

CONTENTS

<i>Erzsébet Szalai</i> : Refeudalization	3
<i>Luc Benda – Menno Fenger – Ferry Koster – Romke Van der Veen</i> : Social investment risks? An explorative analysis of new social risks in the social investment state	25

FORUM

<i>Csongor Hajdu</i> : Aspiring to a better life, or surviving on the minimum? Explaining the discrepancies between Hungarians' declared and real financial situation	43
<i>Kitti Kutrovácz</i> : Conducting qualitative interviews with children – methodological and ethical challenges	65
<i>Babatunde Joshua Omotosho</i> : Career advancement among workers in public and private organisations in Southwest Nigeria	89

REVIEW

<i>Ildikó Hrubos</i> : (Un)Making Europe: Report on the 13 th Conference of the European Sociological Association	113
<i>Gábor Király</i> : 8 th European System Dynamics Workshop	119
<i>Vera Horváth</i> : Risk society in housing	123
<i>Fanni Dés</i> : Street of Pleasure – Hungarian Sex for Euro	131
<i>Anikó Havelda</i> : Gypsy economy	135
<i>Juhi Pandya</i> : The Shape of the New: Four Big Ideas and How They Made the Modern World, by Scott L. Montgomery and Daniel Chirot	141

EDITORIAL

Contents of other journals from the region	145
--	-----

REFEUDALIZATION

Erzsébet Szalai¹

ABSTRACT *After clarifying the conceptual frame, the author describes and interprets the refeudalizing tendencies of global capitalism in the first part of the study. The subject of the second part is an exploration of the refeudalizing processes in Hungary from the period of “existing socialism” to the present day. She concludes about the global system that the refeudalizing processes are immanent features of new capitalism, which come about as the wildings of unbridled capitalism on the one hand, and in defense against them, on the other.*

Concerning the Hungarian processes, the author’s main conclusion is that the tendencies of refeudalization strengthen when – in addition to internal causes – the semi-peripheral “system” exposed to global processes faces a strong external challenge. This challenge involves a radical change in the geopolitical, geo-economic equilibrium, entailing more marked feudalistic, authoritarian endeavors.

KEYWORDS: *refeudalization, capitalism, socialism, feudalism, power structure, world system*

¹ DSc, retired professor of sociology, HAS; e-mail: szalai17@gmail.com. The author is indebted to Ágoston Fáber, Ákos Huszár, Péter Somlai, Ágnes Utasi and two anonymous reviewers for their valuable critical remarks upon the first version of the present paper.

A Wikipedia article claims that refeudalization is a notion that was used to describe seventeenth-century social trends. The Italian Marxist historians Ruggiero Romano and Rosario Villari were the first to apply it in their effort to explore the social relations underlying the Neapolitan Revolt of 1647. The concept was influenced by Gramsci's ideas, the historical debates of the 1960s centering on Eric Hobsbawm's thesis of the general crisis of the seventeenth century, and by Italian domestic politics of the 1960s.

Villari specifically used the term to characterize the process that climaxed in the revolt of the peasantry and the lower middle classes against the feudal aristocracy and international financiers in Naples in 1647. In Ferdinand Braudel's words, Naples displayed the "clearest case" of refeudalization: the kingdom sold feudal titles for money, which in the long run increased the tax burdens of the rural poor, for the nobility were exempt from paying taxes.

In general, the process of refeudalization is blamed for the delay and failure of Italy's transition to capitalism.

Last, but not least, the concept of refeudalization is also used – first of all by sociologists – to describe contemporary global economic and cultural processes. In Habermas' view, the structure of the public sphere has been refeudalized and the feudal "court" revived due to the advent of the most recent manifestation of capitalism. The Swiss sociologist Jean Ziegler used the phrase "Refeudalisierung der Gesellschaft" in his explanation of the driving forces of neoliberalist globalization. In English literature, the phenomenon is mainly termed New Feudalization, meaning the undermining of the basic values of the Enlightenment (liberty, equality, fraternity) by the forces of global capitalism. The term is also used in interpretations of the radical privatization of public goods and services.

In the longer, first part of this paper I adopt the latter course, providing a specific interpretation of the refeudalizing tendencies of global capitalism. This is preceded by a chapter that clarifies the basic concepts as I understand them. In the third part of the study I explore the new feudalistic tendencies in Hungary from socialist times to the present day.

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAME

I start out from the work of Marx, Weber and Elias for the definitions of the concepts I use in my analysis, but the latter are not directly derived from them.

First of all, the basic relations of feudalism, capitalism and existing socialism must be differentiated from various phenomena at the ideotypical level: these

are the dominant social relations; what the main objectives of social, specifically productive activity are; which group constitutes the dominant fraction of the structure of power; and, not least, what mechanism is instrumental in integrating society (and according to what logic), and what the core of the ruling ideology is.

It is an important part of the process of conceptualization from another but related viewpoint that in describing given social formations and their mobility (that is, stepping beyond ideotypical considerations) we should distinguish feudalism from societies that display feudalistic characteristics, capitalism from societies that have capitalistic traits, and socialism from social formations with some socialistic features.

When it comes to “existing socialism”, I confine myself to a description of the Hungarian version from around the mid-1960s. In this chapter, only the concepts of socialism of an ideal or ideotypical nature, free from the totality of realistic elements – or rather, as they existed in communist ideologies – are described.

--

In feudalism the *dominant relation* is between lord and servant, in capitalism between capital and laborer, in socialism between the controller and the controlled.

The dominant *goal* of social, specifically productive activity is to satisfy authority and the power privilege in feudalism, the need for profit in capitalism, and social needs – not fully but in proportion to the work that is done – in socialism.

The dominant group *exercising power* in society is the ruling estate in feudalism. By estate I mean a group cemented by a common ethos, value system, behavioral pattern and lifestyle, as well as a network of formal and informal connections and bargains. At the head of the ruling estate is the king with traditional power, or a leader with charismatic power.

In capitalism the dominant fraction of power is constituted by the economic elite or bourgeoisie. In socialism, the power is in the hands of the people; first of all, the working class.

The *dominant logic* of feudalism is utility measured by authority and power privileges, and society is fundamentally *integrated* by their exchange and the underlying system of bargains. At the center of the dominant ideology is adaptation to ‘superior’ powers such as church, king, overlord, vassals, etc.

The dominant logic of capitalism is efficiency translated into monetary and profit-related terms; consequently, the main integrating force of society is the market and the web of market bargains. The dominant element of the ruling ideology of the former is free competition based on individual egoism, for, as Adam Smith (1922) concluded, it is the only social mechanism that promotes the common good.

The ruling logic of socialism is the principle of utility measured by the satisfaction of needs in proportion to work that is rendered; the main integrating mechanism of society is a system of planned indicators and planned bargains. The core of the ruling ideology is the ideal of collectivism superseding individual egoism.

THE REFEUDALIZATION OF GLOBAL NEW CAPITALISM

As I have explicated in detail in my book *New Capitalism – and What Can Replace It...* it is an inherent trait of the new capitalism that unfolded in the wake of the neoliberalist wave starting in the 1970s that increasingly concentrated and internationalized capital is deconstructing the political, economic, ecological and socio-psychological constraints that earlier ensured its comparatively smooth realization. By subjecting the political elites, including the governments of the nation states under its domination, more inexorably than ever, it reduces to mere forms – or ignores the essential elements of – political rotation and political democracy; also, it makes the implementation of national economic policies, and the regulation of international cooperation between countries and regions, impossible.

Concentrating and globalizing capital is roaming the world practically tax-free: this is why there has been a decrease in the resources available for the reproduction of human capital (health, education, culture, etc.) except for a very narrow segment of the workforce that works with peak technologies – although the leading ideologues of the system speak of a knowledge-based society. Yielding to the pressure of capital, trade unions crumble and hence there is no effective obstacle to wage depression, particularly of less qualified labor. In addition to Marx's basic thesis, in new capitalism in general – particularly at its periphery and semi-periphery – the incomes of a broad strata of labor do not cover the costs of the reproduction of their manpower (in detail, see Artner 2001, 2014), although life expectancy – taking its mean – is rising. A fatal consequence of all this for the bourgeoisie, too, is the degradation of human capital and the lack of a workforce with adequate expertise and performance – even in the core countries. Although the rise in life expectancy may be referred to here (although in the USA this decreased in 2014 after rising for the previous 20 years [MTI 08.12.2017]), together with measurable growth in average schooling (with the reservation that real knowledge levels and cooperative behavior do not necessarily increase with more time spent in education, as international research

experience has found; and what is more, in large social groups the correlation is the reverse [Csapó, 2008]), the incidence of diverse psychic and psychosomatic illnesses is increasing in relation to the stress caused by the “flexibilization” of the labor force – and this in turn reduces the profit producing capacity of such labor (see in detail Szalai 2012). Since capital replaces a far larger part of labor with machines than it creates new jobs, the number of redundant, ‘unnecessary’ people is growing throughout the world, whose mental and physical decline will gradually reach a level at which they can no longer be employed.

The expansion of global capital is irreversibly exploiting our natural resources and destabilizing our climate. This jeopardizes not only the basic relations of capitalism, but also the basic conditions of nature and human life on Earth.

The logic of capital – utility measured by profit – has become predominant in nearly all spheres of social life – this fact is expressed by Bourdieu’s (1983) theory of capital, meaning that in the new phase of capitalism not only physical and monetary goods but also social-political and cultural goods function as capital. In connection with this, the immoderate pursuit of individual freedom is reducing real communities to naught, as a result of which individuals become incapable of constructing their identity – identities – for lack of reference points: this risks their freedom. Although in the short run individuals deprived of their identities are most easily persuaded to consume, the weakening of individual freedom threatens the creativity of the work force and may considerably undermine the conditions of the profitability of capital or capitals in the long run.

--

Let us take a closer look at new capitalism using the definitions of different features of social-economic formations.

The dominant relation in new capitalism is capital-versus-labor relations, but the tendency for this to become interlaced and partly veiled by lord-servant relations is increasing: the relation of capital versus labor is not articulated. Firstly, because the former working class who are in opposition to capital have become disrupted for various reasons, and are constantly fragmenting. This is occurring in part due to the replacement of large factories by the net-like organization of capital in core countries in which formerly comparatively stable positions and collectives of labor cease to exist: individual workers must remain alert to learning when and for how long their work is needed. Labor market positions are temporary, as manifest in the rapid spread of part-time and telework jobs. Added to this is the increase in unemployment; the expansion of the reserve troops of the jobless across the world owing to an increase in the organic composition of capital (“machine replaces man”). These two factors place individual employees completely at the mercy of individual employers

(where these are still visible – I will return to this later) and result in paternalist relationships between the two agents: the worker is grateful to the employer, and conversely, the employer expects loyalty from the employee (Szalai 2011, 2012). This erodes worker solidarity, and even turns employees on each other: the earlier class consciousness dissolves, class resistance disappears.

The free contract between capitalist and worker – perhaps the most characteristic feature of capitalism – becomes mostly illusory: a worker becomes employed as the outcome of numerous constraints, instead of through their own free will and choice.

Apart from workers, capitalists also become increasingly invisible: proprietary structures are transforming so that classic private property accounts for at most 20-30 % of all wealth while corporate ownership is increasing rapidly, particularly the networks of large institutional investments. The actual proprietary relations behind these networks may only be explored through the very complex procedures of the courts of registration (Pitti 2006).

Another important factor in the invisibility of the capitalist is that in new capitalism the bourgeoisie almost totally expropriate nation-states, which also means that they tap working income from time to time through the collaboration of national governments, instead of doing so directly. This is a characteristic feature of the former: one of the most essential elements of neoliberal economic policy specific to new capitalism is restrictive policy that narrows down the domestic markets of nation states, the most direct aim and at the same time instrument of which is the modification of wages and welfare expenditure. This situation was particularly conspicuous – together with the level of interest of the global and local bourgeoisie – in the management of the 2008 crisis: after the outbreak of the crisis, national governments sacrificed considerable resources to rescue the bourgeoisie shaken by the crisis, and in the next phase – that is, in the present days – they are making efforts to stop up the gaps thus created by tapping into welfare budgets, first of all in Europe, while the “people” address their complaints to the “good kings” (the national governments), not to the bourgeoisie.

In sum: both workers and capitalists – and consequently, their relations – are disappearing from view; what is fairly visible in their place are lord-servant, king-subject relationships; that is, a feudal network of relations.

As for the goal of production, in new capitalism the main aim of capitalists is still the maximization of profit, but these capitalists lay claim to powerful authority and a privileged position for themselves: they deploy all their weapons – mobilization of the media, sponsorship, etc. – to make society believe that they and the institutions they represent are endowed with special abilities that qualify them to determine the social behavioral norms that should be adopted; to define what is the “common good”.

The dominant fraction of power in new capitalism is also the bourgeoisie, but the international economic and monetary superstructure displays traits typical of feudalism, since in addition to the global bourgeoisie it also includes the political and military elite of the United States and leaders of the great international monetary organizations and credit-rating agencies, as well as the global media, and among these agents there is a subtle and intricate network of formal and informal relations. This network of relations is regulated by the ethos, value system and behavioral norms of the actors interested in the protection of their global power. Thus, the international economic-monetary superstructure can be taken for a social estate displaying characteristics of class that is re-allocating international economic resources not only according to market but also power criteria. In the power positions of individual nation states one also finds strata with class characteristics, which are, however, most often subordinated to the superstructure on the basis of a peculiar alloy of market logic and feudalistic logic.

The core of the dominant logic of new capitalism is the principle of utility measured in terms of money and profit, but in its mobilization the principle of utility measured by authority and power privileges also plays a role. The latter, first of all through the cooperation of the global superstructure and the national superstructures, may modify or restrict the free flow of the factors of production (in detail, see Szalai 2006). This process was especially marked in the period following the global crisis of 2008 in which the global superstructure and the national superstructures regulated the flux of the factors of production and subordinated them to the criteria of crisis management, meaning their own power stability. This tendency was reinforced by the fact that during the process of crisis management the role of national superstructures increased to the detriment of the global superstructure, and since this resulted in the greater fragmentation of the global power space, it also became more restrictive. This process now finds itself bumping up against the interests and aspirations of the global bureaucracy – as mirrored in the earlier planned and secretly elaborated Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership by which the global bourgeoisie wanted to get the better of nation states that still protected local markets to some extent. This was to have been precipitated by a planned new rule under which large multinational firms could have sued nation states in an international court about their grievances. The plan has failed for the time being, but it is a question when the international bourgeoisie will gather enough momentum to advance its global aims.

The practice of the free flow of production factors, including manpower, is forcing its way in the form of a backlash from the peripheries to the core of global economy; in other words, we are faced with the escalation of the great

challenge of our time, the migration process. Fundamentally, the acceleration of the migration process represents the flow of a low-income labor force toward the central areas that can provide them with a higher income. Proof of this is that the majority of migrants (over 60%) leave their countries for economic, not political reasons (Klubrádió, 22 January 2016, EurópaZóna); that is, the threat of war only explains a smaller portion of migration away from the peripheries on a mass scale.

Among the cultural causes of accelerating migration, capitalization and refeudalization are equally present. Owing to rapid and specific technological development facilitated by capitalist conditions, its achievements in telecommunications appear in the poorest shacks of the peripheries – thus the inhabitants of the peripheries are informed, on a live basis, of the consumption customs of the populace of core regions, and among the repelling and attractive factors they are apparently more influenced by the latter, particularly the young, more mobile generations.

In the longer run, accelerating migration might indeed bring about the equalization of work incomes in the center and the periphery and semi-periphery; that is, the capitalist, market-governed character of capitalism might overcome new capitalism if the cultural tensions it has generated do not incur fierce resistance by the populations and governments of the center, although dramatic signs indicate that this is happening. It is quite possible that the center will respond with the firm closure of its borders and a halt on migration, followed by a new and sudden stop to the free flow of capital, resulting in rough inequalities that also take the form of political tensions. As the declared goals and first moves of Donald Trump, the newly elected president of the USA, prove, this process has already begun. That is, the tensions caused by the expansion and unfolding of capitalism is triggering off a new wave of refeudalization.

According to the ideology of capitalism, neo-capitalist societies are integrated by the market through the logic of capital, whereas in reality the market mechanism has disrupted and disintegrated societies since the turn towards neoliberalism, causing a degree of differentiation that jeopardizes the functioning of the system. The masses of redundant people who require only a solvent income, but whom nobody wants to exploit any longer are increasing, but the system is no longer able to cope with this situation according to its logic of functioning. As a result, the system is making way to a crisis of overproduction (Szalai 2006, 2012; Piketty 2015). That is what triggered off the global economic-monetary crisis of 2008, which is still being only superficially remedied (Farkas 2013, 2015).

--

To conclude: strong forces are acting in new capitalism to get rid of the strengthening traits of feudalism, but in part precisely because of the wildings of this struggle ever newer waves of refeudalization are prevailing, and the system is shackled. Yet it remains capitalist, with increasingly feudal characteristics.

FEUDAL TRAITS AND SEMI-FEUDALISM IN HUNGARY

Although feudalistic traits were present as early as during nineteenth-century Hungarian capitalism, I now only go back in history to the interwar period. I define the Horthy regime as a semi-feudal social-economic system mainly on the basis of the work of István Bibó, Ferenc Erdei, Sándor Márai, Iván Berend T., and György Ránki. The economic basis was comprised of the large feudal estates and the development of a weak industry solely propelled by a war-time economy, while the predominant relations were master-servant relations and nepotistic connections which determined the poor integrative mechanisms of society. Upon the dual (partly feudal and partly capitalist) social-economic structure described by Erdei, an essentially authoritarian political regime was built in which the multi-party system was only formally present.

With the transformation of the political-economic system in 1945-1948 that introduced socialism as it existed, the lord-servant relationship faded, but was not replaced by neutral relations between the controller and the controlled, but by a relationship between the ruling stratum of the party and the one-party state as the collective proprietors of the productive tools, and the exploited wage laborers. This was, however, not a perfect relation of super- and sub-ordination; we know chiefly from Eszter Bartha's work (2009) that the ruling regime paid its distinguished attention to all aspects of the living conditions of workers, first of all, industrial labor until the early 1980s (the latter individuals enjoying privileges during redistribution). (One reason why the center reversed the economic reform launched in 1968 was the fact that the partial liberalization of market relations detrimentally affected the income positions of workers of large-scale industries – Szalai 1981, 1989a). In Hungary during the advanced stage of existing socialism the workers functioned as a class, their position owing partly to the revolution of 1956 and partly to the ideological conviction and devotion of some of the members of the ruling regime in key positions. However, in contrast to the dominant ideology of the political system, the former cannot be regarded as the ruling class, for power was concentrated in the hands of the party and the one-party state, a conglomerate with certain class features, yet fundamentally feudal in character.

