he educated his students who are found today in many scientific workshops throughout the country, further building on his thoughts, bringing his innovations to perfection. Professor Tóth devoted his life to creation: he established research teams, departments, doctoral school, university programmes, organised an institute, directed a faculty and was the top leader of the largest university of the countryside.

The fact that he was born in the Hungarian Great Plain, determined his identity, perception of the world, as well as his ambitions. He was a tendentious, straightforward and ambitious person, with a vision of definite aims, for the reaching of which he looked for partners and he organised teams. It was the Hungarian Great Plain that provided the spatial framework for his studies and the initial half of his career, the most important basis and directions for his research. He went to secondary school and university in the city of Szeged where he graduated as a teacher of biology and geography in 1964.

After graduation he started working for the Department of Economic Geography under Gyula Krajkó, focusing his research on attraction zones and centres. Already being able to look at the Hungarian 'Puszta' and its peculiar world through the researcher's looking glass, he defended his university doctor title in 1966, and his CSc title in 1972 at the age of only 32. As a successful, young lecturer with a rich array of publications, he had the opportunity to test his science organising capacities too: in 1973 he was entrusted with establishing and leading the Great Plain Research Department of the Geographic Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He elaborated and co-ordinated settlement and spatial

structural research projects which were unconventional from many aspects, also exploring and convincing the necessary market, disseminating widely about the results of the group, in the meantime launching prospective academic careers for the young colleagues. As the professional conclusion of his scientific study period focusing on the Hungarian Great Plain, he defended his academic doctoral thesis in 1985, titled „Special features and problems of urbanisation in the Hungarian Great Plain", which also marked the starting point of a new period that of the years spent in Pécs.

In 1984 he became the vice-director of the Regional Research Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Pécs, established by György Enyedi, which became one of the flagship organisations of multidisciplinary spatial research outside Budapest. At that time he was already lecturing at the Department of Geography of the strengthening Janus Pannonius University, where he once again started a process of building. He consciously organised from what was then a college department with few staff members into a research and training base suitable for university level education, already as a full time DSc professor from 1987. He was assisting at the birth of new programmes, and at the development of a separate Faculty of Science from the former Teacher Training Faculty. He invited the qualified research staff of the Regional Research Centre and lecturers of sister universities to participate in the training programmes, and offered unparalleled career opportunities to his talented young colleagues. His impressively suggestive, informative, well-structured and always up-to-date lectures were listened by thousands of students who could also learn from him commitment towards the chosen profession.

Launching the doctoral programme proved to be a perfect means of building his school: it was only five years after the first year of university level training in geography that the PhD school was established in 1994. He was conscious in preparing his disciples for the academic career, also offering important and responsible positions and functions in lecturing, science education, scientific organising and further building.

In 1994, besides leading his department, guiding his disciples and directing the PhD school, Professor Tóth became the dean of the Faculty of Sciences, and rector of the university in 1997. In the year 2000 he was elected the first rector of the integrated University of Pécs, from which position he tried even harder to improve his field of science and the scientific workshop he had established. In the meantime he managed to organise the team of ever younger scientists around him into an institute, the majority of the junior staff being made up from his own former students.

He made the Institute of Geography established in 1998 one of the most populous workshops in the country, which became one of the most diverse research centres too. Through nation-wide co-operation he was first after the political transition to edit university textbooks titled and establish a department called 'Human Geography' instead of the formerly used term 'Economic Geography', thus helping the new international scientific trends to take root and spread in Hungarian geography education. He was actively participating in fitting new or neglected fields of science (medical geography, ethnic geography, political geography, cultural geography, geography of tourism, geography of education) into curricula, and in exploring and utilising their modern research challenges. He fought devotedly for enhancing the recognition of geography by society, and for new pieces of geographic knowledge to be made available for the wide public. For this purpose, too he was effectively making use of his broad Hungarian and international relation system; one of the last prominent pieces of his work was the 'Global Geography' volume published by the Hungarian Academic Press, which he was editor of. He believed firmly that geography is a unitary, yet Janus-faced field of science which should show out by the advantages of this duality of physical and social points of view, rather than by its disadvantages.

Professor Tóth's scientific interest during his years in Pécs was clearly of a synthetic nature. He rather let over his own new concepts to his colleagues for being brought to perfection, always assisting the innovative initiatives of young scientists. A series of books, collective volumes originate from this stage of his work, almost all of which were published together with a young co-author, co-editor. His 'tetrahedron model' became a classical concept in Hungarian human geography even as early as in his life, which he further expanded and interpreted as a notion of anthropogenic geographic spaces. Further developing the concept by Gyula Prinz ("raumorganismus", "raumorganisation") he formulated his own understanding of regions which he communicated in a number of various forums including a peculiar, grand television lecture.

His greatest and most beloved work in the city of Pécs is by all means the doctoral school he established. When the new system of scientific qualifications was being created in Hungary, he was among the first ones to set up a doctoral programme which became the largest and most open of such schools throughout the country. The first individuals to have completed the school are now associate professors and chairs of departments; it has provided the possibility of gaining scientific degree for professionals working in Hungarian higher education both beyond the state borders and inside Hungary. The Doctoral School of Earth Sciences established by Professor Tóth accepted and enrolled not only geographers, but also other researchers from a wide array of other disciplines, receptive to various spatial problems. In the last period of his life he still participated in this scientific workshop, as professor emeritus in the very last two years. Besides, he was lecturing 'Studium generale geographiae', his only last gradual course, which was a very important one in talent stewardship.

Professor József Tóth became a citizen of Pécs and the Mecsek foothills in a sense that although he started off in the Hungarian Plain, he created everlasting values in Pécs, in terms of scientific, educational, science organisational, school establisher and human terms. His activities were signified and recognised by a series of rewards and prizes from scientific, university, municipal, state and public life, of which the one he confessed to be most proud of was the 'Honorable Citizen of Pécs' title awarded by his chosen home-town.

He was a charismatic man with high determination and consistency in his decisions, openly undertaking debates and conflicts for the sake of a good case. With these human features and aptitude, what he created has proved to be everlasting in Hungarian geography, in human geography, scientific and higher education, as well as in regional development. His oeuvre, exceptional personality and devotion to science will not ever be forgotten. We will always remember.

András TRÓCSÁNYI

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Past and present of large housing estates in Visegrad countries and Armenia

Ágnes ERŐSS[1]

Abstract

In all Visegrad countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia), as well as in Armenia, a large proportion of the housing stock consists of blocks of flats erected during the Communist era. Those quarters have become an identical part of the cityscape inducing intense scientific discussion in the field of social sciences including human geography addressing such topics as architectural and spatial planning of housing estates, the analysis of society settled in those blocks of flats or even the psychological effects of the uniform environment on individuals. Following the systemic transformation the possible rehabilitation of the gradually deteriorating housing stock and environment meant a further challenge. Although examples from the West European countries provide significant help and information regarding housing estate rehabilitation, nevertheless due to the different scale of the problem, the altering history and the embeddedness of the topic, discussion on regional level is not only promising but necessary at the same time. This paper focuses on the important questions of large housing estates (LHEs) with special attention to the Visegrad countries and Armenia.

Keywords: large housing estates, Visegrad countries, rehabilitation, social environment

Introduction

"Concrete jungle", "rabbit hatches", "concrete deserts", "vertical slums" – only a few examples of the numerous, not too flattering phrases referring to housing estates all around in the former state-socialist countries. The idea to improve the living conditions of working class by building modern housing estates emerged in the early 20th century but primarily the severe shortage of dwellings after World War II together with the rapid growth of population and the increasing pace of urbanization made housing estates a viable and widespread solution offering home for a great amount of people in need for a relatively cheap price (Van Kempen, R. *et al.* eds. 2005, p. 2).

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Projects like *Million Programme* in Sweden (Borgegård, L. and Kemeny, J. 2004, p. 37) or state financed house building projects in suburban areas in France were initiated for the similar reason as any other long term housing development plans in the state-socialist countries.

As a result of those programmes ten thousands of flats were constructed all around in Europe, both sides of the Iron Curtain. As Murie, A. *et al*. (2005, p. 85) points out those blocks of flats share some common features, namely representing the most recent, up-to-date notions on residential construction of the era when they were built, additionally they were financed everywhere by the state, local governments or non-profit organizations. Besides the similarities, substantial differences also need to be highlighted.

First of all, in the former state socialist countries the ratio of population living in large housing estates reaches 40% of urban population. Furthermore, in certain newly established socialist towns or industrial centres housing estates can concentrate 60–80% of the population while in the Western European countries typically less than 10% of the population lives in such blocks of flats (Van Kempen, R. *et al.* eds. 2005, p. 2).

Secondly, in socialist countries housing estates were attractive not only to blue collar workers, but also to middle class families or even representatives of the socialist elite (Szelényi, I. and Konrád, Gy. 1969). Soon after the appearance of prefabricated housing, similar tendency was observed for instance in France (Blanc, M. and Stébé, J.-M. 2004, p. 105). Decades later the large housing estates built to solve housing problems of families with low income and other vulnerable groups turned to be the symbols of the social problems. The spatial concentration of poverty in housing estates resulted in growing risk of social (in many cases ethnic) segregation (Kemper, F.-J. 1998) and the decreasing prestige of those quarters (Hastings, A. 2004).

Thirdly, there is a fundamental difference between the most Western and Nordic countries and the former state-socialist states: while the majority of housing estates are owned by public authorities or cooperatives in the former group of countries, in the CEE countries the great majority of these dwellings were sold during the privatization process on discount price and now they are owned by private households. As a consequence, the local governments can only implement limited and rather indirect tools to improve the living conditions of housing estates, while the condominiums made up by the private owners/tenants usually lack the fund to carry out significant rehabilitation (Kovács, Z. and Douglas, M. 2004, pp. 243–244; Wassenberg, F. *et al.* eds. 2004, p. 24).

Recent developments of housing estate rehabilitation

In the last decade the future perspectives of large housing estates have attracted growing attention in the international literature. In the frame of RESTATE

EU FP5 project, substantial research was carried out in ten European countries in order to clarify processes, and identify problems attached to the decline of housing estates. As research reports of RESTATE project (Węcławowicz, G. *et al.* 2005, etc.) show, the concerns and actual problems demanding research and policy interventions are similar on both sides of the former Iron Curtain. Nevertheless, taking into consideration the aforementioned differences in social composition or ownership, the former state-socialist countries in Central and Eastern Europe face specific problems of their owns. In Western Europe complex rehabilitation programmes have been designed including the modernization of blocks of flats in terms of energy consumption (e.g. insulation), safety (additional gates), and even, the improvement of connectivity and accessibility of public services are part of these programmes (Helleman, G. and Wassenberg, F. 2004). Learning from the failures of earlier rehabilitation projects where interventions had exclusively either physical or social objectives, nowadays complex projects are implemented addressing both dimensions (Dekker, K. and Rowlands, R. 2005).

In CEE countries housing estates, more or less, managed to maintain their positions on the housing market and they still represent a fair option for lower middle-class households and young families with children (Kovács, Z. and Herfert, G. 2012). Unlike in Western Europe, neither influx of immigrants (Bonvalet, Ch. *et al.* 1995) nor massive depopulation affected them. Notwithstanding, following the transformation, housing estates suffered from a decline in terms of their market position and reputation while signs of growing socio-spatial segregation also appeared. One of the most troublesome tendencies is the relatively high and growing proportion of trapped and unsatisfied households in comparison to the western examples (Kovács, Z. and Herfert, G. 2012). Tensions may emerge upon this situation on the housing market and within the local society. In those cases complex rehabilitation procedures aimed to influence living conditions in blocks of flats might help to mitigate the situation and decrease the tension.

As housing estates compose relatively massive part of local housing stocks and they bear specific characteristics in CEE countries, including the Visegrad states, a comparative analysis is needed which may offer relevant data similar to the Western European results. It is worth taking a closer look at the present situation and the living conditions in LHEs besides evaluating locally the effects of rehabilitation projects carried out in the region. There have been numerous (mainly state financed) housing estate rehabilitation programmes completed during the last twenty years, though most of them focused on the reduction of energy consumption of buildings with central heating (Bierzyński, A. *et al.*).

Since the permanent growth of maintenance costs has been perceived as the biggest downgrading factor, the renewal of insulation, the change of

windows and doors, the removal of poisoning asbestos and the external painting have been the most commonly applied renovation works. If one would like to evaluate the effects of such kind of projects, s/he will find many difficulties as even the technical terms applied in the literature and the renovation work they include shows a great variety. The terms like "revitalization", "renovation", "humanization", "rehabilitation", "reconstruction" are all commonly used in policy documents or public discourses but in most cases the actual meaning of them are dissimilar or overlapping from country to country. The main question is whether the renovation programmes could improve the prestige of housing estates (or their positions on the housing market)?