Thus, the dominant relations were simultaneously feudal (workers and industrial laborers predominantly received allowances through the grace of the leadership), capitalist (the working force rendered wage labor) and socialistic. Actually, this combination indeed created a third way, or middle-of-the-road approach (in detail, see Szalai 2014).

A similar logic is applicable to the survival of nepotistic relations. Although the system of rational redistribution (Konrád and Szelényi 1989) is capitalistic and socialistic at the same time – it is characterized by efficiency measured in money, profit and the satisfaction of social needs alike – both macro and micro relations are permeated by feudalistic favoritism; i.e., relations that primarily rely on and aim at enhancing authority and power; without this “lubrication,” the system would grind to a halt.

A strongly feudalistic feature of the system was the informal assertion of interests permeating every relation, and sly servility mixed with veiled scorn for authority. The essence of these two features is to create the illusion that individuals are adapting and obeying, while attempts are continually made to dupe the superior authority or authorities.

The holders of the peak power of the regime included the ruling stratum (top party leadership), the technocracy (expert officials of the one-party state) and managers of large factories in a monopoly position. The ruling order was thus feudalistic (the stratum is sustained by a network of formal and informal, predominantly individual bargains and was sanctioned by the common ethos and behavioral pattern), capitalistic (the performance of large companies and their leaders was evaluated, though within considerable limits, by the market), and socialistic (the ruling regime governs a latently pluralist system) (as Elemér Hankiss [1983] put it) from the mid-1960s onwards. This means that it considered the partial interests of society, first of all of industrial factory labor, in its decisions. The ruling regime of existing socialism was thus essentially a middle-of-the-road construction, feudalist traits being vital components.

It is neither the socialistic system of plans and indicators nor the capitalistic mechanism of the market that ensured social integration, but the administrative market, a peculiar alloy of the two with feudalistic traits: the administrative market was a system of institutionalized expectations and disciplining which contained and conveyed elements of both political and economic efficiency (the latter measured in terms of profit). Deals on the administrative market often involved political effectiveness (connected partly to the self-interest of the powers and partly to the interests of industrial workers) and economic efficiency measured in profitability (in detail, see Szalai 2014).

The dominant ideology of the regime from the mid-1960s could not be identified by its Marxist-Leninist character, but by the attitude of the slogan

“who is not against us is with us”. This “ideology” was embodied in the toleration, sometimes even stimulation, of the second economy that both resembled feudalistic vassalage relations and the relations of a capitalist small economy.

In sum: the existing socialism in Hungary was basically a middle-of-the-road formation with strong feudalistic traits.

These feudalistic features did not disappear with the change of the system and the building of the Hungarian variant of new capitalism, but kept reemerging, so that by now social relations have assumed a semi-feudal character strongly reminiscent of the interwar period.

In the world, bourgeois revolutions leading to capitalism were always preceded and prepared for by the emergence and strengthening of propertied urban middle classes/bourgeoisie. Before and during the Eastern European “capitalist turn” of 1989/90, a different scenario was acted out: in the course of existing socialism no propertied bourgeoisie could emerge which was strong enough to prepare and initiate system change. In Hungary, this role was played first of all by the late Kádarian technocracy (that I have often discussed) that was born within power structure and articulated the interests of the still non-existing but prospected propertied bourgeoisie, and second, by the democratic opposition outside the hierarchy of power but formulating the ideology of the former, as well as by the new reform-minded intellectuals hovering between the two “forms of existence” (Szalai 1994). From this cast of roles, it logically follows that the change of system was initiated and carried out from above, hence it had a feudalistic character: the appearance and strengthening of the propertied bourgeoisie could not be the outcome of a spontaneous process, but this bourgeoisie was appointed in the course of the system change by the late Kádarian technocracy to key positions in the state bureaucracy. The instruments of the process were the decomposition of so-called state-owned property and its distribution among political clients, as well as the luring of foreign large capital. In other words: a proprietary-economic structure functioning on the basis of capitalist logic as conceived at the top was to be created along a fundamentally feudal logic.

The new proprietary structure that had more or less stabilized by the early 2000s was characterized by the strong dominance of foreign capital (Szalai 2001) for two main reasons. On the one hand, very little money had accumulated within for the purchase of so-called state property – this is why foreign capital was able to pick up the most valuable productive goods and buy up domestic rivals in the acquisition of the market. On the other hand, the extremely fast process of privatization compared to other East European countries, and even more, the related involvement of extra-large foreign capital, can be attributed

to the neoliberal ideological conviction of the late Kádarian technocracy that governed the process. What is more, this thinking meant that the first factor described above – the lack of domestic solvency – turned into such an influential factor. (In the other East European countries in which the system was changed, privatization was far slower, more organic and considerate of social justice. The explanation in part is that in these existing socialisms the stronger central power and harsher suppression did not allow, or only allowed sporadically, the emergence within the ranges of power of a young western-type, market-oriented technocracy that later adopted an openly neoliberal economic philosophy whose views later petrified into social dogmas. This was how the earlier Hungarian advantage turned later into a disadvantage.) The fast and inorganic process of privatization in Hungary resulted in a dual social and economic structure typical of the semi-peripheries of capitalism and reminiscent of the interwar period: a capitalist world governed by fairly transparent, calculable rules in the sphere of settled multinational companies, and in the sphere of feeble domestic capital a feudal-semi-feudal world regulated by feudalistic norms – or more precisely, by deregulation as the rule (Szalai 2001). Compared to earlier conditions, the unrestrained advance of the capitalist logic strengthened the feudal features of power and society.

The comparatively well-regulated multinational sector adapts to this feudalistic logic when it is in its interests. And, naturally enough, its interests are shared at many points with the domestic bourgeoisie: it is in their common interest that the greater part of legal rules regulating the activity of this economic elite should be formulated by them, and also, in the most frenzied period of privatization the application of the rules of competition should be shelved by the political elite for an indefinite time (Szalai 2001). It is thus in their common interest – at least in the short run – to have the economic elite dominate politics, but paradoxically the predominance of the bourgeoisie reinforced the feudalistic, not only the capitalist features of the system.

It is also in their common interest to smash the trade unions and make labor defenselessness. As a consequence, it is in Hungary alone where, owing to soaring capital income or profit, income from work does not cover the costs of the reproduction of a broad strata of manpower, a typical feature of new capitalism (Szalai 2001, 2012).

These costs would imply that resources are being drained continuously from the spheres of collective consumption – education, health care and cultural goods – and according to the logic of the system this cannot be otherwise: from the early 1990s until 1996-97 production and hence central revenues plummeted, not to speak of the fact that the neoliberal ideology of the system also involved the strong moderation of collective consumption. Succinctly formulated: "... it

is everyone's duty to care for themselves, and those who are incapable of doing so can only blame themselves, for instead of enterprising, working, they want to sponge off others." It is according to this logic that returns from privatization are not spent on innovation that creates new jobs or stops up the huge gaps in collective consumption but, in harmony with the short-term interests of the political elite, they are used to decrease state indebtedness (Szalai 2001, 2012, Böröcz 2015). In short: the bourgeoisie and the political elite are devouring the future of the country by dangerously degrading "human resources".

Workers are not protected by free contracts or legal rules – and this is naturally attractive to the interests of incoming foreign capital, let alone the domestic bourgeoisie. Since labor is perfectly defenseless, the capitalist capital-versus-labor relationship is transforming into a feudalistic, paternalist-lord-versus-servant relationship.

In addition to the curbing of collective consumption, the other basic feature of central redistribution by the dominant socialist-liberal governments in power until 2010 was their reliance on feudalistic individual bargaining mechanisms instead of normative regulation, since this mechanism also relatively favored foreign capital over the domestic bourgeoisie (Szalai 2001, 2012). The latter were therefore increasingly hostile to central preferences and the increasing advance of foreign capital from about the early 2000s, and from then on used their resources and political weight to support Fidesz–KDNP who called for the elevation of the Hungarian bourgeoisie. Moreover, anticipating as it were the anti-poor policies of Fidesz and fed up with the allegedly burdensome levels of tax levied on capital, they started openly to demand the powerful roll-back of collective consumption (Szalai 2012, 2014).

Overt support from the big bourgeoisie and the informal-financial backing of the party largely contributed to the election victory of Fidesz in 2010. However, Fidesz's victory has far deeper social and social psychological causes. The pre-2010 phase of Hungarian new capitalism was interlaced with feudal elements but from the viewpoint of the liberties of the bourgeoisie a laissez-faire period involving the accumulation of social tensions of extraordinary magnitude and special nature that turned the system inside out, and prepared the ground for the birth and consolidation of an authoritarian political elite that was to come to subordinate the economic elite. On the one hand, a wide swathe of social strata went down in the world, losing their footing (Szalai 2001, 2012, 2014) and – driven by elementary instincts – turned towards a political force that promised to halt further backsliding and offered some props or clues about how to increase security. On the other hand, the broad social strata of dropouts experienced an identity crisis as the old communities and the identities built on them crumbled into dust, and no new ones evolved due to the narrow array of available roles,

while this new political force promised the a new community a new identity and new self-esteem: “around us everything is on the brink of collapse, but we hold firmly to our ground because we are tied together by being Hungarians.”

The strengthening of political and economic peak power was also implied by the global crisis that started in 2008, massively reinforcing earlier signs of domestic crisis appearing in Hungarian society and economy: on the one hand, the surfacing of the inherent tensions in the malformed, inorganic, dual economic-social structure (such as when the dominant German market for exports almost exclusively produced in the assembly halls of the multinational sector shrank), and on the other, the lack of real innovation and the reproduction of human resources lead to a halt in GDP growth after 2004. This was worsened by the nearly complete collapse of foreign markets and the splintering of the domestic financial institutional system, a situation whose handling cried out for firm powerful central intervention.

From the beginning of the regime to the present days, the main aim of Fidesz after the party assumed power in 2010 was to regulate the earlier dominant bourgeoisie. One tool for this was the creation of a bourgeois clientele loyal to it, a move that was only possible through the radical reshuffling of capital and income, which, in turn, logically implies ignoring constitutional frames and considerably weakening democratic checks and balances. The other tool involves playing off both the Hungarian and the current international capitals – putting them in competition with one another (examples of the former practice are widely found in public procurement procedures, and now in the privatization of state land, the latter practice exemplified by favoring specific – and excluding certain other – multinational companies in the system of strategic agreements.)

The other important goal of Fidesz is to further depress the cost of manpower and to render the labor market “flexible”, one important instrument of which is the modification of the labor code to the detriment of employees. This favors the bourgeoisie, on the one hand. On the other, but related to the former objective, is the dilemma whether international competitiveness should be promoted by improving human resources so they are capable of creating significant additional value, or conversely, rendering manpower cheaper and more flexible: like its predecessors, Fidesz also voted for the latter strategy until 2017. The intention to further tap human resources is implied by the extraction of resources from education, health and culture, which is in line with the policy of the socialist-liberal governments, but now more emphatically practiced.

In response to the massive exodus of predominantly young manpower and the nearly fatal weakening of human resources, in 2017 Fidesz undertook a turn away from the above outlined policy by considerably increasing the minimum wage and guaranteed minimum income. The question is how long the bourgeoisie

will put up with this, and whether it will turn its “own” bourgeoisie against it.

The third main goal of the current regime is to re-educate citizens and place them under the party’s sway. There are several instruments for doing this; first of all, the communal work program, but also the centralization of the resources of culture and science, and the ambition to manually control these spheres, as well as attacks on civil society. While the predominant slogan, clamorously promoted, is: “the country is at one”, György Bánki (2015: 1) termed the regime ‘the System of Narcissistic Cooperation’: “The priority is the enrichment and glory of the elite, while the community must believe that decisions are in their service.”

--

Let us provide a recap of the period using the definitions proposed in the introductory chapter.

The dawn of new capitalism in Hungary is dominated by lord-vs.-servant relations, instead of a capital-vs.-labor arrangement: the situation of the working strata existing in the previous system has collapsed as a result of the activity not of the then-inchoate bourgeoisie, but of its progenitor with strong feudalistic traits, the late-Kádarian technocracy whose activity brought about almost total economic collapse and entailed the laying off of masses of workers and legal deprivation. In this process, no props or protection were provided for workers (Szalai 2001). In existing socialism the workforce was not the owner of social property, but they were not so “excessively” deprived of it, nor so excessively at the mercy of their “superiors” as after 1989.

With the birth of the bourgeoisie, elements of the capital-labor relationship also appeared but with the characteristics discussed in the section of this paper about the similar relations of global new capitalism: for the listed reasons (capitalists hiding behind the state, labor in disarray, eradication of the self-esteem of workers) the capital-vs.-labor relation is very poorly articulated. The swollen reserve of unemployed place the workforce into such a helpless situation – particularly in the sphere of domestic proprietors, because in the multinational sector the position of labor is somewhat more favorable due to the partial application of the rights won by workers in the West – that the situation of the “good or bad” king who represents the state, and the unstable, lawless subjects becomes visible (Szalai 2001, 2011, 2012, Bartha 2009).

With the victory of Fidesz in 2010, the outlined situation has acquired even more sharply chiseled features. Though the rhetoric of the ruling party says “we have to restore the honor of physical work”, the mentioned modification of the labor code further debases the living circumstances and bargaining position of workers, strengthening their status as subjects. One palpable example is the system of communal work that functions as forced

labor. Due to the earlier-begun and continuous depletion of human resources and the degradation of vocational training, productivity is not increasing in the entrepreneurial sphere, jeopardizing the profit expectations of the bourgeoisie. Labor shortages are most pressing in jobs that require higher-level qualifications. Capitalists respond to the situation by announcing their demand (through the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the first place) and effectively lobbying for the government to subordinate secondary and tertiary education to their immediate and emphatically short-term interests. (A corollary is that the government lowered the school-leaving age from 18 to 16 years, which move actually runs counter to the aim of making labor adapt more flexibly to the long-term manpower needs of the bourgeoisie.) All this reinforces the feudalistic traits of the bourgeoisie-government relationship, as well as the connection between this conglomerate and the future workforce and other employees, for it hinders the free choice of careers and the training of diverse skills which alone might guarantee at least a minimal bargaining position for workers and other employees. The response to this situation is the mentioned emigration, on a mass scale...

Around the time of the political turn, the structure of power was strongly feudalistic. Power was concentrated in the hands of a feudalistic “estate” whose dominant fraction comprised the late Kádárian technocracy. Its subfractions included the feudalistically stratified new political elite, the earlier opposition intellectuals who formulated the ideology of the system change, and the pliant, now strengthening, now weakening group of large company leaders of an uncertain position; rivals for proprietary rights with the late-Kádárian technocracy. The socialistic traits of the ruling regime of the previous system disappeared, even reversed, without capitalist characteristics gaining predominance.

In the period of socialist-liberal governments – after the great turn, and later – the emerging big bourgeoisie, including primarily the managers of multinational large companies, constituted the dominant fraction of the ruling elite. Its subfractions included the feudalistically structured political elites and the cultural elite. Incorporated in the state bureaucracy and the cultural elite, and less importantly in the business sphere, the late Kádárian technocracy still preserved its leading role, but now it meant the articulation and representation of the emerging and later the established bourgeoisie, particularly its multinational sector, instead of the assertion of some independent “line”.

In the time interval under study, that ruling regime was the most capitalistic power formation and displayed class features owing to the dominance of the bourgeoisie, but predominantly because of the feudalistic functioning of the bourgeoisie (or its feudalistic characteristics), the feudal traits of power also remained.

After Fidesz' rise to power in 2010, as mentioned earlier, the victorious political elite tried to subdue the economic elite during the power struggle, first of all by creating a loyal bourgeoisie and by pitting the large capitalists in both the Hungarian and the multinational sections against one another, as well as evoking competition between sectors. Not independently of the weakening or elimination of checks and balances, the opposition parties have now become quite weightless. The rightist technocracy and the majority of intellectuals have become vassals of the ruling parties, the aim of the latter being the servile formulation of the ideology of the new political order and the exclusion of "left-liberal" intellectuals from the cultural elite, together with the blocking of leftist critical intellectuals (Szalai 2016). However narrowed, the forums of the "left-liberal" intellectuals still survive, and its actors include some prominent representatives of the late Kádarian technocracy who have gradually been ousted from diverse power spheres, also for reasons of age.

It was not independent of the playing off of diverse top capitalists against each other that some of them began to oppose the ruling elite from around 2014-15, but the outcome of this confrontation cannot be predicted yet. Since the leading figure of the "oppositional" grand bourgeoisie, Lajos Simicska, owns a considerable media empire, the maneuvering possibilities of intellectuals in the right-wing media have somewhat expanded.

From around the same time, cracks appeared in the ruling party and technocracy, connected to two factors. For one thing, since the forces of opposition have been wiped out nearly completely, all the inner tensions and contradictions of the system are articulated *within* the ruling party and technocracy. Also, and consequently, pitting large capitalists against each other creates real rivalries, which also divide the ruling party and technocracy.

The feudal traits of the ruling regime have strengthened since 2010, while its class features have weakened, but owing to the declining but still retained power position of the large bourgeoisie and the overt or covert resistance of a part of it, we cannot speak of a full feudal turn of the ruling regime, only a semi-feudal turn.

As regards the integrative mechanisms of Hungarian new capitalism, such mechanisms – as mentioned earlier – are almost non-existent; what is more, disintegrative mechanisms are preponderant (Szalai 2001; Utasi 2008; Szalai 2011, 2016). Sporadic signs of this process can be discerned from the early 1980s onwards, while they gathered momentum with the great political and economic turn. The feudalistic logic of new capitalism (efficiency measured by authority and power privileges) and its mechanisms, as well as the market mechanism centered on profit maximization fuel this tendency by reinforcing one another: the feudalistic central interventions intensify the inequalities – it is these that

they usually intensify – to which the market responds, and which it reinforces. The alloy of the two mechanisms creates the administrative market of new capitalism.

The basis is the mentioned dual structure of economy and society and the growing gap between the two spheres. (It must be added that the two spheres, first of all the multinational sector, are not integrated internally [Szalai 2012]). The other basis is the tendency to an increase in the income gap and general inequalities. (For a most suggestive account, see Ákos Huszár [Dercsényi 2015]).

According to Tárki reports, inequalities in income distribution were only slightly alleviated in 2003-2007 and after 2012 (Szívós and Tóth 2014). The decrease in 2003-2007 is attributable to the welfare turn initiated by Prime Minister Péter Medgyessy in the course of which civil servants' wages and social benefits were massively raised. The decrease after 2012 was primarily caused by the extensive broadening of communal work.

There are, however, justifiable doubts about the reliability of data, because with the increase in income inequalities incomes at the upper- and lowermost levels of society are hardly, if at all, measurable. (Both the very rich and the very poor are unreachable for surveying.) Nonetheless, if the data do contain elements of truth, then these two intermezzi can be ascribed to the feudalistic intervention of the central power in the teeth of spontaneous market mechanisms.

The dominant ideology of the system during the social liberal periods (except for the brief episode under Medgyessy) highlighted the placing of capitalism on a pedestal. One element of the ideology was touched on earlier: "... everyone has the duty to care for themselves, and those who can't should find fault with themselves." The exception is the Roma population. The other element is the tenet that, since capitalism basically works well, the "middle class" need no attention, they can get along by themselves, state help is only due to the poorest.

The norm of "self-reliance as everybody's duty" becomes even more central to the ideology of the Fidesz governments than it ever was during the social liberal period: it practically contains no tolerance or understanding for the poor or any of their strata. While the social liberal ideology of neoliberal inspiration regarded the growth of inequalities as the automatic, unavoidable and regrettable concomitant of the market economy, the Fidesz governments deliberately promote with their feudalistic tools the massively above-average enrichment of the upper middle class – who owe them gratitude and loyalty for this – and the utter deprivation of the poorest: the core of their dominant ideology is that those "who carry the country on their backs" must be backed up by central support. Related is an element of one of their main legitimating ideas which says that the time of the welfare societies is finally over; now a society of work has to be constructed in which there is no "free lunch".

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

A review of global and Hungarian processes leads to the conclusion that the processes of refeudalization are immanent characteristics of new capitalism. They appear, paradoxically, as the wild excesses of unbridled capitalism (e.g. global mega-monopolies take nation states captive, thus constraining the freedom of market competition) on the one hand, and – speaking in Károly Polányi’s terms – as protection against the wild excesses of capitalism (e.g. the nation states’ response to the 2008 global crisis, and in Hungary, as an authoritarian reaction to the general loss of security resulting from the earlier laissez-faire period).

But why is the world, and Hungary, proceeding towards feudalism – a seemingly antiquated formation –; i.e., backwards, instead of escaping forward into a socialist model, to avoid the anomalies of capitalism? Short answer: the social foundations and conditions for moving toward a socialist alternative are extremely weak, owing particularly to the mental state of societies, and this weakness is also manifest in the great amount of uncertainty present in socialist ideologies (see in detail, Szalai 2006).

--

Widening the horizon, one can infer from Hungarian processes that refeudalizing tendencies appear when the semi-peripheral “system” laid bare to global processes faces a strong external challenge, in addition to internal causes. This challenge is a radical change in the geopolitical, geo-economic balance, eliciting the feudalistic, authoritarian endeavors of power as a defense.

In the reviewed period it is first around the time of the change of the political system in 1989 that such a shift can be discerned – that was when the so-far bipolar world system changed into a unipolar system. The second response began to be felt around 2010 when the earlier unipolar global system started shifting in a multipolar direction, first of all owing to Russian power ambitions: now leaders at the summit of power have to accommodate themselves to several – at least two – forces, which urges the concentration of power. (However, the new situation also implies some maneuvering possibility for the peak power.)

While around 1989 only feudalistic features strengthened, around 2010 what occurred was a turn towards semi-feudalism: this is indicated first by the measures of the peak political elite that featured feudal lords bridling a bourgeoisie regarded as vassals; second, by rendering the earlier also rather weak political opposition perfectly weightless through the undermining of the system of checks and balances; and third, by degrading the workforce to a state of servitude.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that in Hungary there never was a capitalist or socialist “state” close to the ideal type *compared to* which the strengthening

of feudalistic features or a semi-feudal turn may be discussed. Much rather, the country moved from a society with weaker feudalistic traits toward a more strongly feudalistic society – and back. An undulating motion can be traced: predominantly in the last decade of existing socialist the spontaneous movements of society and hence capitalistic features strengthened, while in the period of the major change of a strongly centralized, etatist character feudalistic traits became stronger in connection with the weakening of spontaneous processes. Then the consolidation of the change of the economic system resulting in bourgeois dominance entailed the strengthening of capitalistic characteristics, while the tensions it generated led to the repeated reinforcement of feudalistic traits and even to a semi-feudal turn. This domestic undulation is catalyzed by external challenges.

In 1989 I prognosticated (Szalai 1989b) that the feudalistic character of our social system would survive in the long run, but clad in West European clothes. It would incorporate all the elements of modern commodity and monetary economy, but the fundamental relations they conceal would largely remain feudalistic. This prognosis has been verified as valid.

Now I predict that the semi-feudal regime in Hungary will hold sway for a long time – this tendency is being reinforced by the tempestuous changes in the world and in the European Union that promote the call for national isolation and the strengthening of authoritarian national power centers as a defensive response, at least in the short and medium term. If there is no socialist turn, global capital (as discussed earlier) will sooner or later perfectly (or almost perfectly) deconstruct the national frame, preparing a new capitalistic turn.

REFERENCES

1989. *Fordulat*, No 21, Társadalomelméleti Folyóirat, Budapest.
- Artner, Annamária (2001): “Bárgyú játékosok” [Dumb players], *Eszmélet*, No 50, pp. 2018–2023.
- Artner, Annamária (2014): *Tőke, munka és válság a globalizáció korában* [Capital, work and crisis in the age of globalization]. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Bánki, György (2015): “Az MMA a Narcisztikus Együttműködés Rendszerében” [MMA in the System of Narcissistic Cooperation]. *hvg.hu*, November 29.
- Bartha, Eszter (2009): *A munkások útja a szocializmusból a kapitalizmusba Kelet-Európában 1968–1969* [The road of workers from socialism to capitalism in Eastern Europe]. Budapest: L’Harmattan Kiadó, ELTE-BTK. Kelet-Európa Története Tanszék.

- Bourdieu, Pierre (1983): "The Forms of Capital" in: John. G. Richardson: *Handbook of Theory and Research for Sociology of Education*. New York: no publisher.
- Böröcz, József (2016): "Az államszocializmus összeomlása a "szovjet blokkban" és a globális munkaerő-vándorlás szerkezetváltozása" [The collapse of state socialism in the "Soviet bloc" and structural change in the global labor migration], *Eszmélet*, 108, pp. 108–131.
- Csapó, B. (2008): *Integrating Recent Development in Education Evaluation: Formative Longitudinal and Online Assessments*. Keynote Lecture. The European Conference on Educational Research. Gothenburg, Sweden. 8-9 September, 2008.
- Dercsényi, Dávid (2015): "Akik alul voltak, ott is maradtak. Interjú Huszár Ákossal" [Those who were under remained there. Interview with Ákos Huszár], *hvg.hu*, May 5.
- Erdei, Ferenc (1976): "A magyar társadalom a két világháború között" [Hungarian society between the two world wars]. I–II, *Valóság*, 1976, No 4-5, pp. 23–53; 36–58.
- Farkas, Péter (2013): "A világgazdasági növekedés hosszú, közép- és rövid távú hatótényezői 2013-ban" [Long, medium and short-term factors of global economic growth in 2013]. *Statistikai Szemle*, Vol. 91, No 7, pp. 673–690.
- Farkas, Péter (2015): "A világgazdaság helyzete 2015-ben" [The state of global economy in 2015]. *MTA KRTK Világgazdasági Intézet blog*, May 27, 2015.
- Hankiss, Elemér (1983): *Közösségek válsága és hiánya. Társadalmi csapdák, diagnózisok* [Crisis and lack of communities. Social traps, diagnoses]. Budapest: Magvető Kiadó.
- Konrád, György and Szelényi, Iván (1989): *Az értelmiség útja az osztályhatalomhoz* [The road of the intelligentsia to class power]. Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó.
- Losonczy, Ágnes (2005): *Sorsba fordult történelem* [History turned destiny]. Budapest: Holnap Kiadó.
- Piketty, Thomas (2015): *A tőke a 21. században* [Capital in the 21st century]. Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó.
- Pitti, Zoltán (2006): *A tulajdonviszonyok változása a multipoláris világgazdaság viszonyai között* [Changes of property relations under the conditions of the multipolar global capitalism]. Manuscript.
- Polányi, Karl (1997): *A nagy átalakulás. Korunk gazdasági és politikai gyökerei* [The great transformation. Economic and political roots of our age]. Budapest: publication of Gábor Mészáros.
- Smith, Adam (1922[1776]): *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.

- Szalai, Erzsébet (1981): *Kiemelt vállalat – beruházás – érdek* [Priority companies – investment – interest]. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Szalai, Erzsébet (1989a): *Gazdasági mechanizmus, reformtörekvések és nagyvállalati érdekek* [Economic mechanism, reform ambitions and large company interests]. Budapest: Közgazdasági és Jogi Könyvkiadó.
- Szalai, Erzsébet (1989b): “Az új elit” [The new elite], *Beszélő*, No 27, pp. 59-67.
- Szalai, Erzsébet (1994): *Útelágazás. Hatalom és értelmiség az államszocializmus után* [Ramification. Power and intellectuals after state socialism]. Budapest: Pesti Szalon Könyvkiadó, Szombathely: Savaria University Press.
- Szalai, Erzsébet (2001): *Gazdasági elit és társadalom a magyarországi újkapitalizmusban* [Economic elite and society in Hungarian new capitalism]. Budapest: Aula Kiadó.
- Szalai, Erzsébet (2006): *Az újkapitalizmus – és ami utána jöhet...* [New capitalism and what can replace it ...] Budapest: Új Mandátum Kiadó.
- Szalai, Erzsébet (2011): *Koordinátákon kívül. Fiatal felnőttek a mai Magyarországon* [Outside coordinates. Young adults in present-day Hungary]. Budapest: Új Mandátum Kiadó .
- Szalai, Erzsébet (2012): *Globális válság – magyar válság – alternatívák* [Global crisis – Hungarian crisis – alternatives]. Budapest: L’ Harmattan Kiadó.
- Szalai, Erzsébet (2014): *Autonómia vagy újkiszolgáltatottság* [Autonomy or new defenselessness]. Budapest: Kalligram Kiadó.
- Szalai, Erzsébet (2016): “Értelmiségi tájkép – csata közben” [Intellectual landscape – during the battle], *Élet és Irodalom*, January 22, p. 8.
- Szívós, Péter – Tóth, István György (eds.) (2014): *Jól nézünk ki (...?!) Háztartások helyzete a válság után* [Situation of households after the crisis]. Társi Monitor reports 2014.
- Utasi, Ágnes (2008): *Éltető kapcsolatok. A kapcsolatok hatása a szubjektív életminőségre* [Life-giving contacts. Impact of contacts on subjective quality of life]. Budapest: Új Mandátum Kiadó.

SOCIAL INVESTMENT RISKS? AN EXPLORATIVE ANALYSIS OF NEW SOCIAL RISKS IN THE SOCIAL INVESTMENT STATE

Luc Benda – Menno Fenger – Ferry Koster – Romke Van der Veen¹

ABSTRACT *Individual responsibilities and individual capabilities are becoming increasingly important in public policies of European welfare states. Therefore, it is said that European welfare states are developing in the direction of social investment states. In this article we argue that the shift towards the social investment state may lead to new social risks and new inequalities. Building upon Bonoli's (2005) seminal article, we introduce the concept of 'social investment risks' to refer to these risks. In this article we explore and identify the development towards a social investment state in detail by focusing on different social policy trends in different welfare areas and by analyzing their impact on the individual level. We deconstruct the underlying assumptions of the social investment paradigm and reflect on the role of individual capabilities and social capital in the social investment state. We assess to what extent the distribution of these capabilities creates new social risks and new inequalities using examples from the Netherlands. Dealing with these new inequalities and new social risks may be considered new challenges for welfare states. Therefore, this article innovatively expands the borders of current-day welfare state research and explores the consequences of the social investment paradigm.*

KEYWORDS: *New social risks; Welfare State Regimes; Capabilities; Social Capital; Social Investment; Legitimacy; Motivation; Crowding in, crowding out*

¹ The authors are affiliated with Erasmus University, Rotterdam; e-mail: fenger@essb.eur.nl

INTRODUCTION

Since 1973 European welfare states have been undergoing a continuous process of adjustment to fiscal austerity and new social, political and economic conditions. The readjustment of the post-war welfare state first led to processes of political and economic reform in most welfare states (see Pierson, 1994; compare Castles, 2004). In time, the politics of retrenchment dominant in the 1970s and 1980s gave way to the politics of institutional change (cf. Streeck & Thelen, 2005; Mahoney & Thelen, 2010; Pierson, 1994). The division of responsibilities between the state, citizens, firms, interest groups and the so-called third sector in the policies of the welfare state changed. This led to a transformation of social policies: an increase in the individual responsibility of actors (citizens, employees, firms, professionals, etc.) under the umbrella of – and not instead of – state-organized social policies. This process has been characterized as a transition towards a social investment state: a welfare state in which social policies are mainly oriented towards and also legitimized by investment in human capital. Traditional welfare states aimed at providing compensation for the occurrence of traditional social risks like old age, disability and unemployment. The social investment state is aimed at preventing these risks by educating citizens and enhancing individual capabilities to build resilience. The transformation from traditional welfare states into social investment states involves institutional readjustments. One of the most significant changes is related to the issue of scale: the division of authorities between national, regional and local government. Administrative and governmental responsibilities are decentralized to local or sectorial authorities or centralized with supra-national authorities (Kazepov, 2010). This also entails an increasing emphasis on civil society as a distributor of welfare. This fits within the discourse of the big society which sees citizens as ‘autonomous, self-reliant and democratically engaged individuals working for common purpose’ (Bone, 2012: 11).

We argue that, because of these processes, the capabilities and social capital of individuals are becoming central determinants within the welfare system. As a result, new divisions are created which may present new social risks and new inequalities. This article aims to explore these new social risks and new inequalities that may be caused by the transition towards a social investment state. In doing so, the article contributes to an emerging body of literature on the shift towards a social investment state (see Taylor-Gooby, 2013; Hemerijck, 2012; Ellison and Fenger, 2013). We develop a theoretically based typology of social investment risks which makes policy officials and social policy scholars more sensitive to the potential pathological policy consequences of the social investment state.

This article is structured as follows: In the next section, we elaborate on the background of the social investment state. In Section 3 we move on to a discussion of the new social risks as they have been identified by Bonoli (2005). In Section 4 we reflect on the underlying assumptions of the social investment paradigm. Section 5 forms the core of this article: there we present an overview of social risks in the social investment state. In the final section we reflect on the meaning of these social investment risks for practical policy making and research of the social investment paradigm.

TOWARDS SOCIAL INVESTMENT?

The welfare states that were developed in the first decades of the twentieth century and matured in the early post-war decades were intended to protect citizens from traditional social risks like unemployment, poverty, and illness. However, the measures that were implemented – health insurance, unemployment insurance and social assistance – focus on repairing ‘damage’ after it happens. Social investment policy, in contrast, aims to *prepare* instead of *repair* individuals in relation to the labor market (Giddens, 1998). The social investment state aims to increase social inclusion and minimize the intergenerational cycle of poverty in order to protect individuals from the increasing insecurity (flexibilization) of the labor market. It aims to do so in a manner which does not undermine individual responsibility for one’s own personal well-being, and in a way that helps the system cope with changing demographics like an aging population and the de-traditionalization of the family (Jenson, 2012: 61-7). Three principles are central to the social investment perspective. The first is based on the equality of opportunity, and thereby follows the liberal notion of equality. By creating equal opportunities through investment the intergenerational cycle of poverty should be broken. Therefore, the social investment paradigm highlights the importance of education and the prominent position it has in the lives of all. Early childhood education and life-long learning are, besides formal education, the main routes to social security and a way to overcome new inequalities based on technology and skills.

The second principle rests on the premise that promoting social inclusion by investing in individuals and thereby expanding active and civil society is beneficial to the collective good (Jenson & Saint Martin, 2006). Hence, the development of human capital and labor market mobility are the main concepts of the social investment perspective (Taylor-Gooby, 2008). This requires an ‘empowering’ or ‘active’ state which focuses on partnerships with non-profit and private market parties and ‘restructures’, ‘redesigns’ or ‘recasts’ the welfare

state (Morel, Palier & Palme, 2012: 1-19). According to this perspective, the state provides opportunities for individual citizens, but it is the responsibility of citizens to use these opportunities. For instance, Jenson and St. Martin (2003) highlight the active role that is required of citizens in the social investment paradigm. The state in the social investment paradigm is an enabling state with active and responsible citizens.

Recent trends indicate that many European welfare states increasingly show characteristics of social investment states. The development of more individualized social services, personalized around the needs of the individual (Gerven & Ossewaarde, 2012: 49), demands a new and complex system of administration (Pfeifer, 2009: 118). Social policies have to deal with the individualization of social risks and the fact that personal risk biographies are being formed by the choices individuals make (Giddens, in Gerven & Ossewaarde, 2012: 39). The distributive effects of these new services are dependent on the distribution of formal welfare (collectively organized) and on the access citizens have to informal welfare (social support). Access to formal and informal welfare is dependent on the (bureaucratic and social) capabilities of individuals, and capabilities to acquire and manage formal and informal welfare differ.

However, whether this social investment strategy is actually being implemented and in what scope is still under debate. “In most countries the investment in knowledge and employment mobility enhancing benefits that are distinctive parts of the new approach are not being effectively pursued.” (Taylor-Gooby, 2008: 18). It may be that the social investment approach is only used as a rhetorical strategy to disguise a continuing politics of retrenchment (Taylor-Gooby & Stoker, 2011; Wiggan, 2012). One may ask whether this phenomenon results from liberal ideology, the promotion of free-market capitalism and personal freedom (Friedman, 1982), or from the development of social investment. Individual responsibility figures prominently in both discourses. The possibility exists that after years of convergence towards a European model of welfare distribution (the trend to Europeanization of the welfare state model) two discourses have emerged: one of neoliberalism and the other of social investment. However, both discourses emphasize individual responsibility.

NEW SOCIAL RISKS

In his influential article ‘The politics of the new social policies’, Bonoli (2005) argued that due to socioeconomic transformations new social risks have evolved in addition to the traditional social risks that were introduced earlier, like old age,

sickness, disability and unemployment. Due to the tertiarization of employment and the massive entry of women into the labor market, different risk profiles have emerged in post-industrial societies. Industrial workers traditionally had the highest risk profiles, but because of the homogeneity of the labor class and of family structures, these risks were easy to target. They also had strong political mobilization capacities to ensure improvement of their living standards. In the post-industrial society, these risk profiles have, however, changed. Because of individualization and de-traditionalization more social diversity exists within classes and families, making it harder to effectively target social risks through standardized policy measures. Due to what Bonoli describes as new social risks, welfare states have transformed and tried to adapt (Bonoli, 2005). But what are these new social risks and whom do they affect?