Conclusion

The future of large housing estates remains a challenge both in Western and Eastern Europe in spite of the changing socio-spatial context and problems. Due to the fact that one of the most obvious shared legacies of the former state-socialist countries are the large housing estates that shape the urban landscapes from Berlin to the Caucasus (and beyond), it is worth taking a snapshot about current situation of those estates.

With the support of the International Visegrad Fund, in the frame of HEAS project (Residential Environment in Housing Estates in V4 countries and Armenia), a group of young researchers made an attempt to evaluate the present state of selected housing estates with special attention to the rehabilitation of pre-fabricated houses and the residential environment in Budapest, Bratislava, Katowice, Brno and Yerevan.

The first article written by Pavel Šuška and Linda Stasíková offers a brief overview about the history of Petržalka in Bratislava, one of the largest housing estates in the region which manifests some typical problems of LHEs. From Bratislava we move on to Brno to familiarize with three housing estates and how they are perceived by local inhabitants. The research conducted by Ivan Andráško, Pavlína Lesová, Josef Kunc and Petr Tonev point out how different imaginations and opinions can coexist about housing estates: residents tend to be more satisfied with their own neighborhoods which may indicate the existence of "local patriotism" in housing estates. Additionally, the role of media in influencing peoples' opinions about residential quarters is also important to mention.

The three following papers report about the present state of housing estates taking into account the effect of implemented and planned rehabilitations as well. Three housing estates in Katowice are analyzed shortly in Agata Warchalska-Troll's paper highlighting, among others, the relation between the social status of residents and their willingness to take part in rehabilita-

tion investments. Balázs Szabó introduces the spatial peculiarities of the rehabilitation of large housing estates in Budapest, highlighting the tendency how residents of low status estates perceive rehabilitation as a possible tool to preserve their position on the real estate market.

In the former Soviet socialist republic, Armenia, due to the immense political and economic difficulties of the 1990s, both on the evaluation of the housing stock and the rehabilitation of large housing estates were delayed. The author, Tigran Sargsyan calls attention to one of the interesting findings of a survey carried out in the framework of HEAS project in Yerevan LHEs: although the housing estates in Yerevan are in relatively bad conditions, both in terms of internal (e.g. lack of safety) and external features (e.g. poor condition of greenery) their residents are quite satisfied with the blocks of flats they live in.

We do hope that this colorful imaginary journey may contribute to the better understanding of recent issues and processes of housing estates in Visegrad countries and Armenia.

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Transformation of the built environment in Petržalka pre-fabricated housing estate

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Abstract

The last two decades have brought significant changes into pre-fabricated housing estates built during the era of state-socialism. In the 1990´s an active discussion about "humanisation" of the biggest pre-fabricated housing estate – Petržalka in the city of Bratislava – started. Petržalka´s monofunctionality, its dependency on the city centre and at the same time its segregation from other parts of the city were heavily criticised. In our paper certain aspects of the housing estate´s post-socialist transformation are analysed in the context of wider intra-urban changes triggered by the new production of built environment. This transformation is manifested mainly in the construction of new residential and commercial real estates. The dynamics of that is highly influenced by the political and economic changes taking place at state level. In case of new residential investments, the densification of the existing built-up structure took place. In contrast, heavy concentration of commercial buildings can be observed along the key transport corridors of supra-local (regional and international) importance.

Keywords: built environment, pre-fabricated housing estate, transformation, Petržalka, Bratislava

Introduction

Erecting large housing estates of pre-fabricated, standardized block of flats was an important element of the societal transformation during state-socialism. Transforming the pre-war society with strong agrarian-rural features was a large-scale modernisation project which involved, among others, the development of (heavy) industry and the transfer of a significant portion of the Slovak population into growing urban centres where predominantly panel housing estates were developed.

Between 1950 and 1990 in Central and Eastern Europe 14 million and in the territory of former USSR 66 million flats were built. In the late 1980´s in

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Czechoslovakia one third of the total population lived in the blocks of flats mentioned above (Temelová, J. *et al.* 2011). The different level of industrialisation and urbanisation in pre-socialist era and the equalisation/homogenisation project pursued by the socialist Czechoslovakia were the main reasons why most new development projects were located in the less developed Slovak part of the country. Even Bratislava, the biggest pre-war urban centre, needed enormous investments in both residential and industrial sectors in order to reach the level of second ranked cities in the Czech lands. Thus, in the late 1980´s almost 80% of the residents of the Slovak capital settled in pre-fabricated housing estates of which Petržalka was the biggest one with almost 140 thousands inhabitants (not only in Slovakia but in Central Europe as well) (Moravčíková, H. *et al.* 2011).

Soon after the collapse of state-socialism, pre-fabricated housing estates, once the pride of the spectacular project of socialist urbanisation and modernisation, were perceived as a problem. Functional homogeneity and the strong dependency on the city centre (only basic amenities and services were located there apart from the residential function) were often accompanied by spatial segregation from other parts of the towns.

In the early 1990´s authorities, professionals, and the general public were all preoccupied by discussing the possible ways of humanisation of pre-fabricated housing estates (Szelényi, I. 1996; Enyedi, Gy. 1998). At the beginning there was no agreement to what extent this should involve the improvement of different negatively perceived aspects of residential areas; rather complex revitalisation was expected (Šlachta, Š. 2009). However, it soon became clear that anything happening on the pre-fabricated housing estates would be of more spontaneous nature, more selective and it would be driven by profit interest rather than the realisation of clear intentions and plans.

Attempts to specify and refine analytical methods helping to understand processes of urban transformation have been undertaken by several authors within the field of urban geography. Particularly influential, among others, contributions written by L. Sýkora (2001), in which basic processes were defined. Here, rehabilitation and regeneration are understood as a positive (in contrast to decline or stagnation) transformation of built environment while the existing morphology is preserved. In contrast wider intra-urban transformations may involve demolition and redevelopment which have not always been perceived as positive (Ira, V. 2003). Present paper addresses this wider intra-urban change caused by new built environment in Petržalka pre-fabricated housing estate.

The early history of Petržalka housing estate

The housing estate of Petržalka was designed to follow the typical modernist architectural style which was tackled with criticism by the contemporary ex-

perts in Czechoslovakia, although those voices were repressed (Moravčíková, H. *et al.* 2006; Moravčíková, H. 2012). Applying pre-fabricated concrete blocks, offered the opportunity to provide a uniform dwelling to everybody regardless profession or social status. As Moravčíková, H. (2012) points out: owning a flat in a pre-fabricated block of flats became a symbol of personal success for many people those days in spite of the already mentioned criticism related to the inappropriate design or the negligence of.

After erecting the first block of flats in Bratislava in 1955, the construction activities spread all over the city, though the quarter of Petržalka was intentionally left out. On 15 June 1966 the Board of the National Committee launched a tender for the Ideological Purport Study for the Southern District of the City of Bratislava (Gross, K. 1969). Eighty-four proposals of 19 countries were evaluated; eventually the jury did not award the first and the second prize. Instead, 5 third prizes, 6 premiums and 10 honorary distinctions (idem) were granted.

The project of Petržalka was not prepared in haste, on the contrary, a thorough elaboration of studies evoked the impression of an "ideal place amidst greenery developed along the romantic arms of the River Danube" (Budaj, J. *et al.* 1987, p. 39). The individual quarters were supposed to be self-contained and multifunctional but simultaneously organically communicating. The islands of houses were to be four to eight-storeys with full amenities. The central axis was oriented towards the Castle of Bratislava, a dominant landmark, which "optically and emotionally integrates the city" (Budaj, J. *et al.* 1987, p. 40).

However, the construction of the housing estate had started before the evaluation of the tender due to the impatience of local authorities. Territorial-planning study was not applied in a consistent way (Moravčíková, H., 2012), instead spontaneous constructions started in 1973 (Čapová, M. *et al.* 1995).

As a consequence of all those factors, a special urban structure developed in Petržalka. Regarding the spatial distribution and functions, Petržalka is a type of "belt city" lying along the basic north-south axis cut by the secondary axis of a loosened urban fabric. A central axis and a central integrating core are missing. As a result, today's Petržalka is lacking a single centre with a town hall and the accompanying conveniences and accommodated transport. The residential zone consists of three large quarters: Háje, Dvory and Lúky (after Čapová, M. *et al.* 1995).

Each quarter has a particular urban and spatial composition: the tall buildings in Háje are facing the sunny southern side. The characteristic conception of Dvory is to maintain closed space between the blocks; and the composition of Lúky is based on a meander-like arrangement of blocks of flats (Čapová, M. *et al.* 1995).

Viewed from Bratislava, Petržalka is a monolith wall void of natural and functional dominants (Budaj, J. *et al.* 1987). The same authors also de-

nounced the poor quality of flats quite early: the bad sound-insulating properties of the pre-fabricated panels, doors and sanitary units allowing the noise penetration of lifts, piping, neighbouring flats and road traffic; inadequate entrance and common spaces (fractured hallways, complicated access to flats) – eventually expensive options of refurbishment (Budaj, J. *et al.* 1987).

In terms of architecture, Moravčíková, H. *et al.* (2006) discredited the oversize of Petržalka, its monotony, monofunction, the exclusion from the city and the existing functional dependence on it. Mládek, J. *et al.* (1998) reported about the absence of a central axis and a core of the whole urban structure which made impossible for the architects to draw a thorough transport plan in that quarter. The absence of a natural centre gives rise to social problems; there are no definite meeting points, a place for cultural events while the insufficiently and unevenly distributed amenities are also problematic (Budaj, J. *et al.* 1987).

Changing structures within the housing estate

The last two decades of the profound socio-economic changes have transformed the life of post-socialist Slovakia in many respects (Sýkora, L. and Bouzarovski, S. 2012). Bratislava, which is the capital and the primary urban centre in Slovakia, has been particularly exposed to the pressure of new transformative relations and those shifts have not left untouched the built environment either (Kovács, Z. 1999; Tosics, I. 2005; Sailer-Fliege, U. 1999). For Bratislava those changes eventually[2] brought a significant development stimulus which materialised in an unprecedented construction boom of the past decade. Bratislava with its hinterland can be considered as the winner of the transition period among the regions of Slovakia, at least in terms of ability to attract capital investment and economic development activities[3].

The most significant changes in the built environment occur mainly through new constructions, especially residential and commercial real estate investments and the developments in transportation infrastructure. The general dynamics of residential investments in Bratislava and Petržalka have been affected by the fact that the city represents the most important urban and economic centre of Slovakia (Šuška, P. 2012). The growing interest in real estate investments have also materialised in Petržalka *(Figure 1)* where new

[2] Generally, in Slovakia there was a sort of delay of many social transformations due to the postponed economic and political integration. Therefore, suburbanisation processes, the commercialisation of certain parts of mono-functional areas, socio-spatial stratification and separation, the building boom and the real estate buble – all appeared much later than those in the neighbouring post-socialist metropolis.

[3] Which does not mean that there are no loosers in the transition in Petržalka.

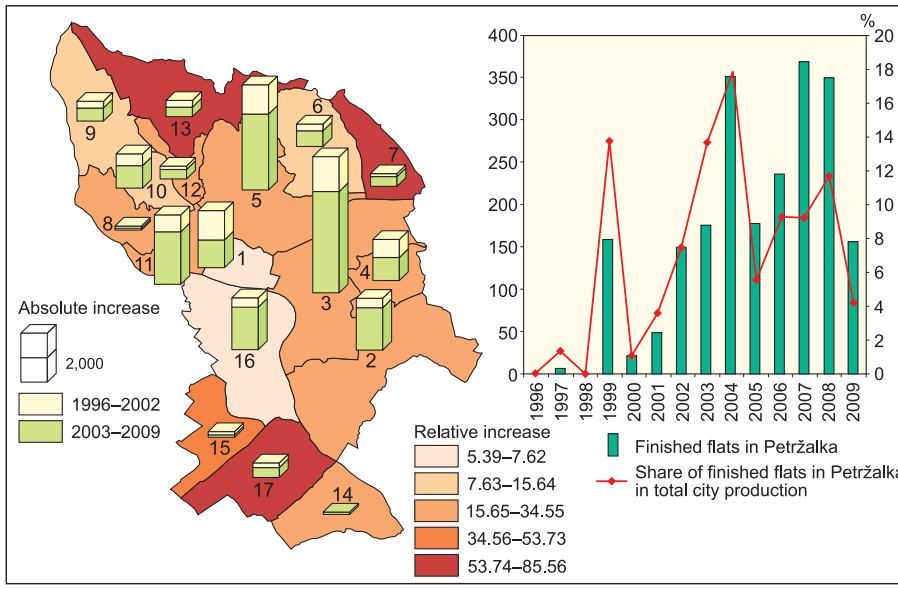


Fig. 1. Production of residential built environment in the districts of Bratislava. Urban districts: 1 = Staré Mesto; 2 = Podunajské Biskupice; 3 = Ružinov; 4 = Vrakuňa; 5 = Nové Mesto; 6 = Rača; 7 = Vajnory; 8 = Devín; 9 = Devínska Nová Ves; 10 = Dúbravka; 11 = Karlova Ves; 12 = Lamač; 13 = Záhorská Bystrica; 14 = Čunovo; 15 = Jarovce; 16 = Petržalka; 17 = Rusovce

dwellings scattered all over the territory contributing to the intensification of the existing urban fabric. Here the densification of existing structures was the dominant process after 1990.