Bonoli (Ibid: 433-5) describes five new social risks that are related to the post-industrial society. The first new social risk he describes is the '*reconciliation of work and family life*'. Because of the changed division of domestic and childcare work within the family, these activities are now being externalized, with the state and the market as the main suppliers. Problems arise when they cannot be adequately supplied and family members need to reduce working hours in order to cope. This results in great losses of welfare. This risk is even higher for '*single parent families*', the second new social risk. Bonoli considers *having a frail relative* to also be a new social risk. Because of the changed work patterns of women, care for the frail elderly or disabled is also externalized. This task was usually performed by non-employed women. When services are not able to provide adequate care, people are made responsible for caring for their frail relatives, which also may result in losses of welfare. These new social risks are all related to the family situation of an individual. The fourth new social risk Bonoli distinguishes is '*the possession of low or absolute skills*'. Unlike in the post-war period when low-skilled workers were employed in the manufacturing industry, low-skilled workers nowadays are mostly employed in low value-added services, like cleaning, hospitality, retail-sales and the like, or they are unemployed. Job creation is limited in these sectors and people work most of the time for minimum wage or a poverty wage. Thus, having low skills or no skills at all entails a very high risk of the loss of welfare. The final new social risk according to Bonoli is having *insufficient social security coverage*. Because changing labor market career profiles and social security schemes are still based on the traditional career profile of the full-time employed male, having an atypical career profile results in incomplete social security coverage and a loss of welfare. Young people, women and the low-skilled are mostly exposed to these new social risks.

These new social risks occur because the traditional welfare states, which are geared towards compensating and decommmodification, have not been fully adapted to the reality of post-industrial societies. The social investment paradigm, as discussed in the second section of this article, might be considered an adjustment of traditional welfare regimes to the post-industrial era in which individual characteristics and behavior are considered more important determinants of social risk than structural economic or social conditions. So the social investment paradigm may be considered a response to Bonoli's new social risks. However, as we claim in this article, introducing a social investment strategy in its place may result in other types of social risks. In this article we label these risks social investment risks.

CAPABILITIES, SOCIAL CAPITAL AND INEQUALITIES

In this section we will consider the social investment paradigm from a capabilities perspective. The social investment state builds upon existing capabilities of citizens and tries to improve these capabilities if needed. By focusing on capabilities we avoid an overly simplistic analysis of the distribution of welfare that focuses on just the means or the ability that individuals have to acquire wellbeing through their participation in the labor market (the human capital approach). We perceive the concept of capability as “the opportunity to achieve valuable combinations of human functionings – what a person is able to do or be” (Sen, 2005: 153). It therefore goes beyond the concept of human capital because it also incorporates social development instead of just economic development (Sen, 1997). The capabilities someone possesses are not only personal traits or the result of someone's personal network, but also the result of institutional influences. For example, the degree of universalism of the educational system determines to a large extent the chances available to citizens to obtain and expand capabilities. Therefore welfare reforms will have different effects in different welfare state regimes for different categories of citizens. Differences in the distribution of social protection by the welfare state have always existed, but the growing importance of the capabilities of actors may increase these differences (Leschke & Jespen, 2012).

When social policies are individualized and personalized and social policy emphasis shifts to civil society, not only personal capabilities but also social capital becomes more important. We define social capital in the same way as Putnam (2001: 19): ‘social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise

from them'. In the theoretical discussion several kinds of social capital are defined. Two of the most prominent sub-concepts are bonding and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital refers to strong network ties and is usually located within families, groups of close friends and tightly structured religious, political or ethnic groups. This kind of social capital produces social support and social control but is inclusive for group members only. A perverse side effect is that it can create too much social pressure on group members with pathological consequences (for instance, see Durkheim, 2013 [1897]). Bridging social capital refers to weak social ties. These kinds of social ties let individuals bridge greater social distance than bonding ties do. Especially when it comes to information gathering and sharing, bridging social capital is of greater worth (Kääriäinen & Lehtonen, 2006:29-30). Granovetter (1973) calls this 'the strength of weak ties'. These different types of social capital may have different values in the accumulation of welfare, depending on the type of support that is needed. When asking for health care, bonding social capital is probably of greater worth than bridging social capital, and vice versa when it comes to seeking a job outside the formal job market. The distribution of welfare then is not only the result of formal welfare arrangements but also of the access citizens have to informal welfare, which is highly dependent on their social capital. This raises the question how welfare state policies interact with the social capital of individuals. Traditionally, welfare state policies are supposed to 'crowd out' social capital, which means that informal social relations are taken over by formal (collectively organized) forms of support (Putnam, 2000). Evidence supporting this claim is not always straightforward and is sometimes even contradictory (Oorschot and Arts, 2005:21-22). However, differences appear to exist between different forms of social policy and its effect on social capital. It is possible that welfare state policy can both diminish and promote social capital (Frey and Jegen, 2001; Kääriäinen and Lehtonen, 2006; Grootegoed and van Dijk, 2012). In addition to the possession of social capital, there is also an issue related to the use of social capital. According to Elchardus and Pelleriaux (2001), the implementation of active policy has cultural effects that go beyond the desired economic effects. Due to the changing notion of personal responsibility, labor is seen as the first and foremost way to take responsibility, not only in terms of taking care of others but also taking care of oneself. One can hypothesize that this changed notion of individual responsibility also affects the way individuals judge themselves in times of need. People may blame themselves more frequently, instead of blaming others for their miseries. Consequently, they will ask for less (or no) help from others because they consider that they themselves are to blame, and are thus not entitled to receive care or assistance, or to a lesser degree.

The increasing emphasis on human capabilities and individual responsibilities can also have a perverse effect. First, it increases the predictability and the visibility of those who are dependent on welfare state support. According to Elchardus, Marx and Pelleriaux (2003) this can undermine the legitimacy of the welfare state because social cleavages, for example between the higher and lower educated, or between different ethnic groups, become more visible and intensify. When individual responsibility and capabilities are a central variable in the social rights of citizens and in the workings of social policies it is possible that this will stimulate feelings of deprivation and exclusion among those dependent on the welfare state. By emphasizing merit and by employing a philosophy of equal chance the discontent among the lower classes in general will be heightened.

The social investment state is based on the equality of opportunities, upward social mobility and individual responsibility through investment-type policies that promote more equality within society. However, the notion of investment also involves the notion of revenue. The greatest benefits will be reaped by investing in the middle of the distribution. Reasoned from an economic perspective, focusing investment on the lower classes will not be cost-effective, but focusing on the middle classes will, thereby making the social investment state a vehicle of inequality (Taylor-Gooby, 2013: 65-71). The social investment state is also more service-orientated than its predecessors. In-kind services are less effective at reaching the lower classes than in-cash benefits. Due to this shift from offering benefits in cash to giving services-in-kind the re-distributive capacity of the welfare system is less effective from an egalitarian point of view (Esping-Andersen and Myles, 2009: 653-5).

Pintelon et al (2013) argue that social stratification based on social class still persists in the occurrence of social risks. The social risks of ill-health, unemployment, living in a jobless-household and performing low-wage work are still more prominent in the lower classes despite the implementation of social investment strategies. Pintelon et al. argue that the use of labor-market-related benefits as stimuli for full participation in the labor market promotes an unequal distribution of welfare. Labor market participation is still heavily mediated by social class. Thus linking welfare benefits to individual responsibility may give way to a Matthew-effect due to the class effects on labor market participation. Cantillon (2011) confirms this hypothesis in her study on the disappointing poverty rates that exist after the formulation and partial implementation of the Lisbon Strategy. She states that social spending based on the principles of the social investment perspective flows mainly to middle- and higher-income groups and does not adequately reach work-poor households, resulting in unchanged poverty rates. Class differences in the use of childcare also exist. The lower

classes tend to make less use of childcare services than their counterparts from the higher classes. Increased funding for early childcare education therefore benefits the groups who already make use of these services. This type of funding thus reaches the higher classes more than the lower classes (Van Lanckers & Ghysels, 2012). Not only does class play a role in the distribution of social risks, but gender also plays an important role. Informal care is usually provided by women (Van den Broek, 2013) who are therefore more susceptible to physical and psychological harm. The shift of responsibilities from state to individual increases the risk of unemployment for women due to injuries sustained during the provision of informal care or reductions in working hours due to informal care obligations which results in less social protection.

Confronting the ideas of the social investment state with the premises of the capability approach leads to important insights. In the social investment paradigm, the well-being of citizens depends on their ability to make decisions that contribute to their well-being and on their willingness to make these decisions. The social investment state offers opportunities to improve capabilities if necessary, along with information and incentives to improve willingness. In the social investment state, the target group of social policies is considered sufficiently willing to take advantage of the opportunities that are offered in the social investment state, and also sufficiently capable of doing this. By willingness, we mean that in the social investment paradigm, citizens are considered to be rational utility-maximizers, motivated to follow courses of action that are in their own self-interest. By ability we mean that the social investment paradigm assumes that citizens are capable of recognizing courses of action that are in their own self-interest. The social investment paradigm produces new social risks if these assumptions are not – or not fully – met in reality. This brings us to a discussion of the social risks of the social investment state in the next section.

A TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL RISKS IN THE SOCIAL INVESTMENT STATE

In this section we propose a typology of social investment risks in a welfare state of increasing individual responsibility. We distinguish four groups of social risks in social investment states. These risks are based on the basic paradigms of the social investment state on the one hand, and the assumption of willing and capable individuals on the other. If we combine these basic paradigms with the potential lack of either capabilities or willingness to enter the welfare arrangements of the social investment state, we can distinguish four different social investment risks:

- Welfare illiteracy;
- The vicious cycle of ‘own fault’;
- Limited network ties; and
- Limited moral articulation.

In the next paragraphs we elaborate on and empirically illustrate these social investment risks using examples from the country that we know best: the Netherlands. However, in our opinion these risks may apply to countries from any welfare regime that is transforming into a social investment regime.

Welfare illiteracy

The distribution of social security and welfare is dependent on individual capabilities. This has always been the case, but the role of capabilities is becoming increasingly decisive. As recent research shows, socio-economic and educational differences between individuals even exist in the occurrence, detection and treatment of cancer. The suggestion has been made that differences in health literacy – ‘the individual capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate decisions’ (Aarts, 2012: 237) – plays an important role in acquiring the right kind of health care. Placing the ‘literacy’ concept in a broader context, we can say that ‘welfare literacy’ becomes more dominant in the distribution of social security and welfare in the changing social policy context of increasing self-sufficiency and self-control. The move towards personalized social services underpins this assumption.

One example of these personalized services is the personal budget (PGB) that was introduced through the Dutch public health service in 1996. Before that time public health was supply-orientated and mismatches between care recipient and care supplier were common. The personal budget was thus introduced to create a better match between both parties. The personal budget gives people the option to choose their own care supplier, which may be informal or formal, public or private. When someone becomes eligible for funded care under the Exceptional Medical Expenses Act (Awbz) or the Social Support Act (Wmo), the PGH gives them the option to choose care in-kind, or to be given a personal budget for the care they want and need. One of the most important characteristics of this policy measure is that care users have a maximum of freedom to choose how and where they want to spend their budget. In 2003 the ‘new style’ personal budget was introduced. The biggest and most prominent change was that money is now

directly transferred to the client without the intervention of a health institution, which was the former protocol. This gives the care user even more freedom than before. They are now responsible for paying their care suppliers (SCP, 2011).

This example illustrates the increase in freedom and personal responsibility to choose a personal path to better welfare, as citizens see fit. The benefit of this kind of policy is that clients can regulate and buy the care and support they need without the interference of a third party. However, regulating one's own care and support without the proper training or education is not the simplest of tasks. The welfare system is complex and changes over time because of innovation or political and economic developments. Several studies have shown that not everybody gets the welfare they are entitled to. The main reasons for citizens not using the welfare measures available to them are that they do not know of these measures, they think they are not eligible for them, or they do not know how to apply (SEO, 2011). This shows that welfare literacy is a big predictor of welfare accumulation. Welfare literacy – the individual capacity to obtain, process and understand welfare information and the services needed to make appropriate decisions – is likely to play a bigger role in the future of the welfare state. In neoliberal or social investment states, where personal responsibility and the freedom to choose one's own welfare suppliers is increasingly emphasized, the amount of knowledge someone possesses about the welfare state will become more important under the influence of both the individualization and the personalization of social policy.

Vicious cycle of 'own fault' ('serves you right')

A key assumption in the social investment paradigm is that people should take the opportunities that they are offered. It is generally assumed that because of the omnipresence of scientific knowledge people are able to make well-informed choices about matters that affect their future. Following this rationale, it is the 'individual's own fault' when are unemployed because they chose an education or career based on emotional grounds ("because it makes me happy") instead of rational grounds. The social investment risk of the vicious cycle occurs when citizens engage in behavior that is not in their own interest according to the social investment paradigm. The consequences of this 'irresponsible' behavior may involve sanctions in the form of the (partial) denial of services, or incentives aimed at correcting such behavior

One of the most notable examples of this type of social investment risk is the so-called *entry-exit paradox* (see Kruijer et al., 2008). This paradox implies that

people are entitled to services or benefits because of the problems they have, but that these problems are also the reason why these services or benefits are denied. For instance, families in debt may be entitled to debt relief services but become ineligible for such services because of new debt they incur during the application of these programs. Other examples are youth with behavioral problems who are removed from behavioral training programs because they do not comply with the rules, and drug addicts who are sent away from the rehab clinic because they use drugs in the rehab facility. In these examples, the observed behavior is interpreted as a lack of willingness on the client side to behave responsibly, even though the causes of such behavior may be situated on a deeper level and may be more related to capabilities than willingness. However, welfare agencies may – and often do – treat behavior from a ‘willingness’ perspective, creating a vicious cycle in which support for clients – and solutions to their problems – remain out of reach.

Limited network ties

An important element of the Dutch interpretation of the social investment paradigm is reliance of the networks of vulnerable citizens. For instance, the Social Support Act that was implemented by the Dutch Government in 2007 focuses on the promotion of social integration of people with a disability. Local authorities play a key role in this act. The central government sets out the general framework, but it is up to local authorities to decide how they operate within this framework that consists of nine areas in which the local authorities are expected to perform. Area four is of special interest in relation to the new forms of social risk. This area focuses on the support of informal carers and volunteers. Informal carers are typically family, close friends, neighbors and acquaintances. People are expected to make use of existing network ties. Research shows that since 2007/2008 more attention has been placed on formally supporting this group by local authorities than other policy areas within the field of social policy. However, big differences exist between municipalities (SCP, 2010).

The above situation clearly shows that social policy is being increasingly directed towards reliance on informal care. But not everybody has an extensive network on which they can rely in the case of emergencies. Not only does the width of the network matter, but also the composition. As the case illustrates, people with a high demand for care are usually supported by people nearby (socially and geographically) and with whom they have a close connection; i.e., through bonding social capital. In this context it is better to have a large amount

of bonding social capital than bridging social capital. The case would probably be different in terms of finding a job in a time of harsh labor market conditions.

Not only does the composition of social capital pose a risk, but also the incapability of individuals to manage their own networks in relation to welfare procurement. Because a network is not static but organic, it has to be nurtured and maintained properly to remain in existence. This requires skill in managing social relations and decision-making capabilities based on potential future reciprocity; i.e. social capital revenue (credit slips, Coleman, 1990). But the size of networks is not only dependent on the networking skill of the individual, but also on the potential supply of social relations which can be used to generate social capital. People who are socially excluded are therefore less able to establish networks from which they can gather social capital in relation to welfare procurement because they have less access to these potential social relations (Volker, Flap and Mollenhorst, 2013: 27-38).

Moral Articulation

As stated before, when people are not capable of caring for themselves, they are expected to rely on their personal networks. We argue that the activation of one's personal network to acquire welfare poses the risk of moral articulation. Asking somebody to provide care or support may create a physical, psychological and social burden on the other. This situation may well challenge the normative beliefs regarding the limits of informal care and create a moral dilemma, making it harder for individuals to ask for help, and in some cases may even prevent people acquiring the support or care they need.

A recent study (Grootegoed & Dijk, 2012) illustrates this risk in the context of welfare state retrenchment and client autonomy in long-term care. This study was conducted in the Netherlands among disabled and elderly persons who have reduced access to long-term care and are expected to fall back on their family and friends. Through the analysis of 500 telephone interviews and 30 face-to-face interviews the authors concluded that most of the disabled and the elderly do not seek alternatives to the formal care they used to receive. In order to cope with the moral dilemma that is caused by the existing care cap, and not wanting to bother their family members or friends, they use different techniques to manage their moral problem. They mask the need for care in order to not border their relatives with responsibilities, which according to the interviewees is 'not their duty'. Or they use hinting techniques and avoid asking directly for support. Both techniques result in less care being received than is actually needed. This problem occurs

especially with people who relied on formal care in the past. People who used to receive informal care are less affected by retrenchment policies in long-term care.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this paper we have explored the risks and inequalities that are caused by the transition towards a social investment state. We argue that under the influence of individualization, glocalisation and the increasing emphasis on civil society, individual capabilities and social capital are becoming more important in the procurement of welfare. The risks we distinguish on theoretical grounds are *welfare illiteracy*, *the lack of networks ties*, *the vicious cycle of 'own fault'* and *barriers of moral articulation*. Any country that moves towards a social investment regime may be confronted with – and should be aware of – these risks. These risks are related to the main assumptions of social investment, namely: the importance of education, equality of opportunities, and the shift in responsibilities from the state to social relations and society. The basis of social investment risk is therefore different in nature than the new social risk defined by Bonoli (2005). New social risks are formed by changing socio-economic relations that result in mismatches with the earlier institutional framework.

This theoretical exploration of the risks of the social investment state offers three important insights for academics and policy-makers. First, the risks that we have identified in this paper are caused by erroneous behavioral assumptions in the social investment paradigm. Specifically, the paradigm might overestimate the capacities and the willingness of citizens to adhere to its basic assumptions. The measures that are taken to correct this behavior also start from the same set of behavioral assumptions. Rather than solving a client's social problems through enabling interventions, these measures lead to the persistence of problems, or even a deterioration in clients' well-being. Therefore, a detailed and systematic assessment of the behavioral assumptions in the social investment paradigm is much needed. This assessment should be aimed specifically at the position of the most vulnerable groups in society.

Second, the social investment paradigm seems to reinforce existing differences between social classes rather than redistribute resources among social classes. Many of the instruments of the social investment state are aimed at citizens that are capable and willing of improving their situations. Most notably, (lower) middle classes seem to benefit from the move towards a social investment paradigm, whereas people in the most vulnerable positions see the gap between them and the middle classes widening (see Cantillon, 2011).

Third, in this article we have tentatively identified some new risks that may be related to the social investment paradigm. Even though countries with different types of welfare systems have implemented elements of the social investment paradigm (see Hemerijck, 2017), the ways in which the social investment paradigm has been implemented differ significantly. This may lead to different outcomes in terms of the persistence of inequality and the position of vulnerable groups. We therefore make a plea for a systematic comparison of the implementation and outcomes of the shift towards social investment in different welfare regimes. Such a systematic comparison may focus on the benefits of the social investment paradigm, but should not be blind to social investment risks.