While in the city centre new developments and extended building processes have been taking place, in Petržalka functional diversification including the creation of urban-centre-like spaces was postponed and the central parts of the housing estate remained underdeveloped in terms of commercial function *(Figure 2)*.

Numerous factors contributed to that deficiency: the disregard of original development plans of the socialist era, the market-driven spontaneity in the location of the new dwelling projects (Šlachta, Š. 2009, p. 13) and the long-term suspension of the intraurban rail transport system.

Especially, the latter means a serious impediment as the intraurban rail transport system is not only crucial in terms of the housing estate connection with the city, but the planned route is also supposed to become the central axis where the concentration of business activities, services and amenities may evolve and thus it can serve as a genuine central zone of the housing estate.

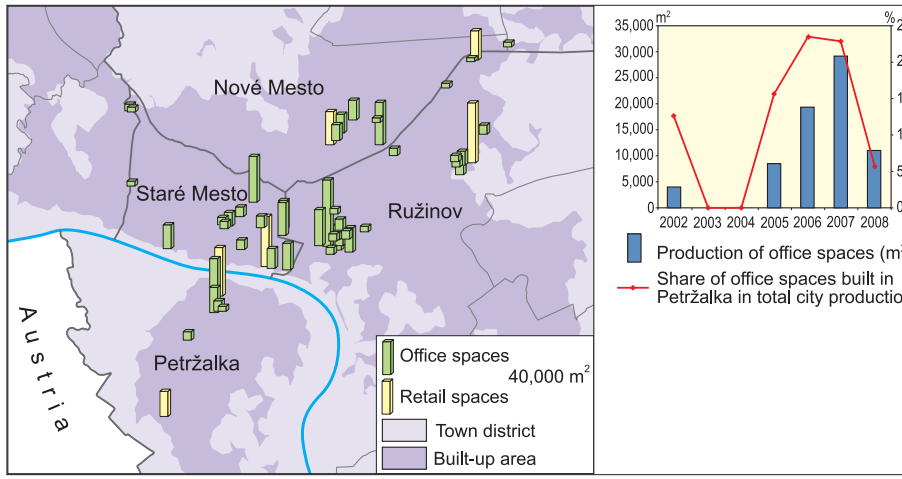


Fig. 2. Production of commercial built environment in town districts of Bratislava

Conclusion

The last twenty years have witnessed significant transformations in pre-fabricated housing estates built during the state-socialist period. Many of the original, encoded problems have been removed, but others persisted or even deepened. Additionally, due to the post-socialist transformation, new problems appeared. In terms of physical transformation of intra-urban structures, virtually all building initiatives, with the exception of transport infrastructure, have been pursued by private investors. The market logic of investment in the built environment does not always meet the needs of complex humanization of environment. The delay of key public investments (i.e. construction of roads and intra-urban trains, which would improve Petržalka's efficient transport links with the city and would also serve as an important socio-spatial integration area of the estate), remains cardinal problem.

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Perception of quality of life in Brno housing estates

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Abstract

The main goal of this paper is to introduce and discuss the ways of perceiving the quality of life on selected housing estates of Brno City. At a general level we focus on the significance of this kind of research and the factors influencing the way housing estates and living there are perceived in the Czech Republic. The results of our research on three Brno housing estates imply that the "external" image of quality of life on a housing estate can be rather different from the feelings and opinions of inhabitants living there. That contradiction is a result of a quite wide spectrum of factors such as adaptation processes, local patriotism or media influence.

Keywords: housing estate, place image, quality of life, neighbourhood comparison, Brno

Introduction

The residential complexes consisting of mainly houses built by means of pre-fabricated, pre-stressed concrete panel technology became not only a symbol of the socialist architecture but also homes for millions of people during the four decades when they were built. The pre-fabricated-panel housing estates (further referred to as housing estates) have left indelible traces in the lives of these people. This paper primarily focuses on issues related to the quality of life and the image of housing estates. We briefly discuss the significance of such research and also the factors influencing the perception of living on Czech housing estates. Then we focus on the selected housing estates located in Brno and on the way they are perceived regarding the quality of life aspect. Our research is based on the concept of "external" and "internal" image introduced

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by Andráško, I. (2006). Considering the acquired knowledge, our research is part of the housing estate studies incorporated into the theoretical-methodological framework of the quality of life concept.

Housing estate research and the quality of life concept

When considering housing estates as a more or less solid component of urban research (see e.g. Berényi, B.E. and Szabó, B. 2009; Matlovič, R. and Nestorová-Dická, J. 2009; Šuška, P. 2012), it is quite logical to ask a fundamental question: "Why should we study housing estates"?

The simplest answer to the question is related to the number of people living there. The construction of housing estates in the Czech Republic started in the 1960s and it ended in the 1990s. The share of panel houses in the housing stock increased to one-third and the share of people living on housing estates increased to 30% (Kallabová, E. 2004), meaning over 3 million people in absolute numbers. In the CEE countries 11–14 million apartments were built by means of panel technology during the period of 1950–1990. Those apartments were the homes for 15 to 45% of the inhabitants of those countries at the beginning of the 21st century. When taking into account the trends of future development (see Kallabová, E. 2002; Temelová, J. *et al*. 2011 we can assume that those rates will not significantly change in the coming years.

Several papers dealing with the housing estates in the CEE countries (e.g. Egedy, T. 2000; Mládek, J. 2000; Temelová, J. *et al*. 2011; Warchalska-Troll, A. 2012) stress that scientists should reveal information that could be used in improving the lives of the people living there. In this context, we consider the placement of studies in the framework of the quality of life concept exceptionally valuable. The scope of such research usually exceeds the possibilities of case-studies and more likely belongs to the sphere of larger research projects. Nevertheless, even studies focusing on the local aspects of quality of life may be beneficial. S. Cutter (1985) specified that approach as an evaluation of the total quality of life in a specific territory through studying individual perceptions. That approach will be used in the following part of our paper.

Perception and shaping of the quality of life image in Czech housing estates

The perception and evaluation of the environment by humans is an inseparable part of the geographical research (see e.g. Ira, V. 2004; Andráško, I. 2009. The image of housing estates cannot be considered very positive over time. It

is partially a result of the way these housing estates were built; planners frequently failed to take into account not only the basic needs resulting from the concentration of a large number of people in a relatively small area but also the more specific requirements connected to the socio-demographic structure of their inhabitants. That problem has become more pronounced since the 1970s. According to Ševčík (2009, in Divina, M. 2010), the reasons were connected with the strong advancement of standardization, the increasing number of building directives and the context of quantitative expansion.

The significance of housing estates in the former Czechoslovakia also appears in artistic works. Let us mention just some examples, a movie by Věra Chytilová "Panelstory aneb Jak se rodí sídliště" (Panelstory or the birth of a housing estate) (1979) or the song "Po schodoch" (Up the Stairs) by Patejdl and Mikletič, played by Banket (1986).

In both cases living on housing estates acquires a satiric or a tragicomic dimension drawing the attention of people to problems such as the paradoxical anonymity of people in an environment where everybody knows what his/her neighbour is doing just now or the "rationally irrational" way of spatial arrangement resulting in spatial disorientation. It cannot be surprising that housing estates were called "concrete jungles" or "rabbit hutches" – the latter expression was used in one of the first speeches of the former Czech(oslovak) president, Václav Havel.

Still, we believe that this negative image of housing estates should not be overestimated. Many people having grown up in the former Czechoslovakia usually do not have a word against "their" housing estates because they grew up there and they managed to identify with it. It should not be forgotten either that housing estates improved significantly the spatial and sanitary standards of households at the time of their constructions (Kallabová, E. 2004).

The events of the "Velvet Revolution" in 1989 brought about many significant changes in the former Czechoslovakia and they had an effect on housing estates as well. The changes in the housing ownership structure, the introduction of market mechanism or the re-establishment of local governments represent just partial couple of aspects contributing to the "humanization" of the residential environment of housing estates. In this respect, terms such as "regeneration", "revitalisation", "renovation" and "rehabilitation" have been used since the mid-1990s.

In general, they are associated with technical, environmental and social changes, spatially related to the apartments (e.g. reconstruction), whole buildings (façade insulation) or to the housing estates' environment in a wider social context (public areas). Market forces relatively quickly saturated many of the formerly poorly fulfilled needs of inhabitants. Developments in services and retailing even changed the images of the housing estates which were perceived negatively before (Andráško, I. 2007).

Brno's housing estates and the way they are perceived by local people

Brno with its 380,000 inhabitants is the second largest city in the Czech Republic. Approximately 40% of the city's inhabitants reside on housing estates. The first panel house in Brno was built in 1957. The number of apartments built by means of panel technology was 247 in Brno in 1960, and this number increased to 1216 by 1963. The first housing estate construction started in 1960 (finished in 1965) and the last housing estate was built between 1987 and 1994. As many as twenty housing estates were built by pre-fabricated technology in Brno (Lesová, P. 2011).

The following section our study focuses on the evaluation of the image of three selected housing estates regarding the quality of life context. Our study is based on a questionnaire survey performed in Brno in 2011. Brno inhabitants were systematically surveyed and the basic data set covers the answers of 2500 respondents. Significant attention was paid to the proportional-territorial character of the sample. Therefore, the city was divided into 75 boroughs. The data set also contains information about the age, the educational and the gender aspects of the population.

The questionnaire focused on a wide spectrum of information about the inhabitants' quality of life. The wording of the individual questions was adopted from previous surveys of Andráško, I. (2007) influenced, besides others, by Pacione, M. (1986). It is impossible to evaluate all the results of the complex research within a single paper; therefore, we focus here on the image of the selected housing estates.

The evaluation of that image was based on the replies of respondents to the questions where they were asked to specify up to 5 locations in Brno which they considered the best and the worst from the quality of life aspect. On the basis of the answers, we established and quantitatively assessed two types of images.

– A general, "city-wide" image that was processed for all 75 city boroughs and it was based on the answers of respondents who indicated a specific neighbourhood to be among the best ones or the worst ones. The result made it possible to establish a ranking of the city boroughs according to the perception of their quality of life. Focusing on the housing estates, we found that within Brno the housing estate Lesná had the best image and the housing estate Bohunice had the worst. Therefore, we selected these two estates for a more detailed investigation. The third selected housing estate was Bystrc. The attitude of people towards that housing estate can be described as "ambivalent" – a relatively large share of respondents classified it both in the best and the worst borough categories.

– We have designed the second concept as an "internal" image. In this case, we focused only on respondents' view of the three above-mentioned

housing estates. The internal (or own) image expresses how the inhabitants of a housing estate perceive the quality of life in their own neighbourhood. In this case, we also took into account the satisfaction of the inhabitants with their places of residence. The degree of satisfaction was expressed on a 5-degree scale (5 = great satisfaction and 1 = great dissatisfaction).

The following section provides a description of the three selected housing estates in order to help the understanding of factors shaping their images.

Lesná housing estate

Lesná maintains the status of "good address" in Brno. It was built in the 1960s, during a period which was more convenient for housing estates from many viewpoints (aesthetic-architectonic, functional, etc.). The housing estate was built at the northern edge of the city (*Figure 1*), on a rugged south-facing slope. The architectonic design was inspired by the Scandinavian cities. The

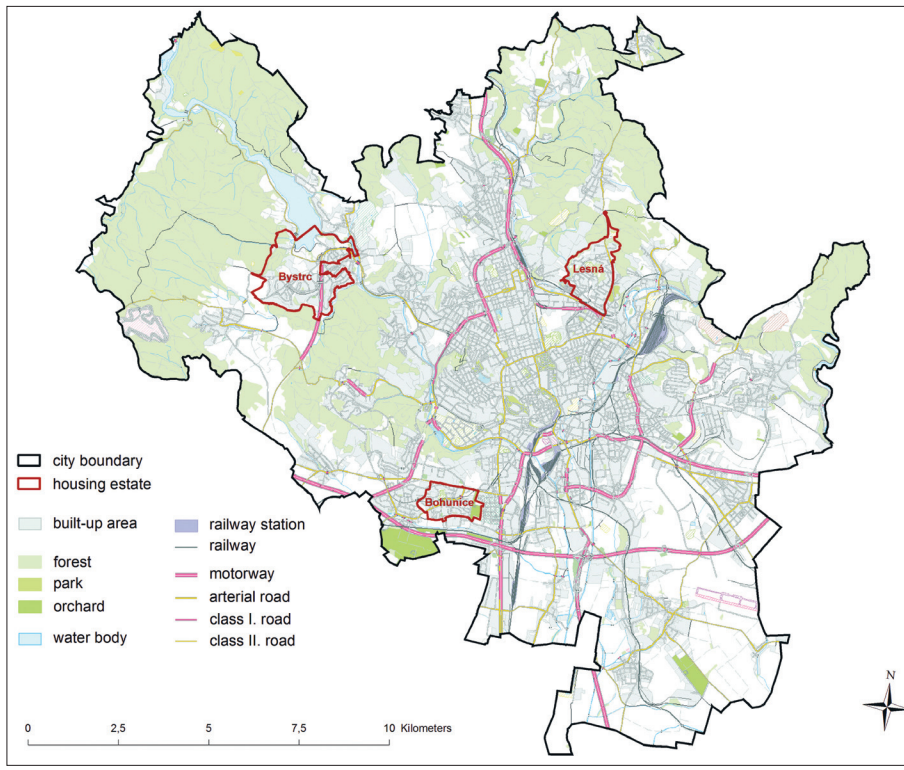


Fig. 1. Localisation of the selected housing estates within the city of Brno

term "Lesná" itself evokes a connection to the nature (the word "lesná" is an adjective of the word "les" which means "forest") and it quite precisely describes the place. The neighbourhood adjoins large forests which are used as a recreational area. The housing estate is also intersected by a depression (Čertova rokle) which is mostly covered with greenery as well and since the main roads are located at the outer circumference of the housing estate, no heavy transport disturbs that area.

The built-up area in Lesná is characterised by nine-storey houses with length of up to 200 m *(Photo 1)*. This structure made it possible to establish large green areas among the buildings with sports facilities.

The attitude of Brno's inhabitants towards Lesná, expressed by means of the "general" image concept, is rather clear. The evaluation of the "first option" (the first choice of preferred borough) implies that Lesná is generally perceived as the best city brough within the limits of Brno.

Lesná inhabitants are mostly satisfied with their place of residence. The internal image quite corresponds to the general image. 24.5 % of Lesná's inhabitants consider "their own" borough as the best one regarding the quality of life; it was not ranked as the worst borough in any single case.



Photo 1. Characteristic high-rise building at Lesná. The balconies are new "components" appeared only after 1990. (Photo by Andráško, I.)

Bohunice housing estate

This residential complex is perceived as the worst example of the socialist housing policy in Brno. Its construction started in 1972 under the name of Housing Estate of the Czechoslovak–Soviet Friendship (Kuča, K. 2000). The housing estate is located at the south-eastern edge of Brno, close to the busy D1 motorway to Prague. This fact played an important part in shaping the "external" image of the housing estate. From the D1 motorway the typical skyline of the housing estate located on a hill can be seen. Up to now the negative image of Bohunice was enhanced by the uniformity of the "colour" of facades, the so-called "concrete panel grey".

The last 20 years brought about many changes in Bohunice that can be evaluated rather positively. Revitalisation measures were, besides others, connected with the re-painting of facades and the significant expansion of green areas, both improving the aesthetic value of the residential environment (*Photo 2*). The investments of the public sector were focused on the development of public



Photo 2. The new colour of facades changed the aesthetic image of the residential environment in Bohunice. (Photo by Andráško, I.)

areas often with a clear and rational emphasis on their functional utilisation (sport areas, playgrounds, park benches etc.). As mentioned above, the "general" image of Bohunice within Brno has not been very favourable. Yet we must remember that from the viewpoint of that image, Bohunice is "only" the worst housing estate, and not the worst neighbourhood in the city.

The results of the internal image evaluation imply that Bohunice inhabitants do not share the "majority's" opinion. Over 28% of respondents from Bohunice specified the borough as the best one in Brno. That rate is even higher than the rate for the "generally" preferred Lesná estate. That finding is corroborated by the average rate of satisfaction with the estate as a place of residence where Bohunice reached the same value as Lesná, i.e. 3.9 (prevailing satisfaction).

Bystrc housing estate

This housing estate is located in the western part of Brno and its relative location can be assessed from different viewpoints. On the one hand, it is located at the greatest distance from Brno city-centre and, on the other hand, it is located next to a largest forest and recreation areas.

Bystrc just like Bohunice used to be an independent village. The construction of this rather large housing estate started in 1971 and it was implemented in several stages. After the construction, Bystrc had insufficient facilities (shops, schools). The infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, roads) was not developed sufficiently, either. Similarly to other places, the situation also changed here, i.e. improved after 1989. The greater distance from the city centre is compensated by relatively good public transport services (Lesová, P. 2011). Nevertheless, a trip to the city centre is 7–8 minutes longer in comparison to Lesná or Bohunice.

Considering the housing estate's general image, Bystrc is assessed in a rather specific way. It appears both among the "top 15" best-evaluated boroughs and among the 15 worst-evaluated boroughs. As implied by Andráško, I. (2006), that "ambivalent" attitude of city inhabitants towards large housing estates is not as surprising as it might seem. Large residential complexes can be perceived very negatively (e.g. because they represent a "dehumanized" environment) and at the same time (for some specific living conditions) their images can be very positive.

The evaluation of the internal image shows that Bystrc inhabitants like their housing estate the most. More than half of them consider Bystrc as the best borough in Brno, an opposite opinion was not expressed in any single case. The value of 4.1 showed even higher satisfaction with the place of residence among local inhabitants than in the case of Lesná or Bohunice.

Comparison of housing estates by selected quality of life aspects

The results of the study revealed significant differences in the perception of quality of life on the housing estates regarding the "external" and "internal" images. It is an important finding, especially in the case of the housing estates with "poor reputation". It can be an important factor, for example, in the decision making process connected with real-estate purchases. Data listed (*Table 1*) show that apartment prices are rather different among the housing estates under study. The most expensive apartments are located on the "popular" Lesná housing estate. Also the least number of free apartments for sale and the largest number of apartments for rent are offered here. On the contrary, the largest number of free apartments for sale is in Bohunice.

Figure 2 demonstrates the level of inhabitants' satisfaction with selected aspects of life. The average values calculated from the replies of all respondents of the three housing estates show that they were most satisfied with the quality and availability of greenery. On the contrary, the lowest satisfaction is connected with cultural activities and parking availability (a typical contemporary problem of housing estates).

Table 1. Average prices of apartments in 2012

Apartment size*	Housing estate and apartment price in thousands of CZK		
	Lesná	Bohunice	Bystrc
2-room apartment	1,912	1,585	1,787
3-room apartment	2,520	2,124	2,109

*2 and 3-room apartments - apartment average price in a panel house (2 and 3 rooms + a kitchen, respectively)

Conclusion

The comparison of "external" and "internal" images of housing estates may provide interesting results for urban planning. It is obvious that factors shaping of that image are part of long-term and complicated processes and that a wider spectrum of factors should be considered here. From the external perspective, mediated information which is, to a certain extent, identical with the "reputation" of the housing estate is especially important. Lesná housing estate was much more promoted in the media than other Brno housing estates, which was certainly beneficial for the popularity of Lesná (Divina, M. 2010). However, mediated information does not need to be either objective or complete, as it reflects only the external image of the location.

The internal image is made up by perceptions of inhabitants whose everyday lives are strongly connected with that particular housing estate.

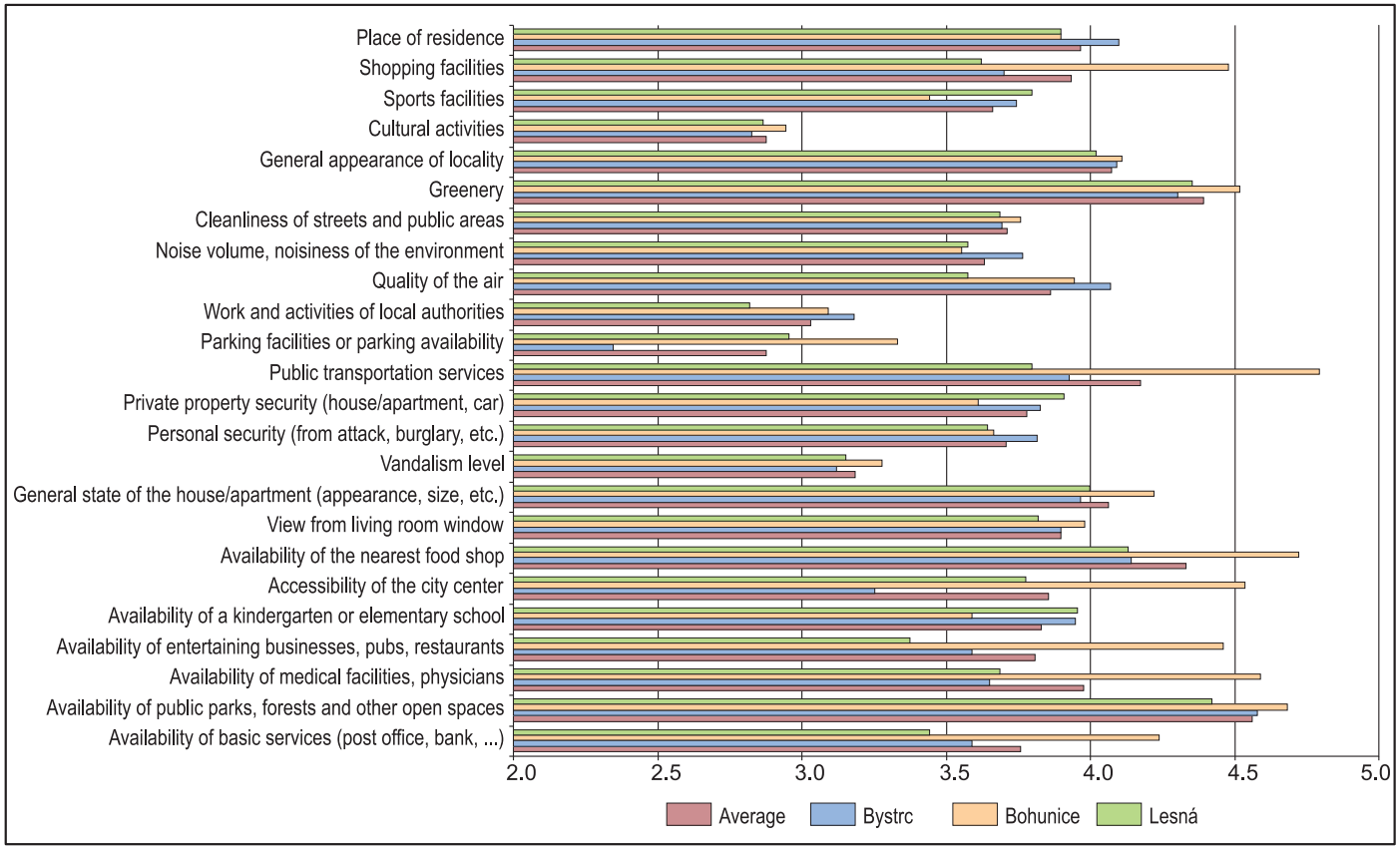


Fig. 2. Degree of satisfaction with selected aspects of life (higher value stands for higher degree of satisfaction)

Predominantly, the positive perception of residents may be a consequence of their familiarity with local conditions and it is certainly a result of their adaptation to that environment. "Local patriotism" related to the shaping of territorial identity is a rather frequent phenomenon. That phenomenon can even be reinforced when the "external" image of the housing estate is negative. This is true for large e.g. Petržalka housing estate in Bratislava (see Andráško, I. 2006) and maybe in the case of Bohunice in Brno. However, that phenomenon must not be universal.

The results of our research and also other studies (Temelová, J. *et al.* 2011; Warchalska-Troll, A. 2012) underline that the future of housing estates will depend on three "connected vessels": physical environment, the ways they are perceived and the social structure of the population. The deterioration in parameters of any of those components will reflect in the other two upon the feedback mechanisms. There are many impacts that could cause both negative and positive changes and their characteristics can be both exogenous and endogenous. On the side of internal factors, we have to emphasize especially the role of local governments and the participation of the public in controlling and decision-making processes. The future of housing estates is, thus, mostly in the hands of their inhabitants and it also depends on them how they will treat their opportunities.