REFERENCES

- 6, P., (2010) When Forethought and Outturn Part: Types of Unanticipated and Unintended Consequences, in Margetts, H., 6, P. and Hood, C. (eds.), *Paradoxes of Modernization: Unintended Consequences of Public Policy Reform*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Aarts, M. (2012) *Socioeconomic determinants of cancer risk, detection, and outcome in the Netherlands since 1990*. Doctoral dissertation. Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam.
- Bone, J.D. (2012) The Neoliberal Phoenix: The Big Society or Business as Usual. *Sociological Research Online*. Vol 17, No. 2, 16
- Bonoli, G. (2005). The politics of the new social policies. Providing coverage against new social risks in mature welfare states. *Policy and Politics* Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 431-449.
- Cantillon, B. (2011). The paradox of the social investment state: growth employment and poverty in the Lisbon era. *Journal of European Social Policy*. Vol 21, No. 5, pp. 432-449.
- Cantillon, B. – Elchardus, M. – Pestieau, P. – Parijs, P van. (eds.) (2003). *De Nieuwe Sociale Kwesties*. Antwerpen: Garant.
- Castles (2004) *The Future of the Welfare State: Crisis Myths and Crisis Realities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Durkheim, E. (2013 [1897]), *Suicide. A Study in Sociology*. New York: The Free Press
- Elchardus, M. – Marx, I. – Pelleriaux, K. (2003). De nieuwe sociale kwesties: begripsverduidelijking en hypothesevorming, in: Cantillon e.a. (2003)
- Friedman, M. (1962) *Capitalism and Freedom*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

- Frey, B. & Jegen, R. (2001). Motivation Crowding Theory. *Journal of Economic Surveys*. Vol. 15, No. 5, pp. 589-611.
- Gerven, M. van – Ossewaarde, M. (2012). The Welfare State's making of Cosmopolitan Europe. *European Societies*. Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 35-55.
- Giddens, A. (1998). *The Third Way. The Renewal of Social Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Granovetter, M.S. (1973) The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol 78, No. 6, pp. 1360-80.
- Grootegoed, E. & Dijk, D van. (2012). The Return of the Family? Welfare State Retrenchment and Client Autonomy in Long-Term care. *Journal of Social Policy*. Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 677-694.
- Hemerijck, A. (ed.) (2017). *The uses of social investment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hoogerwerf, A. (1984) Beleid berust op veronderstellingen: de beleidstheorie, *Acta Politica*, 4, 493-531.
- Jenson, J. (2012). Redesigning citizenship regimes after neoliberalism: moving towards social investment, in
- Jenson, J. – Saint-Martin, D. (2003). New Routes to Social Cohesion? Citizenship and the Social Investment State. *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*. Winter volume.
- Jenson, J. and Saint-Martin, D. (2006). Building Blocks for a new social architecture: The LEGO[™] paradigm of an active society. *Policy & Politics*. Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 429-51.
- Kääriäinen, J. – Lehtonen, H. (2006). The Variety of Social Capital in Welfare State regimes – A Comparative Study of 21 countries. *European Societies*. Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 27-57.
- Kazepov, Y. (ed.) (2010), *Rescaling social policies: Towards multilevel governance in Europe*, Farnham: Ashgate.
- Klerk, M. de, Gilsing R. and Timmermans, J. (eds.) (2010). Op weg met de Wmo. Den Haag. Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.
- Leeuw, F.L. (2003), De beleidstheorie: veronderstellingen achter beleid, in: Hoogerwerf, A. and M. Herweijer (ed.), *Overheidsbeleid: een inleiding in de beleidswetenschap*, Den Haag: Kluwer.
- Leschke, J – Jespen, M (2012) Introduction: Crisis, Policy Responses and Widening Inequalities in the EU. *International Labour Review*. Vol. 151, No. 4, pp. 289-312.
- Mahoney, J. – Thelen, K. (2010) A Gradual Theory of Institutional Change, in Mahoney, J. and Thelen, K. (eds.) *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency, and Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Morel, N. – Palier, B. – Palme, J. (2012). Beyond the welfare state as we knew it? In Morel, N., Palier, B & Palme, J. (eds). *Towards A Social Investment Welfare State? Ideas, Policies and Challenges*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Morel, N. – Palier, B – Palme, J. (2012). Social Investment: a paradigm in search of a new economic model and political mobilization, in Morel, N., Palier, B & Palme, J. (eds). *Towards A Social Investment Welfare State? Ideas, Policies and Challenges*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Nikolai, R. (2012). Towards social investment? Patterns of public policy in OECD world, in Morel, N., Palier, B & Palme, J. (eds). *Towards A Social Investment Welfare State? Ideas, Policies and Challenges*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Oorschot, W. – Arts, W. (2005) The Social Capital of European Welfare States: The Crowding Out Hypothesis Revisited. *Journal of European Social Policy*. Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 5-26.
- Pfeifer, M. (2009) Public Opinion on State Responsibility for Minimum Income Protection: A Comparison of 14 European Countries. *Acta Sociologica*. Vol. 52, No. 2, pp. 117-134.
- Pierson, P. (1994). *Dismantling the Welfare State? Reagan, Thatcher and the Politics of Retrenchment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pintelon, O. – Cantillon, B. – Van Den Bosch, K. – Whelan, C.T. (2013) The social stratification of social risks: The relevance of class for social investment strategies. *Journal of European Social Policy*. Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 52-67.
- Putnam, R.D. (2000). *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Touchstone.
- Sadiraj, K.- Oudijk, D.- Kempen, H. – Stevens, J. (2011). *De opmars van het PGB*. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.
- Schrijvershof, C., Thijs, C., Visscher, K. and Aarts, L. (2008). *Eindevaluatie IRO*. Den Haag: APE.
- Sen, A. (2005). Human Rights and Capabilities. *Journal of Human Development*. Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 151-166.
- Sen, A. (1997) Editorial: Human Capital and Human Capability. *World Development*. Vol. 25, No. 12, pp. 1959-1961.
- Streeck, W – Thelen, K. (2005). *Beyond continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Taylor-Gooby, P. (2004) New Risk and Social Change, in Taylor-Gooby, P. *Rew Risks, New Welfare. The Transformation of the European Welfare State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Taylor-Gooby, P. (2008). The new welfare state settlement in Europe. *European Societies*. Vol 10, pp. 3-24.
- Taylor-Gooby, P. (2011) The civil society route to social cohesion. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*. Vol. 32, No 7-8, pp. 368-385.

- Taylor-Gooby, P. – Stoker, G. (2011). The Coalition Programme: A New Vision for Britain or Politics as Usual? *The Political Quarterly*. Vol. 82, No. 1, pp. 4-15.
- Taylor-Gooby, P. (2013) *The Double Crisis of the Welfare State and What We Can Do About It*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd.
- Tempelman, K., Houkes, A. and Prins, J. (2011). *Niet-gebruik inkomensondersteunende maatregelen*. Amsterdam: SEO economisch onderzoek.
- Van Lanckers, W. – Ghysels, J. (2012) Who Benefits? The social distribution of subsidized childcare in Sweden and Flanders. *Acta Sociologica*. Vol. 55, No. 2, pp. 125-142.
- Volker, B., Flap, H. – Mollenhorst, G. (2013) *Sociale netwerken. Vragen, antwoorden en onderzoek*. Groningen: Noordhoff Uitgevers.
- Wiggan, J. (2012). Telling stories of 21st century welfare: The UK Coalition government and the neo-liberal discourse of worklessness dependency. *Critical Social Policy*. Vol 32, No. 3, pp. 383-405.

FÓRUM

ASPIRING TO A BETTER LIFE, OR SURVIVING ON THE MINIMUM?

Explaining the discrepancies between Hungarians' declared and real financial situation

Csongor Hajdu¹

ABSTRACT *Recent comparison of the consumer confidence of Hungarians with their spending reveals numerous cases when individuals became less confident about their financial situation (expecting it to get worse), yet continued – and even increased – spending, rather contradicting initial expectations. This discrepancy cannot be explained by general, national financial indicators, as income and inflation only provide a partial understanding of the difference between confidence and spending. A review of further determinants highlights the similarities between trends in confidence, poverty, and the social gap, suggesting that the revision and consideration of social benchmarks and previous income trends are significant determinants of consumer confidence and spending.*

KEYWORDS *confidence, spending, income, benchmark, inequality, poverty*
Journal of Economic Literature (JEL): D12, E21, H30

¹ Csongor Hajdu is a research fellow at Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary, and a Retail Measurement Consultant at Nielsen, Hungary, e-mail: csongor.hajdu@yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

In Hungary in 2012 research institutes measured a significant decline in consumer confidence, a metric constructed to capture the self-evaluations of individuals regarding their financial situation. According to international research by Nielsen, a global market research agency, Hungary reached the state of ‘least confident nation in the world’ as confidence declined by 66 percent to one-third of the level of 2005. Economic institutions were expecting this lack of confidence to appear as a reduction in spending, but in reality Hungarians increased their spending significantly. Although this increase in spending occurred during a time of inflation, price increases were not compensated for by the volume of purchases; on the contrary, just as in the preceding year the increase in spending even exceeded inflation, in parallel with the decline in consumer confidence.

This paper presents this phenomenon in detail and analyzes it in a broader timeframe. While the first chapter reveals and explains the observed discrepancy, the following chapters enlist the most important theories from the perspective of income and spending, and compare them to secondary data to test the plausibility of each.

The main goal of the paper is thus to present a list of the most relevant determinants from the perspective of income, and to test each of them with secondary data in order to construct hypotheses that may explain the discrepancy. In addition, the paper provides suggestions for further research: for example, the findings presented herein should be supplemented using theories from other approaches relating to the role of values, trust and reliability in society. From these the most plausible should be statistically analyzed to quantify their impact on spending and confidence; these latter two steps potentially being the focus of separate research efforts and articles.

CONFIDENCE AND SPENDING

Expectations about the reliability of social and economic measures

It is a fundamental expectation that social, economic and political sciences should produce and maintain reliable explanations and forecasts. Market research companies conduct surveys to understand the perceptions and opinions of individuals. Economic and statistical institutions measure macro-level trends,

including GDP, spending, and unemployment. Political organizations conduct qualitative and quantitative research to reveal how people may be addressed during an election period, or whether initiatives have achieved their expected societal goals. But do these measures really generate the expected results without introducing any temporary bias that could ultimately change the final conclusions?

In most cases, the answer to the question above is “yes”. Economic, political and social measures have already been developed at such a high level that the above expectations can in general be met. However, measures that “in general” work, but fail in some situations (of potentially major importance) are not appreciated by governments, political parties or companies. Manufacturing and servicing companies may invest millions of euros into innovations that should not fail due to the incorrect mapping of consumer needs. Political parties may invest several years of campaign work and a significant amount of money into candidate or parliamentary elections, and the last thing they wish is for their efforts to ultimately (and perhaps unpredictably) fail. In the cases when such measures (and ultimately the predictions based on them – be they economic, social or political) fail, this shakes the foundations of whole scientific disciplines and may set back trust in market research, or even broader economic sociology.

However, numerous cases from the recent past exemplify such failed predictions. In Hungary in 2002, the governing party Fidesz was forecast to win the parliamentary elections, but failed to do so. A more recent example is the 2016 U.S. presidential election, in which all the major indicators predicted a win for the Democratic candidate, yet the Republican candidate carried the day.

Unfortunately, it is not only temporary measures that focus on ad-hoc referendums or elections every four years that occasionally fail. Ongoing social and economic indicators that are embedded in everyday economic and financial processes can be biased as well. Although these latter cases may not receive as much attention as some of the failures of ad-hoc measures, this does not mean that their impact is less. On the contrary, considering that ongoing measures tend to work in general, temporary biases may be neglected and left without explanation or methodological improvement. Furthermore, due to the duration and reoccurrence of these biases of regularly applied measures, the total impact of such failures on whole economies and society may even be much greater than the failure of temporary measures. This paper describes a case of when a long-term measure failed to meet initial expectations, and reveals the determinants that should be additionally considered and embedded into the methodological process of its analysis. The case suggests the need for more caution when drawing consequences and creating expectations based on such indicators.

Decline in the confidence of Hungarians

By the end of 2011/beginning of 2012, consumer confidence in Hungary suffered a significant decline. The measure 'consumer confidence' captures the subjective personal evaluations of the financial situation of individuals. This decline in confidence indicates that Hungarian people were less confident about the adequacy of their financial situation to cover their present and future spending.

Nielsen, one of the most important global market research companies, measured consumer confidence in 58 countries across the world using a sample of more than 28000 respondents. Results indicated that by the last quarter of 2011, and again by the second quarter of 2012, Hungary's inhabitants had the lowest level of consumer confidence across the measured 58 countries.

The Consumer Confidence Index of Nielsen (referred to later as 'confidence') is constructed from information about the following three items:

- a) individuals' predictions about their job prospects over the coming 12 months,
- b) feelings about personal finances for the next 12 months,
- c) to what extent individuals consider their current financial situation to be adequate in terms of their ability to purchase the goods they want and need.

Responses to questions about these issues are combined to create a final index number ranging from 0 to 200, where 0 means a total lack of confidence, and 200 the highest level of confidence². In the second quarter of 2012, the highest result for any of the 50 countries that were examined was 120 points (Indonesia), and the global average was 90 points. Hungary had the lowest consumer confidence, with 30 points. Since the time Nielsen started measuring confidence in Hungary in 2005, this was the lowest figure, although this low was reached again within the following nine months (the first time was the fourth quarter of 2011).

In order to understand the implications of this result, the low level of Hungarian confidence can be analyzed through a cross-country comparison. The best benchmarks are on the one hand those countries that are most similar to Hungary in their historical and geopolitical background (Poland, the Czech Republic and Romania, referred to later on as Central and Eastern European countries), as well as those Southern European countries that were impacted most severely by the global economic crisis of 2008, and which suffered the greatest setbacks due to it (Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece).

2 The sample was representative in terms of the age and sex of Hungarian internet users. In 2012, the penetration of internet users was 69%.

The first measure from the comparison that is analyzed as a possible explanation for the low level of Hungarian confidence is GDP in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS). According to the World Bank (2008) “Gross domestic product (GDP) is the measure most often used to quantify economies’ economic activity, and GDP and consumption per capita are basic indicators of economic productivity and well-being”. The hypothesis is that the low GDP of Hungary could be a determinant of low confidence.

Secondary data from Eurostat (2015) support this assumption when looking only at the Southern European countries that have a higher GDP in PPS and higher confidence; however, Central and Eastern European countries that have similar GDP per PPS to Hungary (ranging from -18 to +26 percent compared to Hungary in 2012) had confidence levels significantly exceeding those of Hungary (from 107 to 137 percent). This situation contradicts the expectation that the confidence level in Hungary on an international comparison is determined by GDP.

However, GDP represents the value of goods and services generated by a country, and is only indirectly linked to the amount of income that people can spend (which fact may also determine confidence). For a more relevant perspective, household consumption expenditure should be considered. Findings in this case are quite similar to those for GDP: in terms of household spending, Southern European countries spend more than Hungary, but the spending of Central and Eastern European countries ranges only from minus 8 to plus 33 percent compared to Hungary in 2012 (Eurostat 2015), while confidence exceeds the Hungarian level by 107-133 percent. Even more interestingly, the Czech Republic, whose inhabitants had the highest confidence among the countries in the comparison (exceeding Hungary’s by 133%), had a household consumption level, which was 8 percent lower than the Hungarian level. These findings disprove the hypothesis that the general economic or spending level explains the low level of Hungarian confidence in international comparison.

Contradictory expectations about spending

Even though the low level of Hungarian confidence is an interesting phenomenon, it is just one sign that should draw attention to an even more important one: the trend in confidence and its non-linear correlation with spending. Hungary suffered the most significant decline in confidence among the countries in the comparison during several different time periods. Comparison of the level of confidence in 2012 to previous years reveals that from 2005 (-62

percent since the start of measurement), from 2008 (-51 percent since the start of the global economic depression) and from 2010 (-43 percent since the start of the latest major decline in confidence in Hungary) no other country lost as much confidence as Hungary. What is the reason for such decline? The answer to this question may be found in the relationship of confidence to spending, which factors are closely linked. The main hypothesis of this research is based on the expectation that consumer confidence and spending are correlated; an assumption that has been validated by the findings of several theoretical and empirical pieces of research.

According to the permanent income hypothesis of Milton Friedman (1957), the consumption of individuals is determined not just by their absolute and current income, but also by their expected level of income in the future. As a result, financial expectations – measured using two of the three questions that construct the confidence index – should be reflected by the confidence measure. If this claim holds true, it means that individuals' negative expectations regarding their financial situation (i.e. declining confidence) can serve as a proxy indicator for a decline in spending.

Research by Vadas (2003) analyzed the suitability of the confidence index (specifically, the confidence index of GKI, a major Hungarian economic research institute) for forecasting consumer spending. This analysis was based on the works of Bram and Ludvigson (1998) who investigated whether consumer sentiment could be used to predict future consumer spending in the U.S prior to the 1990s. The empirical findings of Bram and Ludvigson led the authors to conclude that “consumer sentiment can help predict future movements in consumer spending”. Findings of Vadas (2003) about Hungary confirmed this hypothesis by revealing that the above expectation, based on the permanent income hypothesis, is not just a theory but applies in practice: the Hungarian consumer confidence index explained 51 percent of variability in the growth rate of consumption spending. These findings strongly support the initial hypothesis that consumer confidence is correlated to consumer spending in Hungary.

Such expectations are present not only in theoretical or academic work, but are institutionalized in the economic and financial sphere as well. The GKI Institute, one of the most important research companies in Hungary, is an institution with a good reputation and solid methodology for measuring consumer confidence³.

3 The consumer confidence survey of the GKI uses answers to five questions that focus on the “responses to questions regarding the actual and the expected financial situation of households, the actual and the expected economic situation of the country, and the adequacy of purchase of higher value consumer goods” (GKI 2012). The final index value ranges from minus 100 to plus 100. The survey is based on a sample of 1000 respondents, and results are representative for age, sex, education and type of location.

According to the explanation of their method for measuring prosperity, one fundamental expectation of the GKI (2015) is that consumer confidence can be used to forecast spending⁴. Furthermore, the National Bank of Hungary (MNB) specifies in their handbook concerning the use of Hungarian economic data (Ferenczi – Jakab 2002) that “the consumer confidence index of GKI is a lagged indicator of consumption spending”. The basis of this claim is the confidence index of GKI and the findings of Vadas, noted above. What the handbook further mentions is that this practice of using consumer confidence to forecast spending is widespread (e.g. in use at national banks such as the Bank of England, and Bank of Canada).