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Progress of rehabilitation of large housing estates in Katowice (Poland)

Agata WARCHALSKA-TROLL[1]

Abstract

Large housing estates (LHEs) built during the communist era in the countries behind the 'Iron Curtain', nowadays, are places of residence for 20–30% of their population, covering a considerable amount of space in many cities. Therefore, changes that LHEs are undergoing are crucial for the quality of life of millions of people in Central and Eastern Europe. The aim of this study is to present the recent rehabilitation progress of LHEs through the example of three case study estates from Katowice – the historical centre of the Upper Silesian industrial agglomeration in Poland. Through inventory, mapping and observation, a set of data on the technical and visual state as well as on the functional aspects of the estates in question were gathered. The analysis led to the conclusion, that the general state of the investigated LHEs is satisfactory, but there are considerable differences in the speed of the rehabilitation process, which may result in a deepening polarisation of the quality of life on the estates in the near future.

Keywords: large housing estates, urban rehabilitation, Katowice

Introduction

The city of Katowice investigated in this paper, with around 300,000 inhabitants and not a very long history, has quite a typical look of a socialist town. Besides, Katowice is the capital of the large Upper Silesian conurbation shaped by intensive coal mining and the massive development of the connected branches of heavy industry during the past decades.

Most of the Katowice's LHEs were erected for the migrants who arrived to work in mines and steelworks. Nowadays, those areas are affected by some typical problems: the ageing of both the population and the housing stock; technical problems of the buildings and the infrastructure due to low quality building materials and the poor workmanship. Those problems were

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deepened by the damages caused by mining as well as by social problems like the unemployment induced by the post-socialist transformation. Nevertheless, the prospect of a given estate is not automatically so bleak. Many of them are still appreciated as a suitable place of living by young families and young singles due to their relatively low prices and good access to basic amenities. Next to old blocks of flats new residential buildings are being erected, which brings along new challenges in managing the estates' residential environment.

After the collapse of communism – and especially in the last decade – the conditions of the large housing estates has attracted the interest of a growing number of scholars and research groups. Most of the research projects have focused on the diagnosis of the nature and the scale of the LHEs' problems and, eventually, they have also put an emphasis on the LHEs' future perspectives throughout Europe (like the overall papers of the RESTATE Project, e.g. Dekker, K. and Van Kempen, R. 2004; Černič Mali, B. *et al.* 2008), in particular countries (Gorczyca, K. 2009; Temelová, J. *et al.* 2011; Constantin, D.L. 2006, 2007; Dimitrovska Andrews, K. and Sendi, R. 2001; Černič Mali, B. 2005) or at the local level (e.g. Górczyńska, M. 2008; Warchalska-Troll, A. 2012).

In a broader context, the investigation of the residential environment of LHEs is closely connected with the issue of the quality of life in an urban environment. This research field has been in the focus of interest of many geographers of Central and Eastern Europe, too (e.g. Andráško, I. 2005, 2006; Zborowski, A. *et al.* 2009).

The large housing estates of Katowice – their histories, locations, dimensions and other characteristics – are described in a monograph written by L. Szaraniec (2010). Their susceptibility to physical and social degradation was the subject of a research carried out by the author (Warchalska-Troll, A. 2012). Currently, a Polish-German scientific project entitled 'The past, present and future of Polish and German big housing estates. Comparative study of urban development models and their approval - examples of Katowice and Leipzig' is being conducted by the Faculty of Architecture, Silesian University of Technology in cooperation with UFZ – Helmholtz Institute – Environmental Studies Centre in Leipzig (Large housing estates… 2012). However, to the author's knowledge, no scientific paper with the outcome of that project has been published yet (as for 17. December 2012).

Introduction of research sites and the field survey

This study aims to focus on the rehabilitation of LHEs in recent years through the example of selected case studies from Katowice. The main research questions are the followings: What is the general state of the housing stock and how great are the differences between the particular estates? Has the rehabilitation

advanced over time or it is just at an early stage? Are there any general ideas behind the rehabilitation actions or are they rather limited and chaotic? Does the rehabilitation cover public spaces, too? Are there really enough basic amenities? In order to answer these questions, three different estates were selected in Katowice, erected mainly between the late 1960s and up to the mid-1980s:

– Tysiąclecia estate, today divided into Upper and Lower Tysiąclecia estates, is the biggest housing estate in the city, having a population of around 25,000. It is also famous for the height of the blocks (most of them have more than 10 storeys while some have even more than 20), and it is well-connected with the city centre and the recreational areas;

– Paderewskiego estate, situated close to the centre of Katowice and the recreational areas. The estate has especially good reputation within the city many intellectuals from local scientific and cultural institutions as well as the local media used to live there. The size of the estate is medium (by Polish conditions) with around 9,000 inhabitants;

– Witosa estate situated near a closed mine and the run down district of Załęże at the outskirts of Katowice. Its size is medium (with around 11,000 inhabitants) originally built for workers of a coal mine and the nearby factories. Nowadays, it has a bad reputation in the city.

The research was conducted in September 2012, by means of techniques such as inventory, mapping and observation. The acquired information was compared to the results of a similar research conducted by the author on the same sites in 2009 (Warchalska-Troll, A. 2012) when the social aspects of life on the LHEs were also tackled (mostly through questionnaires).

The features considered in the field survey included *(Table 1)* buildings of several types and their close surroundings; playgrounds; the location and the number of amenities such as shops, schools, medical centres, etc.

Table 1. Types of buildings considered in the study

Name of the building category used in this paper	Description
Old high-rise residential	A building of more than 5 storeys, built before 1989
Old low-rise residential	A building of less than 5 storeys, built before 1989
Old single-family	Detached house, semi-detached house, built before 1989
New high-rise residential	A building of more than 5 storeys, built after 1989
New low-rise residential	A building of less than 5 storeys, built after 1989
New single-family	Detached house, semi-detached house, built after 1989
Non-residential	Shops, shopping centres, schools, kindergartens, medical centres and private practices, culture clubs, libraries, churches, kiosks, administrative buildings, restaurants and pubs, banks and financial services, post offices, etc.
Under construction	Every building which hadn't been finished by September 2012

The progress of rehabilitation was considered mostly according to three dimensions:

– Physical conditions of buildings (e.g. full renovation, only painted, under renovation/construction, no renovation) including the state of the building's surroundings – substantial changes (pavements, driveways etc.) as well as minor changes (street furniture, entrance doors to the blocks, waste containers, etc.);

– State of playgrounds (representing public spaces and social infrastructure at the same time);

– Functional structure of the estate and access to basic facilities.

The state of buildings was evaluated according to visual signs of whether they were freshly painted or insulated. The state of playgrounds was evaluated according to features such as surface type (concrete or other hard materials, soil, Tartan, grass, etc.), fence (no fence, short fence, taller fence protecting against vandals), the state and the diversification of the recreational equipment (new, old, the number of pieces).

Results of the survey

Types of housing stock

In all three cases high-rise residential buildings erected before 1989 (the beginning of political and economic transformation in Poland) predominate. They usually represent the typical features of housing in the 1970s: concrete panel blocks made of pre-fabricated materials, following very simple design, with flat roofs. There is only one interesting exception: a group of five blocks on the Lower Tysiąclecia estate. Having a flower-like figure for base, they are called 'corns' as their silhouette remind people heads of maize *(Photo 1)*.

The largest variety of housing can be found in Witosa estate – in addition to the 'old high-rise residential' category, also old and new low-rise and single-family residential houses occur (*Figure 1)*. In contrast, Tysiąclecia and Paderewskiego estates have new housing stock under construction which means that they are still perceived as perspective residential areas by developers and investors.

The high rate of single-family housing on Witosa estate can be explained by the provision of higher standard housing for the managerial class of the former mine situated nearby. They were luxurious in the past, but from nowadays perspective they are not attractive any longer. Old low-rise multi-family residential housing at Tysiąclecia estate includes the oldest buildings of the area dating back to the early 1960s, before residential tower blocks became popular in Poland.



Photo 1. 'Corn' houses in Lower Tysiąclecia. (Photo by Warchalska-Troll, A.)

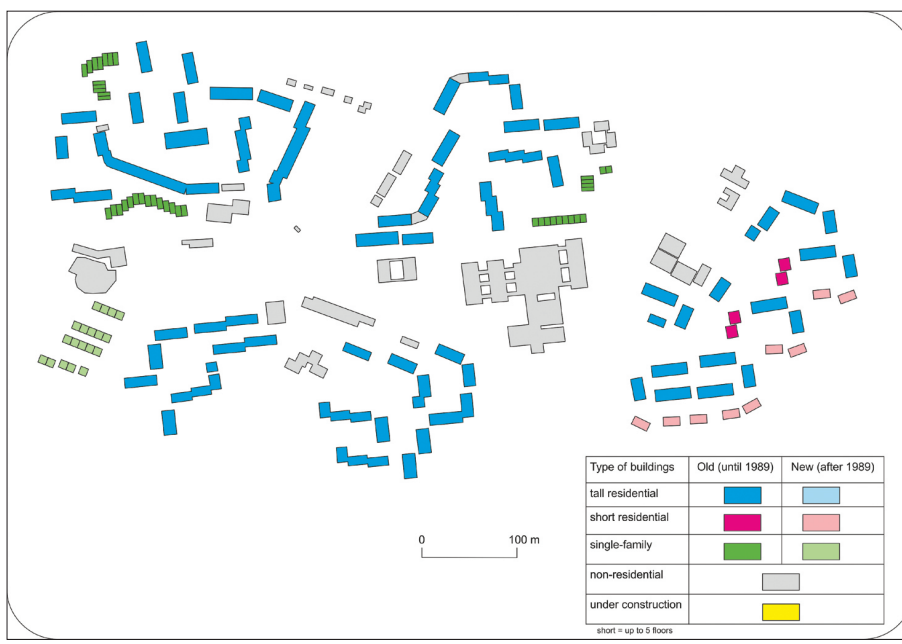


Fig. 1. Witosa estate – types of housing stock. *Source:* see *Fig 5.*

State of housing stock and public spaces

The investigated housing estates differ most regarding the state of housing stock. Paderewskiego estate is an example for an area being rather well-maintained, although most renovation activities were conducted some time ago. Current rehabilitation actions seem to be chaotic and incoherent *(Figure 2)*.

Public spaces like playgrounds are generally in good conditions, although they meet little the current quality expectations. On Tysiąclecia estate rehabilitation process seems to be following a cohesive general strategy *(Figure 3* and *4)*. However, due to the poor quality performance of builders the renovations and the repairs are like a never-ending story there.

Due to its large size, the scale of problems and needs is also large. A slightly better situation can be observed in the upper part of the estate where the last built blocks can be found. Public spaces are very well-maintained and they meet modern standards in many aspects. Especially, the network of open-access sport facilities installed recently is worth mentioning. Witosa estate is an area which makes the worst impression, but at the same time it is full of contrasts. Totally neglected buildings stand in close proximity to fully renovated ones *(Photo 2)*.

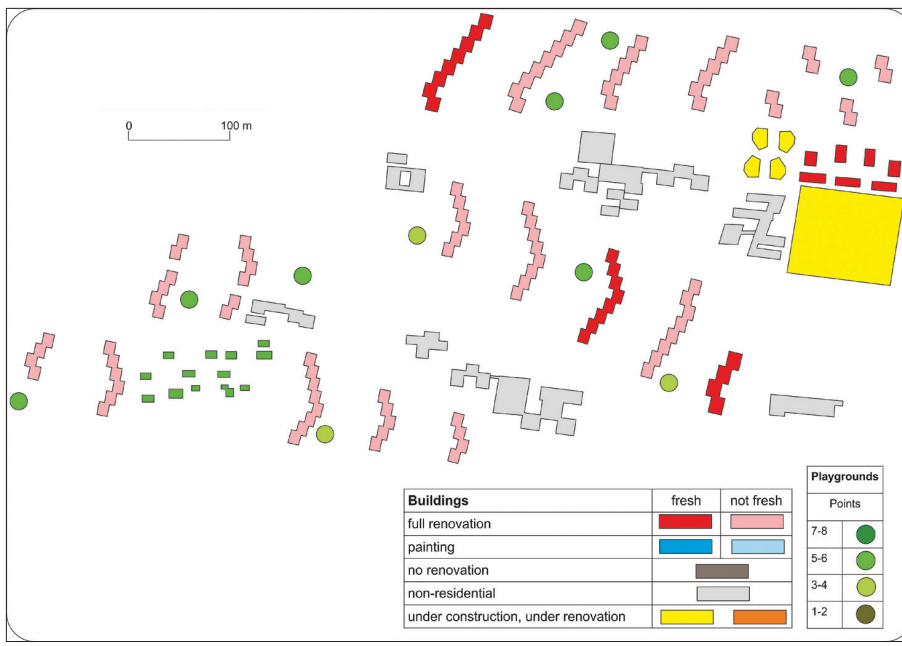


Fig. 2. Paderewskiego estate – state of housing stock and public spaces. *Source:* see *Fig 5.*

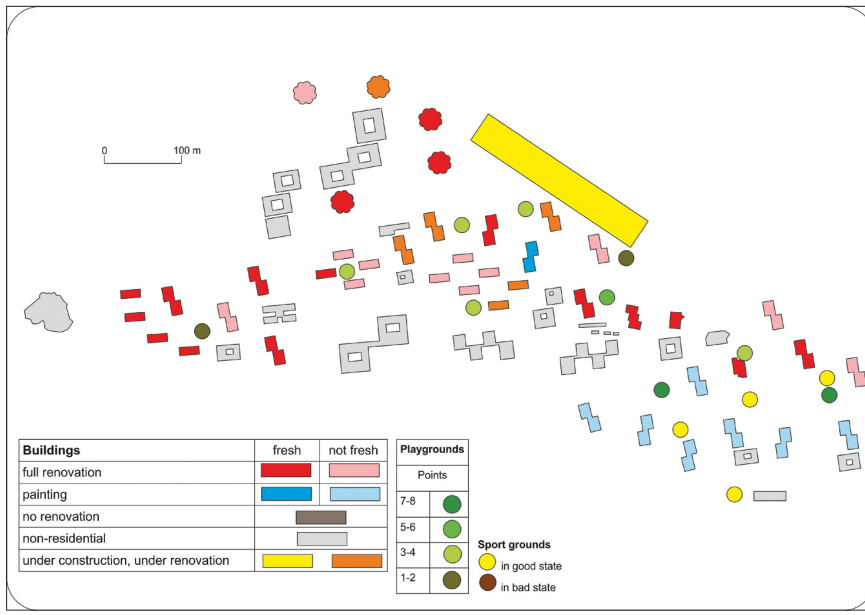


Fig. 3. Lower Tysiąclecia estate – state of housing stock and public spaces. *Source:* see *Fig 5.*

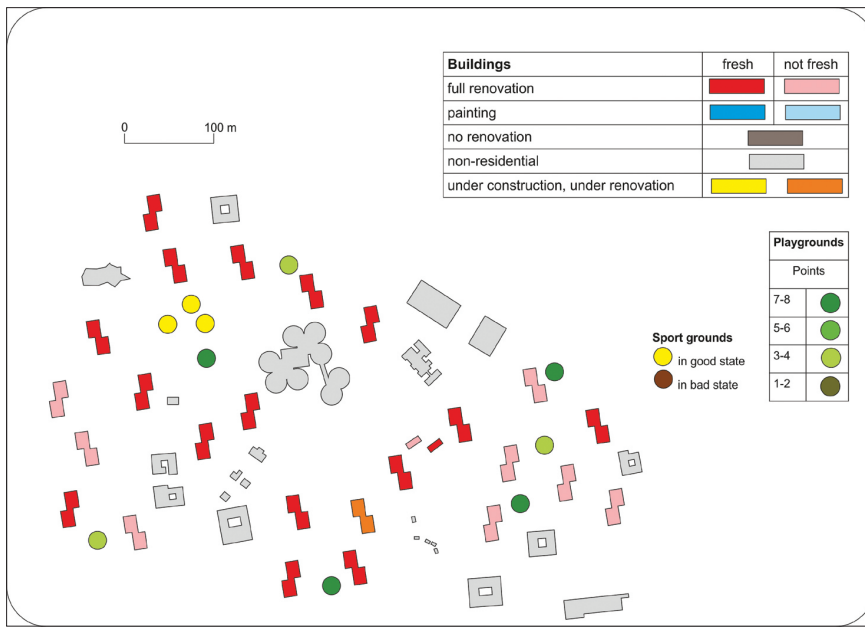


Fig. 4. Upper Tysiąclecia estate – state of housing stock and public spaces. *Source:* see *Fig 5.*



Photo 2. Renovated and neglected buildings in Witosa estate. (Photo by Warchalska-Troll, A.)

Yet, not the well-maintained buildings predominate on this estate. As for public spaces, some positive changes can be observed, like St. Herbert's Square near the church or new football pitches in the northern part of the area. Nevertheless, the general quality of the estate is very poor *(Figure 5)*.

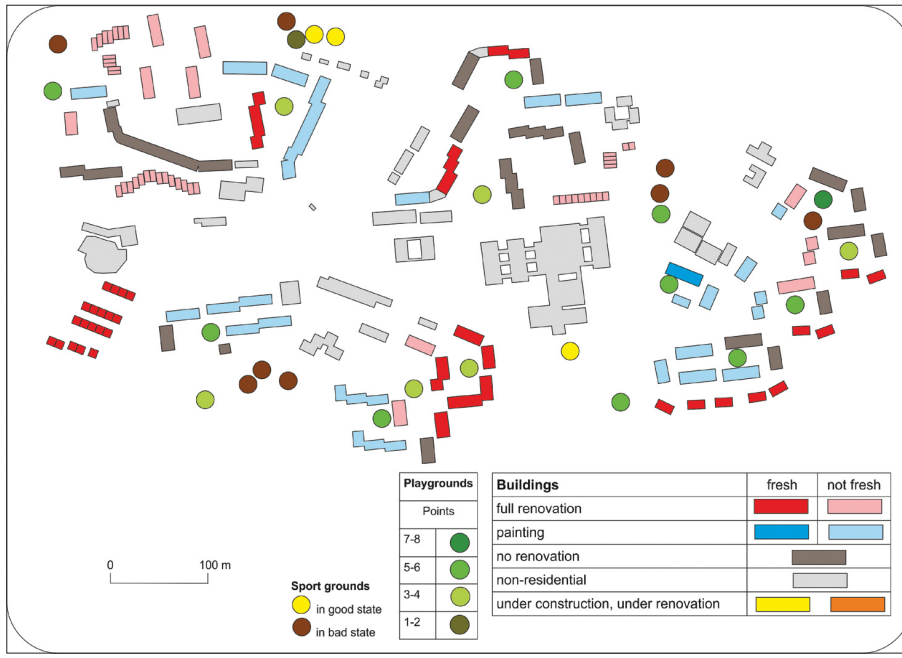


Fig. 5. Witosa estate – state of housing stock and public spaces. *Source:* Author's field research including GPS measurements; visual interpretation of the satellite images available on: maps.google.pl

Functions and facilities

In general, the investigated estates are well-equipped with basic amenities and facilities with many grocery shops, a school, kindergartens, a medical centre, a post office, a bank and cultural institutions (libraries, culture clubs) at every estate. This provision of services is extended by shopping centres and supermarkets situated usually in the estates' neighbourhood. Paderewskiego estate has additionally a very easy access to many cultural, educational and administrative institutions provided in the city centre as it is located less than 2 km away from the Main Square of Katowice. Tysiąclecia estate is characterisedby some specific institutions: secondary schools, a school of arts and two police stations.

On both Paderewskiego and Tysiąclecia estates almost all tower blocks are equipped with small grocery shops and services such as hairdresser, medical practitioners, shoe-repair workshops, etc. which is very convenient for inhabitants, especially for elderly people. In contrast, on Witosa estate there

is a relatively lower number of shops and services which can be explained by the inhabitants' generally worse economic situation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the three investigated estates have quite a lot in common and they face similar challenges. The success or the failure of rehabilitation process will probably depend on the different social and financial conditions upon which the cooperatives managing those areas have to act. The lower class profile and grave social problems of Witosa estate seem to explain why the rehabilitation process has not advanced there yet. The unfavourable financial situation of inhabitants affects the low level of renovations and repairs. Visible social contrasts enhance the frustration of poorer inhabitants. The widespread vandalism supports the impression that any rehabilitation action is in vain. That makes people even less eager to pay for renovations.

On Paderewskiego estate social problems have not been so serious until now, the estate has always maintained a good reputation and it still makes a positive impression. However, it may change in the coming years unless the rehabilitation process is more structured and better managed, and the local cooperative pays more attention to the current small-scale renovations and repairs. Tysiąclecia estate is in the best situation out of the three investigated estates. The local cooperative seems to have both a cohesive strategy and funds for rehabilitation actions and it seems to have a social acceptance for it, too. The problem may occur when the costs of maintenance of the ageing and run down housing stock and infrastructure will reach the point of economic effectiveness.

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Ten years of housing estate rehabilitation in Budapest

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Abstract

At the turn of the millennium about one third of the inhabitants of Budapest lived at housing estates. Since then this rate has slightly declined because of new constructions. Demographic trends have also contributed to the decrease of the share of population living on housing estates. The rate of ageing is especially high in case of the older housing estates, nevertheless, the share of the families with children has still remained above average. The rehabilitation of large housing estates seems to be the best way to avoid their demographic erosion and social decline. This paper explores the rehabilitation initiatives carried out in Budapest in the last decade, with special attention to their outcomes, and their effects. We also examine whether renovations resulted in some new socio-spatial differentiations at large housing estates.

Keywords: large housing estate, rehabilitation, segregation, Budapest

Introduction

The fall of state-socialism drastically changed the position of large housing estates on the overall housing markets and the social composition of their inhabitants. Housing estates were not at all socially homogeneous even during communism, their prestige varied already in the time of their construction and the change of regime also brought about further differentiation. One of the main factors behind these changes was the privatisation of housing when the share of owner occupied flats increased from 50% to 93% just over a decade, between 1990 and 2001 (Népszámlálás, 2001).

The majority of housing estates became the losers of the housing privatisation. Only the 'elite' housing estates built in the 1980s could keep their

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position on the housing market (Kovács, Z. and Douglas, M. 2004).[2] The high level of comfort was one of the main advantages of panel dwellings before 1990. That very same feature became a disadvantage in the following decade due to the rapid rise of housing costs, especially energy costs (Egedy, T. 2000). After privatisation the new owners living at large housing estates found themselves in a new situation: the value of flats in pre-fabricated houses declined, while the costs of maintenance drastically increased. As a consequence, the lower-status residents of housing estates often became trapped: they could not sell their flats or buy another one of similar quality; thus their housing career ended (Hegedüs, J. and Tosics, I. 1998).

The most problematic part of the rising housing costs is connected with the central heating and the insufficient insulation of the houses (Egedy, T. 2003), thus, rehabilitation programmes were targeted to offer a solution to this problem. Some support encouraging and facilitating the application of energy saving methods became available already in 1997. The first governmental program (called "Panelprogram") was launched in 2001, however, the highest share of the rehabilitation was implemented only after 2004 (Egedy, T. 2006).

One of the main social consequences of the rehabilitation was the improvement of the residential satisfaction of inhabitants (Kovács, Z. and Herpai, T. 2011). The residents of renovated houses were very satisfied with the better insulation, the lower level of noise and the lower costs of heating, besides, the aesthetic view and the higher market value of dwellings were also important aspects. The difference between the satisfaction of residents became significant in the renovated and non-renovated houses but it has not yet affected the residential mobility of dwellers.

Up to now, we have little information about the renovation of large housing estates in Budapest, let alone its physical results and social consequences. This was the motivation of our research project, which aimed to scrutinize this aspect of urban rehabilitation. As the first step, we carried out a survey on large housing estates in Budapest with a focus on their present conditions and possible renovation efforts that have been carried out.

[2] It must be noted that housing estates do not represent the bottom of the Budapest housing market. There are several less prestigious segments of it, namely the most deteriorated 80–100 years old tenement blocks in certain inner-city quarters, the old working class estates in the transition zone and some peripheral neighbourhoods with family houses of low comfort level.

Survey method and classification

The survey of 142 housing estates in Budapest[3] was carried out in summer 2012. The students participating in the survey collected information on the field (and after on the internet) on the main features of the buildings (the number of gates, dwellings, storeys) and the characteristics of recognisable renovations. Renovations of buildings at housing estates were divided into four categories: renovated, painted, other improvements and under renovation. Renovated meant the insulation of the walls of the house that is the most significant investment of all, because it increases the value of the dwellings and decreases the costs of housing for the inhabitants. The painting of a house has only an aesthetic effect. It is typical in the case of older, not pre-fabricated (panel) buildings. Being newly painted might suggest a high level of maintenance, but it does not really change the value of the building. The other improvements included either some kind of partial insulation or the change of windows without an insulation of the walls. There were buildings that were under renovation during the survey. Most of them seemed to be insulated, but we could not estimate it.

The typology of renovation is widely used in the analysis of our survey results. Whenever we examine the composition of renovation types, the percentage values are always calculated on the basis of the number of dwellings in buildings which have gone through certain kinds of renovation.