Both GKI's and Nielsen's measures show that, between 2005 and 2012, confidence significantly declined. Although there are differences between the two indexes in the intermediary period, the change is consistent across both measures, which both also identify a second wave of decline between 2010 and 2012. Based on the previously mentioned theoretical and research findings, the main hypothesis of the research described herein is that such a decline in consumer confidence should indicate a decline in consumer spending.

However, according to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH), household spending increased by 29.7 percent between 2005 and 2012, and by 8.0 percent between 2010 and 2012. In comparison, in the same time period confidence declined by 34–62 percent from 2005, and by 30–43 percent after 2010, as measured by GKI⁵ and Nielsen, respectively. This initial comparison of spending and confidence suggests that we reject the hypothesis that a decline in confidence results in a decline in spending. The finding indicates that when individuals perceive their financial situation to be inadequate for making purchases, and when they do not expect their financial and employment situation to improve in the near future, they do not start saving, but instead may increase spending.

This discrepancy can be observed not only in short- or long-term comparisons, but for several distinct periods. Even at the start of the long period of comparison,

4 Although GKI only uses the confidence index to forecast the volume of retail trade purchases, the findings of Vadas (2003) reveal that it is not only the volume but also the actual value of consumption that may be determined by consumer confidence. For the remaining part of the research, the main approach is based on the findings of Vadas, and the value of spending is used as the factor or reference, while the volume of purchases is considered a separate and limited secondary factor, rather incorporated as a component of total spending.

5 The GKI consumer confidence index was adjusted to align it with the Nielsen confidence index. The initial scale of the GKI index ranged from minus 100 to plus 100, while in the adjusted version values were shifted upwards by 100 to bring them in line with Nielsen scale, which ranges from 0 to 200. This modification was required to harmonize the trend dynamics.

between 2005 and 2007, both confidence measures indicate a decline from year to year, while spending grew. Between 2010 and 2012 there was again a major decline in confidence, in parallel with increased spending. A similar situation occurred again in 2015 when confidence was stable or declined, while spending grew. What may explain the discrepancy between confidence and spending? The following chapter presents some possible explanations from the perspective of income, with the intention of creating an initial filter that can be used to examine (e.g. prior to a regression analysis) whether the identified factors determine confidence and spending.

THEORIES AND POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS

The main presumption of the research described herein is based on the permanent income hypothesis and the further research and findings that build on it. According to this hypothesis, it is not just the absolute level of income or its changes that determine spending, but also the expected level of income. This approach relies significantly on the perceptions of individuals about the adequacy of their finances compared to the desired or required spending, about which factors such as future income or employment situation may also be taken into consideration. Subjective evaluation of an individual's financial situation and the future status of income and employment are two of three components of the consumer confidence index. The main conclusion that may be drawn from this – based on several empirical pieces of research in the U.S and Hungary, as well as on the general practices of research agencies and national banks, as previously described – is that consumer confidence should forecast spending. Translating this assumption into the permanent income hypothesis means that expectations towards individual financial situations should indeed determine spending, so that a decline in confidence should result in a decline in spending, and vice versa. However, the comparison of secondary data indicates that this hypothesis is invalid.

The main goal of this and the following sections is to describe the most relevant theories that can help explain the discrepancy indicated by the secondary data. The intention is to identify the most influential determinants that could be used in a regression analysis in later research.

Income as a partial explanation

Those who are familiar with the economic sciences, especially with monetary policy theory, may consider the Keynesian approach (Keynes 1936) appropriate for explaining the observed situation. This theory suggests that aggregate consumption mainly depends on aggregate income. In the examined case, this could mean two things.

The first scenario involves income growth over the years that exceeds growth in spending. This scenario could provide a partial, but well-founded explanation: Hungarians may have downscaled their spending due to a decline in confidence; however, thanks to the increase in income, this downscaling would be relative to a growing income and would still lead to – slightly lower – growth in absolute spending. Even though this approach may appear to be promising, it leaves open and even emphasizes a very important question: why would consumer confidence decline in a time of both income and spending growth, and even more importantly, when income growth even exceeds spending?

The second scenario consists of income and spending growth of similar magnitude. This would mean that changes in income could indeed determine changes in spending. However, this raises the question why individuals would use their increased income to maintain their level of spending, rather than reduce it, considering that a decline in confidence should reflect a decline in the self-evaluation of financial circumstances. This puzzle may be combined with the question that the validation of the first scenario leaves us with (why would confidence decline at a time of financial prosperity?) and may also raise the question why would spending not decline with confidence at a time when income growth could hardly cover growth in spending?

With the help of data from KSH (2015) about household spending and the net income of households, the above scenarios can be evaluated. The most important condition to consider in this comparison is that even though trends and changes in income and spending may seem to be strongly correlated – an assumption that may be easily constructed even after a cursory look at the data – the time lag between income and spending should be included in any calculations. According to Katona and Mueller (1968), “an increase in spending follows in income gain only with some lag, which may range from six to nine months”. In the present case, this means that the magnitude and direction of each year’s change in spending should correlate to the magnitude and direction of income of both the year under analysis and the year before

that (almost as if the average of the two years' income could be correlated to the spending of a given year)⁶.

Data from KSH (2015) indicate that income may indeed provide a very valid explanation for spending trends. For each and every period of observation (between 2005 and 2012), either the actual or 'delayed' level of income is of a similar magnitude and trend as actual spending⁷. In 2006 and 2007 the change in spending appear to be in line with that year's change in income (4.6 and 4.9 percent for spending, 4.6 and 4.2 percent for income, respectively), while in 2008 the 6.2 percent spending growth may have been the result of the previous year's income growth of 4.2 percent. Between 2009 and 2011 the magnitude and direction of the change in spending seems to reflect the income change of the given years (spending declined by -0.3, then rose by 3.3 and 4.7 percent, while income changed by -0.2 percent, then by 8.3 and 5.3 percent, respectively). Following that period, the change of spending in 2012 (3.2 percent) may be a result of the income change of the previous year (5.3 percent).

Considering that the trend and magnitude of changes in income and spending strongly suggest that income is the main determinant of spending, the following issues were investigated to ascertain whether the first or the second hypothetical scenario better reflected reality (with regard to income exceeding spending): a) if confidence had declined in an environment of prosperity, or b) whether individuals did not reduce their spending when such growth in spending could have exceeded growth in income.

What the data indicates is that both situations existed, but the second scenario more accurately describes the whole duration of study. Calculation of only the average of the changes across the year of observation indicates that while spending grew by a yearly 3.8 percent on average, income grew by only 3.1 percent. This means that what we observe is not a "relative cut-back" of spending compared to a more intensely growing income, rather a spending increasing more rapidly than how income improved; quite the opposite of what the first scenario would suggest.

Splitting this period of examination into two periods (2005 – 2009, and 2010 – 2012) reveals that while in the first period growth in spending (3.9 percent) significantly exceeded income growth (1.9 percent), in the second period it was actually income (4.7 percent) that exceeded spending (3.7 percent). This may

6 Comparable data is only available on an annual basis, so the impact of the estimated lag cannot be precisely calculated. It is assumed to represent a value between the two chronological points (the value in the preceding and in the year under analysis).

7 It would be interesting to analyze whether it is the actual or the delayed level of income that determines spending, and how one affects the other. However, such analysis is beyond the limitations of this paper and should be separately conducted.

create the impression that individuals felt better about their financial situation in the second period, yet the reality is slightly different. This second finding creates a further discrepancy as it indicates that it was actually between 2010 and 2012 when confidence went through a major decline, although in this period financial circumstances improved more than in the preceding years.

Summarizing these findings, we may conclude that although income does seem to determine spending and explain the trend to growth, this situation amplifies the concerns raised initially. What is the explanation for the decline in consumer confidence at a time when income and spending grew – especially at times like between 2010 and 2012 when income growth exceeded spending growth? In addition, why did people not reduce their spending during a time of declining consumer confidence? The following chapters provide an answer to the question of why confidence declined, but the answer to the latter question suggests the consideration of inflation as a possible explanatory factor.

The reason why inflation should be taken into consideration is to evaluate the assumption that the increase in spending was not driven by individuals and households intentionally spending more money, but was rather an inevitable result of consumers trying to maintain the quantity of their consumption at a time when this was more costly (due to increases in prices). If it can be shown that individuals intentionally spent more, this may reflect – in general, and according to the empirical research noted previously – an increase in the self-evaluation of personal financial situations. However, an inevitable and unintentional increase in spending driven by inflation would rather reflect the fact that individuals may have struggled to maintain the quality and quantity of their consumption, which hardship was reflected in the decline of consumer confidence. As a result, if inflation drives spending growth, it makes the decline in confidence ‘reasonable’, indicating that individuals struggled to maintain their consumption and life quality.

If the assumption about inflation is valid, we should observe inflation levels exceeding the level of the spending increase: the level of change in spending should fall between the level of inflation (if the full amount of inflation is absorbed by consumers) and neutral or negative nominal growth (if consumers decreased their total purchases to compensate for increases in price).

Data from KSH (2015) indicate that inflation may indeed be a possible driver of the change in spending; however, they do not seem to fully explain the whole phenomenon. Prices increased every year between 2005 and 2012 at a yearly average of 5.2 percent. At this level, the general increase exceeds the average increase in spending (3.8 percent) as well as increases in income (3.1 percent), so it may be assumed that price increases were an important driver of the increase in spending and the decline in confidence.

However, a more granular look at the data reveals that even though the long-term general trend supports the main assumption that inflation is a strong driver of the increase in consumption, this solution leaves important questions unanswered. The findings suggest that, as inflation drove an increase in spending and people were struggling to maintain consumption levels, consumer confidence declined over the years. However, there are several time periods when this assumption is questionable. From 2005 to 2006, income grew at a higher pace (4.6 percent) than inflation, which means that individuals would have been able to afford to cover price increases, and probably even did so, because spending increased more (at 4.6 percent) than prices (3.9 percent). Yet at such times of potential financial prosperity, consumer confidence declined by 11-13 percent⁸. Another period when income growth exceeded inflation was in 2010 and 2011, when income grew yearly by 8.3 and 5.3 percent and inflation was only 4.9 and 3.9 percent, respectively. In 2011 spending growth even exceeded (at 4.7 percent) inflation (3.9 percent) suggesting that in these two years individuals were willing to spend more from year to year, fundamentally challenging the link with consumer confidence which started to significantly decline after the second half of 2010 and hit its lowest point in the last period of 2011 and first periods of 2012.

In summary, we conclude that based on the secondary data it is reasonable to assume that an increase in spending was enabled by an increase in income, and that inflation may be one of the important reasons for this happening during a period when consumer confidence was on a general downward slope. However, the fact of an increase in income that covers spending raises the question why confidence also declined in such prospering financial circumstances. Inflation may be one of the explanations for the majority of the examined periods, but there are several points in time (like the changes between 2010 and 2012) for which it is not a valid answer. Why did confidence decline between 2010 and 2012, even if income grew significantly and the increase in spending suggests that people perceived this income growth to be sustainable?

Benchmarking

The main hypothesis of this research, which is designed to help understand the discrepancy between confidence and spending, originates from the theory of permanent income. Several theories and pieces of empirical research support

⁸ GKI's adjusted measure and Nielsen's normal measure, average yearly change from 2005 to 2006.

the initial assumption that confidence and spending are correlated. In the cases where this assumption was not valid, the first measure for consideration was income, based on the Keynesian approach to spending. Fortunately, this approach provided valid findings, being that income – and even inflation – may provide a partial explanation for the observed discrepancy. Considering that this latter explanation approached the question from the perspective of income, it was considered advisable to maintain the same approach in the research described in this following chapter, which seeks further possible explanations for the cases that could not be explained, by the Keynesian approach. The theories in this chapter are based on the relative income hypothesis of Brady and Friedman (1947).

The main assumption of the relative income hypothesis is that, besides absolute income, consumption is also determined by the distribution of income in society or community. What this means in the examined case is that it is not only the absolute level and absolute changes of income that should be considered as determinants of consumption, but the place of income within a benchmarking environment (henceforth, ‘benchmarking’).

Benchmarking can have an impact when an individual’s aspired-to level of income or spending departs from their real income and spending. This can lead to a decline in consumer confidence as the individual’s financial situation deteriorates in respect of the level aspired to. This type of negative impact on confidence may even happen in an environment when general income actually grows. Accordingly, benchmarking may provide a valid and thorough explanation for those cases when income and inflation only explain increases in spending, but fail to provide sufficient explanation for declines in confidence.

There are several theoretical findings that suggest the consideration of benchmarking as a determinant in the examined case. Venkat and Ogden (1996) noted that “...human beings have a drive to evaluate their opinions and abilities through comparison with other people” so that “social comparisons may play an important role in shaping consumer judgments”. Ariely (2008) also highlighted the importance of benchmarking, stating that “A man’s satisfaction with his salary depends on...whether he makes more than his wife’s sister’s husband”. Furthermore, Easterlin (1995) also emphasized the importance of comparisons in subjective self-evaluations, arguing that “Judgments of personal well-being are made by comparing one’s objective status with subjective living level norms, which is significantly influenced by the average level of living of society as a whole. Over time, however, a general increase in individual incomes raises societal average”. Coleman (1990) also noted that a widening gap in benchmarking could lead to a decline in confidence: “When there is rapid improvement in conditions, those of some improve more rapidly than

those of others. Those for whom conditions are not improving very rapidly see others, perhaps no more qualified, doing much better than they are. It is from this perspective that they perceive a widening gap, which leads them to feel frustration”.

Furthermore, Skrabski, Kopp and Kawachi (2004) noted that “the theory of relative deprivation suggests that invidious social comparisons triggered during periods of rapid economic change may lead to stress and frustration, especially among those who are left behind on the socioeconomic hierarchy”. In addition to this, findings by Kopp and Skrabski (2000) proved this situation to be valid for Hungary, arguing that “...the deprived strata live their life in a continuous chronic stress and uncertainty”.

As noted in the previous chapter, income and inflation do not seem to be the main determinants of the decline in confidence between 2010 and 2012. The way benchmarking may play a role in the change of confidence is two-fold: on one hand, income benchmarks may have risen, while on the other hand, the financial circumstances of a part of society could have deteriorated. The prior case would presumably be indicated by income gap widening. The latter case could be reflected in declines in the income of some part of society, even if the average income in Hungary grew.

KSH indicators (2015) show that the first situation, a widening social gap, may indeed be a valid explanation for the outlier periods. Between 2010 and 2012, the Gini-coefficient increased from 26.9 to 28.0 points. The percentage of individuals living in severe material deprivation increased from 23.4 to 27.8 percent. Relative poverty increased from 18.2 to 21.0 percent. Adding another year into this comparison (2009) further amplifies this trend, as all measures show greater increase in the three years leading up to 2012. A further interesting finding is that this trend seems to have peaked in 2012, after which a period of stability or even improvement occurred, just as with consumer confidence, which started to improve again after 2012.

Based on this data, it would be realistic to assume that the income gap in society increased between 2010 and 2012, further increasing the average benchmark relative to the income of the less fortunate part of society. On the other hand, the absolute financial situation of a part of society also deteriorated, driven by a decline in income. A detailed split of the net income of the employed (KSH 2015) reveals that, although there was an increase from 2010 to 2011 (6.4 percent) and then until 2012 as well (2.1 percent), this increase was not perfectly distributed. From 2010 to 2011, those who were employed in the private sphere enjoyed a net income increase of 8 percent, while public servants, numerically 28 percent of all those employed, experienced only a 2 percent increase. Even more interestingly, from 2011 to 2012 employees in the private sphere received

a 4.4 percent increase in net income, while public servants even suffered a 3.4 percent decrease. Although income levels represent just one way of segmenting society, it is clearly visible even from this perspective that at least 28 percent of society experienced not just their financial situation declining relative to the benchmark by 2012, but also a deterioration in their actual financial situation. These findings suggest that an increase in income inequality is a possible determinant of the decline in confidence between 2010 and 2012.

Referencing

Besides the above-mentioned perspective of relative income, which considers consumption in relationship to the distribution of income in a broader environment, which defines aspirations, there is another perspective that should be analyzed. According to findings of Duesenberry (1949), it is not only the current absolute and the relative level of income that determines consumption, but also individuals' past level of income. The main reason for this is that individuals or households in general strive to maintain or even increase their level of consumption and the basis of their aspirations is defined by their past experience, especially by the highest level previously achieved. Easterlin (1995) also claims that "the utility one attaches to one's current income level depends also on one's past income". In this research, this phenomenon is called referencing, and is the main focus of this section.

The impact of referencing might be quite important in a country such as Hungary that underwent several major changes in the previous decades, including times of significant development of income and consumption, followed by a setback after the global economic recession of 2008. KSH (2015) indicators about income show that between 2005 and 2012 average yearly growth was 3.1 percent, with the highest level being 8.3 percent and lowest -0.8 percent. Income grew during five of the seven years, and even the years of decline witnessed only minor setbacks that might even be considered times of stability rather than major decline. Between 2005 and 2009 income growth ranged between -0.8 and 4.6 percent, consisting of two years growing at around 4 percent, followed by two years of stagnation. However, the period after 2009 presents a more interesting pattern.

During the two years that lead to consumer confidence dropping to its historically lowest point (in 2012), the argument of Duesenberry regarding the highest level of past income to impact present spending habits may be an important factor to consider. From 2009 to 2010, after two years of stagnation,

income growth peaked at 8.3 percent, the highest level since 2005, and almost twice as high as the growth experienced in 2006 and 2007. This led to an increase in spending (4.7 percent) in the following year (considering the findings of Katona and Mueller [1968] that there is a time lag between changes in income and changes in spending), even exceeding inflation (3.9 percent). Expectations about an increase in income of 8 percent may have been defined at that time; however, the following years did not support such an improvement.

By 2011, income grew only by 5.3 percent and by 2012 only by 0.6 percent, indicating stability rather than growth, compared to previous years. By 2012, inflation was at 5.7 percent, and spending was only growing by 3.2 percent, meaning that individuals had to cut back on total spending to compensate for inflation that could not be covered by (lack of) income growth. Instead of financial prosperity, people may have had to downgrade their aspirations simply to survive the hard times and minimize losses; a major change compared to the situation just two years prior.

These findings lead to the strong assumption that while in 2010 the financial situation was developing so positively that it led individuals to believe it would last, by 2012 the speed of development came to a halt and the lack of income growth and increase in prices left individuals feeling discontent, especially considering that they even had to reduce their total consumption level, not only downgrade their aspirations.

Furthermore, the high level of variability across the years – with two years of income growth followed by two years of stagnation, followed by two years with significant growth leading to another year of stagnation – probably made it extremely challenging for people to evaluate the adequacy of their financial situations and predict whether there was any promise for the future. According to Tversky and Kahneman (1974), “the internal consistency of a pattern of inputs is a major determinant of one’s confidence in predictions based on these inputs.” Individuals may have ended up losing confidence during a time of major changes such as the years before 2012, intensifying the negative impact of referencing that originated from the aspirations that were set quite high and then remained unmet.