Dimensions of renovation at housing estates

More than one fifth of the dwelling stock of housing estates has been renovated during the last decade. This is not a low rate, but it is far from the necessary level. The shares of dwellings renovated in one way or another are as follows:

- 13.4% in completely renovated buildings,
- 1.2% in buildings under renovation,
- 3.1% in buildings that were only re-painted,
- 5.1% in (mostly panel) buildings where other improvements also occurred.

[3] The list of housing estates involved in the survey was based on a paper of BVTV (1987) and a study of Iván, L. (1996), but we had to complete it with some smaller housing estates ignored by those authors. As a rule, every estate appears as a single item in the database even if it was built during several phases. The only exceptions are Csepel city centre and Káposztásmegyer, because the two parts of those housing estates were not constructed at the same time and they are also spatially separated. The number of dwellings in the housing estates included in our database is 295,000. That figure is not far from the one mentioned in the cited papers.

Since the rehabilitation of housing estates began after the last population and housing census in 2001, we have only indirect information about its social consequences.[4] Therefore, we have to rely on research materials when trying to explore the connection between renovation and social status. Csizmady, A. (2008) ranked the 30 largest housing estates of Budapest by their social milieu and the housing prices and she classified them into three (low, middle and high status) categories. Using that ranking,[5] it can be assessed whether the occurrence and the intensity of renovation are different among housing estates dominated by distinct social groups *(Table 1)*. The share of dwellings located in buildings completely renovated, painted or under renovation seems to be almost independent from the prestige of housing estates; only the share of 'other improvements' is much higher in the low-status housing estates as compared to the more prestigious ones.

Table 1. Intensity of renovation by the social-status of housing estates, in %

Social status	Proportion of dwellings in renovated buildings	Renovated	Painted	Under renovation	Other improvements
Low	27.6	15.2	0.4	3.0	9.1
Medium	19.0	15.9	0.7	0.6	1.8
High	20.1	14.5	0.0	0.5	5.1

However, within the status groups there are big differences. In the high-status group we can find only one housing estate (Őrmező on the Buda side) where more than 80% of the dwellings were renovated. At the same time the most popular "elite" housing estates are hardly renovated. In the low-status group we can find housing estates with poor reputation but with certain renovations because the inhabitants who cannot otherwise finance the full-rehabilitation usually try to renovate their houses in other, cheaper ways (e.g. through insulation of some parts of the buildings).

In the 1990s several research projects (Iván, L. 1996; Csizmady, A. 1998; Egedy, T. 2000) focusing on housing estates identified some common factors which are related to the status of housing estates. Those are the size, the age, the morphology of housing estates and the developer who financed the construction. Taking into consideration the aforementioned factors the large housing estates with panel buildings built in the 1970s by the local councils have the lowest status while the smaller, old, non-panel estates and the panel estates built in the 1980s mostly by private investors (condominiums, ministries,

[4] In fact, the year of the very last census was 2011 but its detailed data have not become available by the time of our survey.

[5] From those 30 housing estates, 7 are now changing their categories, thus, we have decided to restrict our analysis to the remaining 23.

institution) are considered to be in better position. Since it is most likely that the very same features of the housing estates also have an influence on the rehabilitation activities, it is worth taking a closer look at our data in this context.

The impact of the size of housing estates is neither unequivocal nor significant *(Table 2)*. The share of complete renovation at large estates is a bit higher than in the smaller ones, but the difference is rather narrow. By contrast, there are substantial differences within the different size-groups.[6] From among the thirteen large housing estates (above 5,000 dwellings), five have a high share of renovation (above 25%) whereas four are hardly renovated (below 5%).

Table 2. Intensity of renovation by the size of housing estates, in %

Size of housing estates (number of dwellings)	Proportion of dwellings in renovated buildings	Renovated	Painted	Under renovation	Other improvements
below 500	25.7	13.2	8.5	0.9	3.0
500–1,499	21.7	11.4	5.9	0.0	4.3
1,500–4,999	20.7	11.9	3.4	0.6	4.7
5,000–9,999	24.1	14.5	3.8	0.5	5.3
above 10,000	24.5	15.4	0.0	3.0	6.1

The age of housing estates is also an important factor. First, housing factories started to produce pre-fabricated panels in 1967, so estates built prior that were made of traditional building materials. (It is especially important because the governmental fund for rehabilitation is available only for the pre-fabricated buildings). Secondly, the difference between the time of construction of the oldest and the youngest panel houses is also more than 20 years.

Although the technology was largely the same during the whole period, its application developed and became more sophisticated over time. The technical problems were typical for estates built in the 1970s, then in the 1980s the quality of buildings improved. In fact, the renovation rate is lower on housing estates built during the 1980s than on those that were constructed between 1965 and 1979. It seems that the first generation of panel buildings needed renovation the most.

[6] The finding is somewhat surprising in the light of the former research results. As Csizmady, A. (2003) pointed out, the size of housing estates correlated to their status: most of the large housing estates have population with lower status, a few ones have middle class profile. Lower status people are obviously less able to cover the costs of renovations, thus one can expect a relatively low renovation rate in larger housing estates. The unexpectedly high rate of renovation on such estates is probably a consequence of the ongoing state (and EU) supported rehabilitation programmes.

There is also a significant difference between the first and the second half of the 1980s. In the first part of the decade mainly large, "traditional" housing estates were built, while during the last phase smaller-scale elite housing estates became dominant. In the latter group there is less need for complete renovation and the weight of 'other improvements' is greater (it means usually the change of windows). It is not surprising that re-painting is outstandingly very frequent way of renovation in the old "pre-panel" (mainly brick) housing estates.

As emphasized in the literature the location of the estates is one of their most important characteristics. It is not only connected with their status (Csizmady, A. 2008), but also with the actual level of their renovation. The housing estates which are embedded in villa quarters are tend to be more renovated *(Table 3)*. They are not elite housing estates, but typically small ones (below 500 dwellings) and most of them do not differ from their surroundings. Many of them were built before 1970, but even those constructed during the panel period were of better quality than the large housing estates.

Table 3. Intensity of renovation by the location of housing estates, in %

Location of housing estate	Proportion of dwellings in renovated buildings	Reno-vated	Painted	Under reno-vation	Other impro-vements
Villa quarters	17.1	14.0	2.9	0.2	0.0
Inner quarters	9.2	2.3	1.5	0.5	4.8
Transition zone	31.5	17.7	5.7	0.6	7.4
Outer districts	17.5	11.0	1.2	1.8	3.6

The prestige of housing estates in the inner quarters or adjacent to them are varies, there are both high-status and low-status housing estates among them. Interestingly enough, the renovation of centrally located housing estates proceeds in opposite way compared to the renovation of old tenement houses. In the case of latter ones, the higher status quarters were renovated first (Kovács, Z. *et al.* 2013), whereas in the case of housing estates of inner quarters the status does not correlate with the level of renovation.

The differences within a housing estate are not as sharp as in the inner city quarters where the heterogeneity of buildings is much stronger. In spite of the homogeneous dwelling stock of housing estates, the differences created by the status of the first dwellers remained untouched in the 1990s (Csizmady, A. 1998).

Due to the lack of data about processes of 2000s, we have only some impressions about the modification of social composition of inhabitants at the level of buildings. On the basis of our knowledge related to the housing market boom in the late 1990s (Farkas, J. *et al.* 2004), we assume that population change accelerated on the housing estates. According to real estate analysts

two characteristics of the housing estate buildings may have an influence on their position at the housing market. First, the demand towards panel dwellings depends on the size of the buildings. Low-rise buildings (below five storeys) and houses with a relatively low number of dwellings are more appreciated than the high-rise ones, where generally lower-status people reside, often late with the payment of service charges.

The other factor influencing the market position is whether the building is renovated or not. The dwellings in renovated houses can be sold at higher prices and within shorter time, however, the increase of prices does not (or rarely) cover the costs of the renovation.[7] Our data indicate that the rate of renovation is higher in bigger buildings[8] than in the smaller ones. It also suggests that renovation can be a strategy of flat owners in larger houses to improve (or at least to stabilise) their positions on the housing market. In fact, it is generally the only possible strategy since panel buildings are mono-functional (i.e. residential) unlike the old inner city tenement blocks which can be converted into offices. Within the group of housing estates, renovation can lessen the differences between the smaller (non-renovated) and the renovated larger houses. If rehabilitation programmes were cancelled for a longer period, a new cleavage would emerge between the renovated and non-renovated larger buildings.

Conclusions

The rehabilitation of housing estates in Budapest started about 10 years after the construction of the last panel buildings. Since then only a small part of the blocks has been renovated, nevertheless, some differences among the housing estates and their perception have already emerged. The rate of renovation is relatively high in some low status large housing estates built in the 1970's. The renovation is likely to be an instrument that could be used to prevent the declining status and position of such housing estates on the housing market. Achieving that aim could be further enhanced by the renovation efforts of residents.

Completely renovated housing estates are hardly found in Budapest, while there is a great number of them without any renovation. If the government supported rehabilitation support was cancelled for a longer period, the large non-renovated housing estates would be in a desperate situation, because they are not be able to compete with either the smaller estates with good location or the renovated larger ones on the housing market.

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[7] ingatlanhirek.hu/hir/Atlagban-35-szazalekkal-olcsobbak-a-panelek/41740/ downloaded at 01.10.2012., ingatlanmagazin.com/ingatlanpiac/mennyire-konnyu-ma-eladni-egy-panellakast-es-miert-erdemes-vasarolni/ downloaded at 01.10.2012.

[8] The categories "buildings above 200 dwellings" consist of almost exclusively high-rise (10–15 storey) buildings.

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Residential environmental conditions on housing estates in Yerevan

Tigran SARGSYAN[1]

Abstract

Most housing estates of Yerevan, the capital of Armenia were constructed during communism, mostly between the 1960s and 1980s. The residential environment was shaped according to the typical approaches and styles of the Soviet urban construction: houses of the same type can be found almost in all 15 capitals of the former USSR. The construction of the so-called "elite" housing stock appeared in different parts of Yerevan in the 2000s. However, due to higher prices, those houses are not widely available. Therefore, housing estates of the communist period still remain the only possible housing for the majority of the population in Yerevan. Nowadays, the residential environment on those housing estates has to face different kinds of problems and challenges: communal, infrastructural, environmental, sanitary, esthetical, etc. In the present paper the author makes an attempt to provide an overview on the residential environment of large housing estates in Yerevan based on survey data and field work.

Keywords: housing estates, residential environment, housing stock, communal services, Yerevan

Introduction

Yerevan, the capital and the largest city of Armenia is located at the north-eastern edge of Ararat Valley, on the banks of Hrazdan River which originates from Lake Sevan. The territory of Yerevan is 227 sq km (0.8% of the territory of Armenia). It is noteworthy to mention that Yerevan is situated at the altitude of 865–1,400 meters above sea level. The population figure of the city as of January 1, 2012 is 1.127 million which equals to 34.4% of the total population and about 53.8% of the urban population of Armenia (Yerevan, RA capital in figures, 2012).

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In order to analyse the current state of residential environment in Yerevan, a field survey was carried out in the framework of IVF's small grant project ("Residential environment in the housing estates in V4 countries and Armenia"). Out of the 12 administrative districts (AD) of Yerevan, the following ones were surveyed: Qanaqer-Zeytun (the main research site), Davtashen and Nor Nork. In this paper the most centrally located Quanaqer-Zeytun is analysed in details; because its peculiarities and problems well reflect the overall state and the challenges of housing estates of Yerevan.

The history and current conditions of housing stock in Yerevan

The geographical position and the relief have shaped the main directions of housing development and the urban structure of Yerevan. The geographical, architectural and functional "core" of the Armenian capital is the city centre which is located at lower altitudes (at about 1000 m above sea level). This was the place where the urban development of the city started. During the period of 1960–1980s a range of new housing estates were constructed on hillsides (1,000–1,400m) surrounding the centre *(Photo 1)*.

During the communist period Armenia and particularly Yerevan had well-organised housing stock and continuous housing production; housing management and maintenance were arranged centrally. The housing sector was entirely controlled and supported by the state (Janoyan, T. *et al.* 2002).[2]

In the late 1980s two events contributed to the worsening of housing situation in Armenia: a conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh Region with Azerbaijan[3] which triggered the influx of about 350,000 refugees from 1988 to 1992; and in 1988 a devastating earthquake in the northern regions of Armenia (including Yerevan) which rendered about 17% of Armenia's housing stock uninhabitable (Anilian, S. and Vanian, I. 1997). Besides, Armenia had to cope with at least three more challenges: firstly, the regional destabilisation caused by local fighting in neighbouring countries (i.e. Georgia and Azerbaijan), secondly, the effect of Turkish and Azerbaijani economic blockade, and finally the exceptionally harsh winters of 1992–1994.