CONCLUSION

The main intention of the author of this paper was to raise awareness about the problems of accepting the simple solutions suggested by some economic and social indexes, and to emphasize their temporary biases. As more attention is

being paid to the accuracy of conclusions that are drawn from these measures, and due to the significant problems that are caused when such standard measures fail, it is more important than ever that the economic and social disciplines create a detailed understanding of economic and social processes.

The initial situation that the research focused on was the contradiction between the trends in consumer confidence and spending in Hungary in 2012. On a global comparison, Hungarian society had become the least confident country by the end of 2011/ beginning of 2012. This low level of confidence cannot be explained by reference to GDP, nor by the level of household expenditure, as other CEE countries had similar – and in some cases even lower – GDP or expenditure levels, but significantly higher confidence than Hungary. This fact draws attention to an even more interesting situation: it is not only the absolute level of confidence that is challenging to explain, but also the intensity of its decline, considering that this exceeded the rate for all other countries in the comparison, in every time period examined.

Based on the theory of permanent income, the empirical findings of Bram and Ludvigson (and later by Vadas, as well as the recommendations of the National Bank of Hungary), the assumption was made that consumer confidence should predict spending. However, comparison of the general confidence trend and spending indicated a contradiction.

The first set of explanations for this situation were based on the Keynesian approach to spending, assuming that spending primarily depends on income and on changes in the level of income. The data reveal that income did indeed change in the same magnitude and direction as spending. However, in the second half of the period under investigation consumer confidence continued to decline even though income exceeded spending. This raises the questions why confidence declined in a period of prosperity, and also why individuals did not reduce spending in the longer term if they lacked both income and confidence. Inflation explains spending growth for the majority of the examined periods, but fails to explain each and every time period, especially the years between 2010 and 2012 when confidence significantly declined in an economic environment while income, as well as spending, grew.

The answer is supplied by the relative income hypothesis. Numerous theoretical findings suggest that, beyond level of income, income distribution should also be taken into consideration. This benchmarking approach supports the claim (through several measures that indicate growth in income inequality and poverty) that the gap between the actual financial situation of individuals and expectations may have led to a decline in consumer confidence. In addition, aspirations may have been quite high: in 2010, when confidence started to decline significantly (to its lowest point by 2012), income increased at rapid pace, and

the fact that spending in the following year exceeded inflation suggests that individuals expected their income growth to remain sustainable. However, by 2012 income had stagnated, forcing people to lower not only their aspirations, but also their real spending. This may have further amplified the impact of the growing income gap, and led to the historical drop in consumer confidence.

What the previous findings highlight is that drawing conclusions only from knowledge about confidence, income, or inflation separately may be misleading. It is not only the entirety of these factors that should be taken into consideration when estimating the level of spending or trying to understand consumer confidence, but – and perhaps even more importantly – the situation of relative income; more specifically, the gap between reality and aspirations; the latter being partly the product of social benchmarking as well as past income peak.

With the importance of social circumstances in analysis having been revealed, it is recommended that research, which follows, investigates the determinants that may impact aspirations using an approach that is not focused on income. Considering the most relevant and frequently mentioned phenomena in Hungary, the main focal points for this research should be level of trust (which may impact the commonly mentioned stereotype of the high level of pessimism in Hungary), the definitions of values, and changes in these (considering that Hungary was and probably still is a country that places high importance on material values and conformity), and even measures such as corruption or political stability (which may erode/increase trust in society and predictability).

As the final step of this thorough analysis, and to clarify all the details of the phenomenon, the magnitude of the determinants that may have impacted changes in spending and confidence should be statistically analyzed. These findings should then be applied to the countries of comparison to reveal whether they explain not just trends in Hungarian confidence and spending, but also their relative levels in an international comparison. Findings from this second part of such a research endeavor will be described by the author in a forthcoming paper.

REFERENCES

Printed sources

- Ariely, Dan (2008), *Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions*, New York, HarperCollins Publisher
- Brady, Dorothy S. – Friedman, Rose D. (1947), “Savings and the Income Distribution”, *Studies in Income and Wealth, Conference on Research in*

- Income and Wealth, National Bureau of Economic Research, pp. 247-265.
- Bram, Jason – Ludvigson, Sydney (1998), “Does consumer confidence forecast household expenditure? A sentiment index horse race”, FRBNY Economic Policy Review VOL. 4, No 2, pp. 59-78.
- Coleman, James S. (1990), *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press
- Duesenberry, James S. (1949), *Income, Savings, and the Theory of Consumer Behavior*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press
- Easterlin, Richard A. (1995), “Will raising the incomes of all increase the happiness of all?”, *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* Vol. 27, No 1, pp 35-47. DOI: 10.1016/0167-2681(95)00003-B
- Friedman, Milton (1957), *The Permanent Income Hypothesis. A Theory of the Consumption Function*, Princeton, Princeton University Press
- Katona, George – Mueller, Eva (1968), *Consumer response to income increases*, Washington, The Brookings institution
- Keynes, John Maynard (1936), *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, London, Palgrave Macmillan
- Kopp, Mária – Skrabski, Árpád (2000), “Magyar lelkiállapot az ezredfordulón” [Hungarian state of mind at millenium], *Távlatok* Vol. 50, pp 499-513.
- Skrabski, Árpád Kopp, Mária – Kawachi, Ichiro (2004),” Social capital and collective efficacy in Hungary: cross sectional associations with middle aged female and male mortality rates”, *British Medical Journal, Journal of Epidemial Community Health*, Vol. 58, No 4, pp. 340-345. DOI: 10.1136/jech.2003.010017
- Tversky, Amos Kahneman, Daniel (1974): “Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases”, in Kahneman, Daniel (2011) *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, (pp. 419-432) New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux
- Vadas, Gábor (2003), “Túl a mikrováltozókon: a lakossági bizalmi index és a magyar háztartások fogyasztási kiadásai” [Beyond microdeterminants: the consumer confidence index and the consumption expenditures of Hungarian households], *Statisztikai Szemle*, Vol. 81, No 3, pp. 252-267.
- Venkat, Ramesh – Ogden, Harold J. (1996), “Impact of social comparisons on material satisfaction: the role of similarity”, *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, Vol 9, pp. 160-177.

Online sources

Eurostat

Gross domestic product at market prices: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tec00001&plugin=1> Accessed on 29th June, 2017

Final consumption expenditure of households and non-profit institutions serving households: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/refreshTableAction.do?tab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tec00009&language=en> Accessed on 29th June, 2017

GKI Gazdaságkutató Zrt.

Új modell a kiskereskedelmi forgalom előrejelzéséhez. [New model for forecasting retail trade]: http://www.gki.hu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/kiskereskedelmi_prognosis_ajanlat.pdf Accessed on 29th June, 2017

KSH Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, available at www.ksh.hu

2.2.3.4. Az egy főre jutó éves kiadások részletezése COICOP-csoportosítás, jövedelmi tízedek (decilisek), régiók és a települések típusa szerint: https://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_zhc021a.html

2.2.1.1. Az összes háztartás adatai jövedelmi tízedek (decilisek), régiók és a települések típusa szerint: http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_zhc014a.html

3.6.1 A fogyasztóiár-index: https://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_qsf001.html

2.2.2.1. A szegénységgel vagy társadalmi kirekesztődéssel kapcsolatos fontosabb indikátorok: http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_zaa007.html

2.1.53. Az alkalmazásban állók havi nettó átlagkeresete a nemzetgazdaságban: http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_evkozi/e_qli018d.html

MNB – Magyar Nemzeti Bank

Ferenczi, Barnabás Jakab, M..Zoltán (2002), Kézikönyv a magyar gazdasági adatok használatához. [Handbook for the utilization of Hungarian economic data], https://www.mnb.hu/archivum/Kutatas/mnbhu_elojelzo_modszerek/mnbhu_fresh/mnbhu_felh , Accessed on 29th June, 2017

Worldbank. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Global Purchasing Power Parities and Real Expenditures (2008). <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ICPINT/Resources/icp-final.pdf> Accessed on 29th June, 2017

Nielsen Consumer Confidence Index

<http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/dataviz/consumer-confidence.html>
Accessed on 29th June, 2017

CONDUCTING QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS WITH CHILDREN – METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CHALLENGES¹ –

Kitti Kutrovátz²

ABSTRACT *This paper explores the methodological and ethical challenges of conducting qualitative research – especially individual interviews – with children in relation to an investigation of individual perspectives about the time that parents and their teenage children spend together. From an overview of the topic, three key issues are identified: power inequalities, competence, and parental gatekeeping. First, the paper discusses general challenges and suggests possible responses as far as conducting qualitative interviews with children are concerned, with a focus on the phases of research design and data collection. Second, it reflects on specific questions that are raised in connection with an investigation of the sensitive issues of parental time and technology use. The paper concludes that using a combination of traditional and innovative techniques, and paying attention to taking a reflexive approach throughout the research process, are essential elements of research with children.*

KEYWORDS: *research with children and young people, qualitative interview, methodology, ethics*

¹ This paper was written as part of a National Research, Development and Innovation Fund project ('Race against time', OTKA K120086). An earlier Hungarian-language version of this article appeared in *Prosperitas*. The author is grateful to Gábor Király for his helpful comments.

² Kutrovátz Kitti, PhD student at the Doctoral School of Sociology at Corvinus University of Budapest. kitti.kutrovatz@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses some important methodological and ethical dilemmas related to qualitative sociological investigations that focus on children. It outlines some possible responses and suggestions regarding these issues based on earlier empirical findings. The paper focuses primarily on qualitative interviews, and especially the phase of data collection: some key issues are determined, and the researcher's considerations are elaborated. This discussion of methodological and ethical frameworks was instigated by research that focused on examining the time that parents and their children spend together. However, the paper is primarily written to reflect the universal challenges of undertaking qualitative research with children.

In the previous decades, research that has sought to capture the child's perspective has become a topic of interest of international social studies (Christensen – James 2000; Greene – Hogan 2005). The practice of defining childhood as a social product has become popular in sociological debate, also leading to the interpretation of children as a social group (Christensen – Prout 2005; Mayall 2000). Consequently, the 'missing voice' of children is interpreted in relation to their disadvantageous position and their dependence and subordination to adults (Christensen – Prout 2005). Therefore, understanding the child's perspective is crucial for integrating the opinion of this neglected social group into the sociological debate. Furthermore, the diverse conceptualizations of childhood reflect methodological and ethical dilemmas and ways of conducting research with children (Punch 2002a).

Although qualitative investigations can reveal some important and still unexplored aspects of family functioning, family research mainly neglects this type of approach (LaRossa – Wolf 1985). Moreover, studies that investigate family dynamics primarily focus on parents, neglecting the perspectives of the child (Milkie et al. 2010; Kremer-Sadlik – Paugh 2007; Christensen 2002).

There are no widely accepted practices for conducting interviews with children in the field of sociology in Hungary, and examples of qualitative family research with children are lacking. Thus, to the author's best knowledge there has been no review of methodological and ethical issues related to research with children in Hungary. The current paper is designed to outline the challenges researchers may face, and provide them with guidance. First, the paper describes the processes which have led to the emergence of research into childhood. Methodological difficulties are then discussed. Some potential ethical and methodological recommendations are presented through a definition of some key fields. Finally, the paper summarizes the implications for the above-mentioned research and offers some universal suggestions about interviewing children.

WHY AND HOW HAS IT BECOME IMPORTANT TO EXPLORE CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES?

The sociology of childhood

The more intense exploration of children's perspectives and the spread of research with children was instigated by two changes. First, a shift in the conceptualization of childhood (Qvotrup 1993; Brannen – O'Brien 1995; Christensen – Prout 2005) that also significantly influences how research is conducted (Punch 2002a). Second, the acknowledgement of children's rights, and especially an emphasis on their participatory rights (Morrow – Richards 1996).

Although there is a long tradition of research involving children³, these studies tend to neglect children's voices and opinions, and thus lack the actual *involvement* of children in research (Hill 1997; Morrow – Richards 1996; Brannen – O'Brien 1995). Two theoretical approaches which have influenced this tradition may be mentioned; namely, socialization theory, and developmental psychology (Kirk 2007).

These approaches are based on the differentiation between adults and children, and define childhood as a developmental period, a phase of growing up. Consequently, children are regarded as immature, irrational, and asocial entities who are shaped as social beings through the socialization process (Christensen – Prout 2005).

Social constructionism has questioned the conceptualization of childhood as a biological phenomenon. According to this approach, childhood is also a social and cultural product, and children may be defined as active, competent persons (Christensen – Prout 2005: 48).

Besides changes in the conceptual framework, the acknowledgement of children's rights, which also has fostered the involvement of children in research, must be underlined (Morrow – Richards 1996; Hanafin et al. 2014; Hill 2006). In 1991, Hungary also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 1989). This contains some important articles that highlight the participatory right of children to express their opinions freely and to decide about issues that concern them⁴.

3 Certain fields of sociology focus on children, such as family sociology, gender studies, health and education research (Brannen – O'Brien 1995: 1).

4 Article 12 (1) and Article 13 (1) (UN 1989)

Christensen and Prout (2004) differentiate between four approaches to childhood research based on diverse theoretical paradigms. In the first, children appear as the objects of research, an approach based on the emphasis of their dependent position and vulnerability. Investigations that deal with information about children that is collected from adults – parents, teachers etc. – are good examples of this. The second approach regards children as equal social actors and, consequently, as the subjects of research. However, significant emphasis is placed on the disparities between children and adults, and on judging children's cognitive and social skills when including them in research. The third approach does not differentiate between adults and children; it acknowledges children as real social actors, not only as parts of families and other institutions (Christensen – Prout 2002). The fourth approach defines children as active participants, capable of participating in research design, based on the international declaration of children's participatory rights (Christensen – Prout 2002). Consequently, participatory research methods, such as participatory action research, have spread in research with children (Hill 1997; Punch 2002a).

To summarize these changes, from the 1990s onwards the emerging sociology of childhood has criticized approaches based on the division between adults and children that regards childhood as an object of research according to different levels of cognitive development of children. Consequently, the paradigm that defines children as research subjects, and accordingly involves children at diverse levels and in diverse ways in research has begun to prevail.

Research fields

The processes described above have led to an increase in the sociological interest in children, and (mainly) ethnographic and qualitative investigations have increased in number. The importance of research with children in fields related to health may be highlighted (e.g. the investigation of children's experiences in hospital with chronic diseases and self-care) (Christensen – Prout 2005), since health research approached related ethical problems earlier, and in more detail (Hill 2005). The other relevant field is education research, where research into school life and school performance may be underlined. Furthermore, the issue of identity – ethnic and gender – has also emerged in research with children (Christensen – Prout 2005). Despite the significant role of children in families, family sociology has not researched the experiences of children in families (Morrow – Richards 1996). In this respect, Ellen Galinsky's (1999) representative examination in the 1990s in the US was a pioneering

project that also examined children's perspectives about the relationship between family and work life. Furthermore, from the early 2000s onwards other research explored the perspective of the child concerning family functioning (e.g. Jensen – McKee 2003; Hedegaard 2012).

The Hungarian context

In Hungary only a few sociological research projects with children can be identified, especially concerning qualitative investigations. Primarily, assessments related to international research, (for example, PISA tests in the field of education research [Balázsi et al. 2013]), or research focusing on children's health and lifestyles in collaboration with the World Health Organisation may be mentioned (Németh – Költő 2010). Although children are also included in the target group of the 'Magyar Ifjúság Kutatás' (*Hungarian Youth Research*) (Székely 2013a), most of the respondents are adults (the target group is respondents of 15-29 years of age). Furthermore, the above-mentioned investigations are based on quantitative data collection and do not deal with the methodological and ethical dilemmas of surveying children.

Investigations of the use of electronic media by children have spread, although these typically use focus groups and do not discuss the potentially special procedures required for undertaking research with children (László 2005; Székely 2013b). As far as the discussion of these methodological dilemmas is concerned, a focus group inquiry among children in school undertaken by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Center for Social Sciences "Lendület" RECENTS research group is investigating this issue (Bocskor – Szilasi 2015).

METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CHALLENGES

Scholars' perceptions about childhood and society's idea of children determines how research with the latter is conducted. The theoretical paradigm adopted by the researcher significantly influences whether similarities or differences between adults and children are emphasized. Consequently, elaboration of these similarities and differences is the focus of methodological and ethical literature (Christensen – Prout 2002; Morrow – Richards 1996; Punch 2002a; Hill 2005). The scholar's perspective about this issue affects all of the research processes (Punch 2002a).

In line with the approaches outlined by Christensen and Prout (2002), we regard children as competent persons and equal actors, and thereby as the subjects of research. Notwithstanding this, their differences from adults may be considered significant, and thereby shape our methodological framework. In following this theoretical approach, research with children may not be conducted in the same manner as with adults (Gibson 2012), and it is highly important that basic differences are taken into account by planning for research with children (Hill 2005). This standpoint also influences the challenges described in the following section of this paper.

Hill (2005) distinguishes three main differences between adults and children: discrepancy in verbal competence, unequal power relationships, and the additional vulnerability of children. Concerning verbal competence, age-related disparities are undeniable (in terms of vocabulary and – apart from verbal skills – in understanding and maintaining attention). The unequal power relation between adults and children is based on the existence of an adult-centered society that means that children are under control of adults (Punch 2002a). The deconstruction of their marginal position and related power inequalities is the most central issue in research with children. Moreover, this is closely related to the issue that children are more vulnerable and are more exposed to persuasion and manipulation (Hill 2005).

Regarding similarities, there are no major disparities in memory and recollection between adults and children (Hill 2005). Moreover, the investigation of subjective feelings and thoughts – typically the interest of qualitative family research – does not require accuracy of recall (Gibson 2012). Furthermore, children have the same rights concerning what information about the research is shared (Hill 2005). Consequently, differences between adults and children do not mean that children are less reliable research subjects (Greene – Hill 2005).

Research ethics

In the debate surrounding research with children, ethical considerations are typically more emphasized than methodological ones (Punch 2002a). In the following section, the important issues of research ethics will be briefly elaborated.

Two dimensions of research ethics can be distinguished (Guillemin – Gillam 2004; Mazzone – Harcourt 2014). The first one concerns the formal procedures that are called ‘procedural ethics’ by Guillemin and Gillam (2004:

263). This includes adhering to the content of codes of ethics and the approvals and permissions of ethics committees that ensure that the methodology and the implementation of the proposed research meet the ethical requirements of the specific field of science (Mazzoni – Harcourt 2014). The issue of research consent is one of the central topics in the ethical regulation of research with children (Morrow – Richards 1996). The Hungarian Sociological Association's Code of Ethics (2001) does not specifically deal with issues related to conducting research with children. Based on the American Sociological Association's Code of Ethics (2008) and examples of other Hungarian scientific communities of practice – such as psychology, and market research (Hungarian Psychological Association 2004; ICC/ESOMAR 2009) – it can be concluded that researchers should obtain consent both from children and parents when involving children in research (the issue of informed consent is discussed subsequently).