[2] The housing rights of Soviet Armenian citizens were stipulated by the Constitution of 1977 and by the Housing Code adopted on 3rd December 1982.

[3] Nagorno-Karabakh, a historic part of the territory of Armenia settled by ethnic Armenians was joined to Azerbaijani SSR under the decision of Soviet government in the early 1920s. At the end of 1980s the inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabakh expressed their wish to join the Armenian SSR in peaceful and democratic way according to the international law. The massacre of the Armenian population in Baku, Sumgait and in other parts of Azerbaijan in 1988–1990 was the response of the Soviet Azerbaijani rulers.



Photo 1. View of the densely built-up area of Arabkir district (Photo by Sargsyan, T.)

Although the sale of state owned dwellings to citizens (i.e. privatization) started as early as 1989, during the period of 1989–1993 only 40,000 out of 500,000 state apartments (8%) were transferred to the private sector (Janoyan, T. *et al.* 2002) . To increase the pace of privatisation, in September 1993 the "Law of the Republic of Armenia about Privatization of State and Public Housing" was accepted. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Urban Development, 381,000 households claimed that their dwellings should be privatized (Tatian, P. 2002). The privatisation of the housing stock lasted until the end of 1998. As a result, about 96% of the housing stock became privately owned by 2000 (United Nations, 2004).

The current conditions of the housing stock of Armenia and Yerevan is rapidly deteriorating due to three main reasons:

– Armenia is located on an unstable tectonic plateau which requires (and would had required) special architectural and engineering measures and solutions;

– No major repair and maintenance projects to prevent the gradual deterioration of existing multi-apartment buildings have been financed and carried out since the early 1990s;

– Even basic maintenance was extremely limited in the last two decades, as neither the private apartment owners nor the municipalities in charge of the buildings have had the necessary financial resources (Gevorgyan, K. and Hirche, S. 2006) *(Photo 2)*.



Photo 2. Home-made house repair in Qanaqer-Zeytun district (Photo by Erőss, Á.)



Photo 3. Newly built housing blocks in the heart of Yerevan (Photo by Erőss, Á.)

The intensive reconstruction of Yerevan, particularly of the downtown, was launched in 1998. That resulted in the increase of density of construction and at the same time in the reduction of green areas. The new Master Plan of Yerevan was adopted in 2005. It envisaged 1.2 million inhabitants within the existing administrative borders of the city (Danielyan, K. *et al.* 2007).

During 2004–2008 Armenia also faced a housing market boom when real estate prices rose by 2.5 times over the 4-year period. This was very high even compared to the considerable increase in other post-Soviet countries (Stepanyan, V. *et al.* 2010). It should be noted that new housing construction is primarily a private activity nowadays *(Photo 3)*. In 2003 the state budget accounted for only 0.4% of completed housing. The international donors and private Armenian households together accounted for 47% (Struyk, R. *et al.* 2004).

The total area of housing stock of Yerevan (as of January 1, 2012) is about 23 million m^2 (25.9% of the total housing stock of Armenia) The number of multiple dwellings is 4,781 (about 23% of all multiple dwellings of Armenia).

Brief overview of the field survey and data analysis

The survey was designed to shed light on the most important and urgent problems and peculiarities regarding the environmental conditions and life circumstances on large housing estates in Yerevan. The questionnaire used in the survey consisted of 5 blocks: A, B, C, D and E.

Blocks A ("General information", e.g. total surface of the apartment and the number of floors of the house) and E ("Demographic and family data") have descriptive and informative character. Block D ("Communal services") focuses on the problems of waste management, the frequency of electricity cuttings, gas and water supply, the existence of sewage. Blocks B ("House and location") and C ("The apartment") inquire about specificities in relation with the environment of the blocks of flats.

After the first data evaluation, five neuralgic points can be determined at large housing estates in Yerevan:

– the lack and/or the insecurity of entrances and entrance doors,
– problems with elevators (security and aesthetics),
– very limited distance/narrow spaces between houses, the limited number and the highly changeable quality of playgrounds and greenery problems,
– (in some cases) low access to transport, public/social services (e.g. hospital, schools).

Living conditions in Qanaqer-Zeytun district based on the survey results

Qanaqer-Zeytun is located in the north-eastern part of Yerevan, on a hillside, connecting the city to Yeghvard and Kotayk volcanic plateaus in the north. It is surrounded entirely by the territories of Arabkir, Avan, Kentron (Central) and Nor Nork districts of Yerevan with no external borders *(Figure 1)*. Its ter-

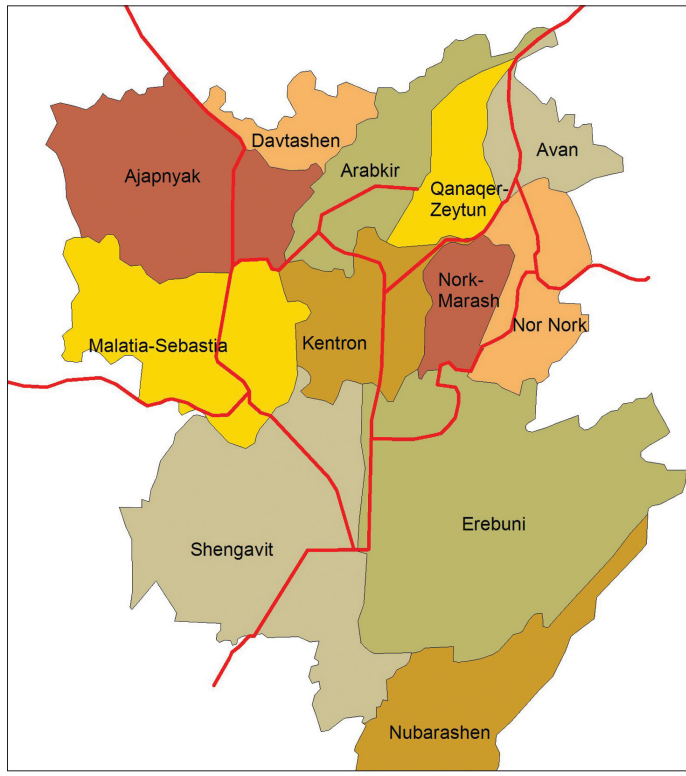


Fig. 1. Qanaqer-Zeytun in the system of administrative districts of Yerevan. *Source:* www.yerevan.am

ritory is 7.75 sq km (3.4% of the total area of Yerevan, 10th place among the 12 ADs) with a population of 79,600 (7.1% of the total population of Yerevan, 8th place). It means that Qanaqer-Zeytun ranks second in the population density of Yerevan (10,271 people per sq km) (Yerevan RA capital in figures, 2012).

There are 353 multi-storey buildings in Qanaqer-Zeytun with 16,081 apartments and 41,180 inhabitants altogether (51.7% of the total population of the district). The average market price is about 266,000 AMD per sq km (about 532 EUR) which is the third highest in Yerevan following Kentron (882 EUR) and Arabkir (688 EUR) (Yerevan RA capital in figures, 2012).

Qanaqer-Zeytun has no administrative subdivisions of lower levels (like all ADs of Yerevan). In spite of the lack of administrative legal status, two main historical neighbourhoods can be clearly distinguished. One of them is Quanaquer – a former village of historical significance and importance – which joined Yerevan after 1950s. It occupies the northern and the north-eastern parts of Qanaqer-Zeytun district where people live mostly in private houses.

Nevertheless, there are also some multi-storey buildings and blocks of flats in the central part of Qanaqer and on Tbilisi highway ("north-eastern gate"). The other neighbourhood is called Nor Zeytun ("New Zeytun" in Armenian) which occupies the southern part of Qanaqer-Zeytun. It was founded during the period of 1940–50s after the repatriation of the Armenians from Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Iran and other states that was organised by the governments of the USSR and the Armenian SSR. The further development of Nor Zeytun as a housing estate continued in the 1960–1980s.

During the Soviet years the blocks of student dormitories were constructed here. After the Nagorno-Karabakh military conflict and the collapse of the USSR, many of them were settled by refugees. A number of important and busy transport routes of Yerevan run across the area, therefore numerous industrial enterprises, universities, medical and trade centres of citywide importance are situated in Qanaqer-Zeytun.

All in all, 811 respondents participated in the survey from this district, the majority of whom was living either in multi-generational families (parents, children, grandparents) or in families with 2 or more children, which reflects the dominant Armenian family model and traditions.

One of the most important and urgent problems in Qanaqer-Zeytun is the state and the safety of the entrance doors. As it is displayed in *Table 1*, only 13% of the entrance doors have security systems and close safely, more than 60% of them close just slightly.

Table 1. Composition of building stock according to construction years, materials and the state of entrance doors

Period of construction	Nr.	%	Building material	Nr.	%	State of entrance doors	Nr.	%
Before 1960	10	7.2	Panel	59	44.1	No entrance door	14	10.7
1960–1980	102	76.6	Stone	74	55.3	Does not close	21	16.0
After 1980	22	16.2	Monolith	1	0.6	Closes slightly	81	60.3
Total	*134*	*100.0*	*Total*	*134*	*100.0*	Security system	18	13.0
						Total	*134*	*100.0*

Environment of housing estates

Dense construction is a very common problem in Yerevan and especially in Qanaqer-Zeytun district. It has different aspects: aesthetic, seismic and even psychological. In some cases houses are very close to each other (a couple of meters) *(Photo 4)*. About 64% of the surveyed households considered the distance between the houses "satisfactory", however, roughly 25% of them were not satis-



Photo 4. Reduced distance between housing blocks means not only aesthetic but psychological problems as well. (Photo by Erőss, Á.)

fied in this respect. As the seismic situation in Armenia is not stable, the dense construction of big blocks of flats is undesirable because of safety reasons.

Special attention was paid to the quality of playgrounds and green zones as important factors of comfortable and healthy residential environment. In this context the dry and hot climatic conditions of Yerevan should be taken into account as well. Although 76% of the respondents reported about an existing playground in the vicinity, it should be clearly defined what they mean under "playground" and "green zones". Generally speaking, a playground is a garage-free little corner with minimum facilities (or without them) while green zones include only a couple of trees.

Security is a crucial problem here as well: it is common that children play among cars, because courts and playgrounds usually lack fences or gates. It should be noted that Yerevan municipality has done a lot for the improvement of courts during the last years. There are particularly nice examples for green, safe and comfortable courts belonging to houses in Qanaqer-Zeytun *(Photo 5)*. However, the lack of safe courts and playgrounds is still a common problem in Yerevan and there is much to be done regarding the environmental, esthetical and safety aspects.

Regarding the access to transport and social services, Qanaqer-Zeytun is well-equipped especially that main streets and highways as well as the bus stops are within a short distance – it takes less than 5 minutes for 80–86% of inhabitants



Photo 5. One of the few positive examples: newly renovated playground in Nor Nork. (Photo by Erőss, Á.)

to reach them. As there is no subway station here, it takes more than 20 minutes for 87% of families to reach the closest station. The schools and the kindergartens are located in a distance of 0–15 minutes walk for 81% of households. As more than 25% of the 811 inhabitants belong to the age group of 0–19 years, this factor has a special importance. Due to its central location there is also relatively good access to pharmacies, markets, shops and supermarkets: more than 90% of the respondents can reach those facilities in less than five minutes.

Finally, the survey also focused on the satisfaction of people with their districts, especially with the blocks of flats they live in. 59% of respondents claimed that they did not want to change their apartments. About 40% of families intend to change their apartments and have the preference "Same house, other apartment" and "Same district, other house". It shows that Qanaqer-Zeytun with its 30–40 year old buildings will probably remain a comfortable and suitable place for the majority of local population. The main motivation of those who intended to move is to have a larger flat or to live separately from their parents/grandparents.

Conclusions

The survey of housing estates that were constructed during the 1970s–1980s showed that the typical architectural style of the Soviet housing construction prevail everywhere. Thus, households living on these estates are facing almost the same problems and difficulties in every district. The revealed problems can be

merged into two groups: internal problems (at the level of households or apartments), and external problems (at the level of buildings, courts, streets or ADs).

One of the main internal problems is the low per capita housing surface. Not taking into account the single households (up to 68–70 sq m per person), the average size per inhabitant varies from 16 sq m to 21 sq m. The family traditions of Armenians ("living all together") play a significant role in many cases. The majority of apartments have been repaired only symbolically. In some cases structural changes have been done (merged rooms and corridors, closed or added balconies, removed walls). The problem of seismic security was mostly not taken into consideration in most cases.

External problems refer to communal services, the state of courts, elevators and entrances, the access to transport and public services. The research results are much more optimistic than our expectations were prior to the survey. The households are particularly satisfied with the communal services and with the access to transport and public services. However, the lack of green areas and playgrounds and the problems of density, the quality of entrance doors and elevators' safety indicate an urgent need of intervention.

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