The other dimension of ethics is its practical application in the field of research. This concerns everyday ethical dilemmas which are not predictable, and which compel the researcher to make decisions at any stage of the research. The authors call these situations 'ethically important moments', or 'micro-ethics' (Guillemim – Gallim 2004: 265). These may involve situations when participants feel uncomfortable during research, or when the researcher has to decide whether they can discuss a sensitive topic. Phelan and Kisella (2013: 84) describe some research situations that exemplify these moments: because of a child's nonverbal cues, the researcher feels that the atmosphere has become tense and more uncomfortable, accordingly, the participant avoids eye contact, becomes quieter and stares at the floor. The researcher does not ask any more questions about the topic, and lets the child lead the interview. In the end, the decision results in important and until-then unexplored information.

Consequently, obtaining formal approval is not enough for managing unpredictable situations. The researcher's personal responsibility is also crucial because they decide directly in the field about ethical concerns (Mazzoni – Harcourt 2014). A combination of the two approaches (formal procedures and ethics in practice) and the continuous reflexivity of the researcher are required if research is to be carried out in an ethical manner (Christensen – Prout 2002). The notion of reflexivity is essential: Guillemim and Gillam (2004) extend its application to ethical practices when they suggest that "Adopting a reflexive research process means a continuous process of critical scrutiny and interpretation, not just in relation to the research methods and the data, but also to the researcher, participants, and the research context" (p. 275). Therefore, this issues is of notable significance in research with children (Christensen – Prout

2002; Punch 2002a). Some practices of reflexivity will be discussed among the recommendations that follow.⁵

In conclusion, despite the ways in which children are distinguished from adults, no guidelines are available about conducting research with this group (Gibson 2012). This paper was thus written to provide some suggestions and identify some of the dilemmas related to key areas. In the literature about research with children, ethical and methodological concerns are largely mixed. Thus, these concerns will not be elaborated separately, but the paper instead focuses on the three sources of adult-child differentiation mentioned previously: power inequality, competence, and parental gatekeeping. (The latter relates to the vulnerability of children, since contacting children is possible only through adults.) In the following, various difficulties – methodological and ethical – associated with these three key issues are discussed, and possible responses are described.

Power inequality

Dilemmas

The researcher's position of power and status with regard to children primarily raises ethical concerns; furthermore, the interpretation of research findings is responsible for most of the difficulties (Punch 2002a; Hanafin et al. 2014). Nevertheless, power inequalities may also be taken into consideration during the phases of research design and data collection. First of all, this might influence the participation of children. Gatekeepers can decide whether to allow researchers to approach children, raising ethical issues and also decreasing the reliability of data. The problems of gatekeeping are elaborated below.

Furthermore, fundamental inequalities exist between the power of the researcher and research participants. For this reason, the issue of social desirability can arise: participants may try to impress the researcher by providing answers which they believe will be viewed positively. This can influence the data significantly. In the case of research with children, a further power dimension – the power differential between adults and children – can strengthen these effects (Punch 2002a).

⁵ Provision of a detailed discussion about the practices of reflexivity is beyond the scope of this paper. For examples of the elaboration of the concept, and guidelines about how to practice reflexivity, see e.g. Warin 2011, or Phelan – Kinsella 2013.

Furthermore, the research method can affect power inequality. Traditional methods – such as qualitative interviews – are especially liable to increase the inequality that exists between researcher and research participant. Children might not tell the truth for many reasons: for example, to avoid embarrassing or painful conversations, or because of a feeling of shame. Face-to-face interviews can thus be especially problematic, since children are often asked to respond to notably personal questions – concerning, for example, their relationship with parents or their personal satisfaction – to a strange adult, in a situation in many ways similar to an exam (Punch 2002a).

Moreover, the research setting may also enhance unequal power relations. The majority of research projects with children occur in institutions such as schools or medical institutions where children have less control (Punch 2002a). Consequently, the research setting may affect the findings. Despite this observation, earlier empirical experience indicates conflicting results from interviewing at home. On the one hand, the home environment supports informality and greater autonomy (Mayall 2000), but on the other, children may consider personal questions and questions about domestic relations to be intrusive in the home environment (Hill 2006). The problem of the researcher's role also arises with interviewing at home, since the former are guests in the household (Mayall 2000, Jordan 2006).

Suggestions

In line with the above-elaborated dilemmas related to power inequalities, two issues which might enhance the empowerment of children may be highlighted: ensuring free choice of participation and of research conditions, and selection of the appropriate research method.

First, obtaining informed consent can provide children with the right to decide about their participation. Moreover, guaranteeing children's free choice to participate can help the interviewer establish good relations through enhancing comfort and building trust. Maintaining a positive and confidential relationship between researcher and child is indispensable, and may also increase the reliability and validity of data that is gathered (Punch 2002a).

There is an additional and important function of obtaining informed consent: the process informs participants about the details of the research (i.e. goals, what is expected from the participants, how long it will take, and how the data will be used and disseminated). Sharing such information contributes to trust-building (Hill 2005).

If the child is not able to give consent, they must be informed verbally about the research (the researcher making sure that they comprehend the process) and they should freely agree to participate (Hanafin et al. 2014). Obtaining consent from a child might require specific forms of preparation, the description of which goes beyond the scope of this article. Gibson (2012) outlines some strategies that researchers can use to facilitate the understanding of consent. There is evidence in the literature on research methodology that teenagers are able to give informed consent, and that children of over seven years old can meaningfully give their assent to participating in research. However, parental consent is necessary in each case (Hanafin et al. 2014).

Concerning practices of reflexivity, informed consent should also be construed in a reflexive manner as a process rather than as a one-off event. In clarifying the role of the children involved in the research process, the researcher should inform children that they may withdraw from the study at any time, or not answer uncomfortable questions (Hill 2005; Warin 2011; Gibson 2012). Furthermore, revisiting the child's assent throughout the research process by observing their verbal and nonverbal cues and offering them the chance to withdraw consent may improve reflexivity (Phelan – Kinsella 2013).

Furthermore, children are empowered if they can decide about the conditions of the research. Concerning the interview technique, participants may have more freedom than in the case of other qualitative methods such as focus groups or participant observation. Being given free choice of location and time of interview might increase confidence in the researcher (Greene – Hill 2005). Similarly, Gibson (2012) suggests that the researcher engage in activities with children to promote enjoyment of the process and create a partnership that builds trust and thereby decreases the power differential. This is crucial mainly in adult-dominated places where children have even less control (Punch 2002a). Connected to this, it might be especially beneficial to interview children in their own spaces, where they feel comfortable and safe. Concerning the researcher's role in the home of the family under investigation, it is important that this is clarified, and that boundaries are established in advance. The researcher must adapt to the hosts' – thus, the child's – needs (Mayall 2000). Moreover, Jordan (2006) proposes that families may define the researcher's role differently, and the interviewer should acknowledge that these roles shape the home environment. In relation to this, researchers should continuously question the child's perception of their role, and reflect on this in order to empower participants (Phelan – Kinsella 2013).

In connection with the interviewer's role, gender is highly important, a fact which should be taken into account in the research design. For example, Gibson (2012: 151) suggests that young women can establish rapport with children more easily because they do not seem threatening.

Second, using the appropriate research method can also mitigate inequality. Many researchers (Punch 2002b; Greene – Hill 2005) consider the application of task-based innovative methods – for example, written methods (such as drawing, or the diary method) or the application of visual techniques (picture-taking by children) – to be effective techniques. Punch (2002a; 2002b) argues that these methods may decrease unequal power relations, because in these situations children do not have to immediately furnish ‘proper’ answers, meaning that they can think over the subject of the research. One piece of research in Scotland with children aged 13-14 applied the innovative “secret box” technique: participants responded to sensitive questions in written form by placing answers in a closed box (Punch 2002b).

Moreover, Warin (2012) argues that the application of these participatory methods promotes reflexivity, thereby fostering rapport and creating a more positive research experience.

In sum, power inequalities may influence the child’s freedom of choice to participate, and data may be less reliable because children seek to impress the researcher, primarily in one-to-one situations (Punch 2002a). Accordingly, the distance between researcher and participants should be reduced in order to obtain valid and reliable data. Obtaining consent, providing a free choice of research conditions, and applying appropriate methods are effective solutions.

Competence

Dilemmas

What follows is a discussion of a critical subject: the competence of children. The different approaches to the interpretation of childhood determine whether children are considered competent to be involved in an investigation as research subjects, and in some cases also to be actively involved in research design. The researchers’ standpoint regarding their competence can influence which age group will be chosen as the target group of the research, and which research technique is considered to be suitable.

Concerning the competence of children, we find age-based distinctions to be crucial. Most research projects based on the developmental perspective seek to identify an age group which is considered to be competent enough to provide usable data (Hill 1997). However, many researchers argue that age-based differentiation must be viewed critically. Accordingly, although disparities in understanding and in communicative competence must play a central role, age

should not be identified with level of development (Greene – Hill 2005; Gibson 2012). On the one hand, the latter approach conceals in-group diversity (Greene – Hill 2005), while differences in gender and social and ethnic background also influence methodological considerations. On the other hand, models of the development of children are socially and culturally determined (Punch 2002a: 324). However, the importance of age in society cannot be disputed, since it is a component of how children's life paths are defined. Children's progress at institutions (for example, the educational system) suggests that children of similar ages have similar experiences (Greene – Hill 2005).

Connected to this observation, the researcher may face the challenge of engaging children in developmentally appropriate research. Here, the choice of applicable methods and questions that are suited to the child's developmental abilities and to their understanding and communication competences are important factors (Gibson 2012).

Suggestions

Despite the critiques of age-based differentiation, most researchers suggest that cognitive developmental level related to age is an important dimension that researchers should be aware of (Mauthner 1997; Gibson 2012). Gibson (2012:151) proposes that “there is general agreement that by age 7, most children have the skills necessary to provide accurate and useful information when interviewers employ methods that are developmentally appropriate”. In line with this, Mauthner (1997) considers individual interview technique and the application of self-reporting instruments appropriate for investigating older children.

Moreover, the selection of children according to age is also highly relevant in terms of constructing focus groups. It is recommended that children should be no more than two years apart in age to avoid the influence of peer pressure, or the tendency for older children to influence or dominate younger fellows (Gibson 2012: 152). However, the existence of diversity in skill and competence among children in the same age group is undeniable. In conclusion, a balance should be found that avoids the bias that the researcher's preconceptions about a certain age group overly defines their approach (Kirk 2007: 1256).

The choice of the appropriate research technique results not only in the empowerment of children, but also contributes to information being obtained from children with methods suited to their skills and preferences (Punch 2002b).

In the case of combining interviews with innovative techniques, the popularity of the ‘child-friendly’ method has increased. Some scholars argue that emphasizing the ‘child-friendly’ nature of techniques runs contrary to the

conception of the new sociology of childhood because it underlines the claim to children's immaturity and incompetence (Punch 2002a). Moreover, these methods may also be useful for investigating adults. As a result, Punch (2002a) argues against the use of this term. This position is also confirmed by children's opinions about diverse interview strategies: an earlier piece of research found that children did not prefer task-based methods to traditional interviews (Punch 2002b). The diversity of children is reflected in their research preferences, which can also define the choice of method(s) (Greene – Hill 2005). Using a variety of methods might be an effective strategy for grasping the diversity of childhood and exploring children's diverse perspectives (Hill 2006). Interviews can be effectively combined with task-based instruments; this could make the research more enjoyable, and help to maintain interest (Hunleth 2011). For example, the use of participatory photo interviews (also referred to photovoice⁶) as a visual technique may be highlighted (Zartler – Richter 2014; Jorgenson – Sullivan 2010). Similarly, eliciting drawings with younger children or using diary writing might be also an efficient tactic (Punch 2002a). In sum, combining traditional and task-based techniques can result in rich findings (Punch 2002b).

Furthermore, concerning the different linguistic abilities of children, observation of children and spending some time learning their use of language and adapting their vocabulary might be a good strategy (Gibson 2012).

To sum up the issues with competence, researchers are faced with the challenge of selecting the appropriate age group and also of choosing appropriate methods with which to investigate children with different skills and competences. Researchers must remain aware of the nature of childhood development, and should combine this knowledge with their personal experience of children.

Gatekeeping – parents

Dilemmas

It is of high priority that children who participate in research are protected. This goal in some ways conflicts with the need to promote children's research participation, as presented above (Hanafin et al. 2014). The requirement of the primacy of protection of children, because of their vulnerability, raises several issues.

6 Photovoice refers to the method whereby children take pictures about specific topics that are later presented and discussed during an interview.

To protect children, there is consensus that the consent of adults – primarily of parents – is required for their research participation (Hanafin et al. 2014; Hill 2005). The reason for this is children's legal status; namely, that they are dependent on parents, and researchers typically contact them through adults. Depending on the subject and the location of the research, different people may be gatekeepers (primarily parents, but also teachers and educators) (Hill 2005). With a focus on family research, parental gatekeeping is discussed below.

First of all, parental gatekeeping considerably influences the recruitment of the research participants (Hanafin et al. 2014). Although many countries have ratified the above-mentioned UN convention supporting the right of children to form an opinion about certain issues (especially when they are mature enough to do so, such as when they are teenagers), if parents do not consent, children may not participate in research regardless of their willingness (Hill 2005). Sensitive research topics and questions (concerning, for example, drug use, domestic violence, adolescents' sexual behavior, etc.) and the time-consuming nature of certain types of research (such as the individual interview) might cause parents to reject their participation (Hanafin et al. 2014). However, parental consent might also affect children's contributions since it is more difficult for children to refuse to participate if their parents wish them to do so. Situations may occur when the child is moody, feels uncomfortable, or does not really wish to cooperate with the researcher (Hill 2005). For this reason, Warin (2011) suggests the practice of reflexivity in the form of remaining ethically mindful of the disparity between gatekeeper consent and children's consent.

Furthermore, another difficulty is that parents often have the right to be present during interviews. This problem particularly arises at home and can significantly influence and bias children's responses. Mothers often want to be present at interviews and to have some degree of control over their child's answers – especially with a younger child – in order to convey a picture of a happy and healthy family (Mauthner 1997: 19). Moreover, parental presence seriously undermines an atmosphere of confidentiality and the child's right to privacy, such as data protection (Hanafin et al. 2014). This problem mainly emerges during family research when the diverse perspectives of several family members are the focus of investigation (Mauthner 1997).

Suggestions

Managing parental gatekeeping in family research is one of the most challenging issues. Building trust with parents and explaining the research process and goals comprehensively can be effective strategies for ensuring

parents do not dominate (Hill 2005). In this process, pre-meetings with the family might permit causal conversation that enhances trust in the researcher (Gibson 2012). Additionally, offering detailed information about the research and avoiding conducting interviews at the first meeting can help mitigate this effect of gatekeeping, even if parents are ultimately present during interviews.

Notwithstanding this fact, the presence of parents may be also reassuring for the child, making them feel more comfortable with the researcher and strengthening cooperation (Hill 2005). However, researching family functioning from diverse perspectives can make it especially difficult to obtain reliable data from children in the presence of parents. The ideal solution may be when the interview takes place in an open space, but out of parental earshot. However, this is not feasible in many households, or if parents cannot fully accept the child's right to privacy. In this case, participants may answer sensitive questions in written form (Hanafin et al. 2014).

Lastly, and most importantly, researchers should reflect on parental presence and on their reasons for wanting to be included in the research environment. Parental influence should be continuously negotiated by the researcher, and should be seriously taken into account during data analyses and interpretation.

In conclusion, adult gatekeeping may affect the participation of children and decrease the reliability of data. This effect can be mitigated by building trust in the researcher, and by comprehensively describing the research processes in advance. Also, the presence of parents should be reflected on during the process of analysis and dissemination.

METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In this section that reflects on the above-discussed dilemmas, methodological implications related to research into parental time are summarized (see Table 1). Our research is currently in the design phase. At this point arises the issue of target group selection, and of specific methodological and ethical challenges related to research with children.

The forthcoming research is designed to investigate the role of time in family dynamics based on the time parents and children spend together. It seeks to examine how shared time is connected with the use of technology, and will explore features, quality and perceptions of time. The research thus applies a qualitative methodological approach which is appropriate for investigating the quality component of time and family members' perceptions about it. Moreover, the qualitative approach supports in-depth understanding of preferences and

strategies related to time use, use of technology, and related attempts to create balance. Since we aim to explore family members' perspectives of shared time and of family dynamics, and to compare the perspectives of parents and children, the research will involve conducting linked, semi-structured interviews with both parties (at least one parent and the child) separately.

Previous research projects suggest the application of several methods; a combination of traditional and task-based techniques. On the one hand, using task-based methods may empower children; on the other hand, this approach may also be adjusted to the diversity of competences and preferences. Based on this previous research experience, we are considering involving photos and diaries in our research. Similarly to with participatory photo interviews, children can be asked to take photos of their technological environment (Jorgenson – Sullivan 2010). This can facilitate the establishment of rapport and comprehensive observation of domestic scenes. Asking children to write diaries about one of their typical weekdays and weekend days might also be an effective way of obtaining information about children's everyday lives (Punch 2002a).

Concerning target group selection, the issue of competences in relation to the research topic has been considered. It was important to choose an age group which will be competent to participate in semi-structured qualitative interviews. In spite of the critique of age-based differentiation, the literature suggests that individual interviews may be successfully conducted with older school-aged children.

Furthermore, the field of research often affects the definition of the age group. Since we consider the impact of technology use on shared time to be significant, we have chosen to investigate adolescents. Also, investigations of technology suggest that there is a spectacular change in children's use of technology at around ten years of age. Moreover, previous empirical findings confirm that teenagers' use of technology is very intensive and differs from adults' (Aarsand 2007; Dén-Nagy et al. 2012). These facts also motivated our research interest and influenced the definition of the target group, selected as individuals aged between 12 and 16 years.

The issue of the research location arose related to empowerment and parental gatekeeping. The home environment is the most practical choice for investigating parental time when both parent and child are being addressed. Moreover, earlier research experience underlines the more confidential and more informal nature of interviewing at home. Furthermore, since the research also focuses on the use of technology at home, the present researchers decided that such an approach would be especially useful for obtaining further insight into families' living spaces.

Related to the investigation of parental time, the exploration of the satisfaction and opinions of family members – especially children's – make the subject

particularly sensitive. Previous qualitative research experience confirms the tendency for participants to present the family as a unit (Jordan 2006). As a result, it can be difficult to obtain valid and reliable answers about family functioning and relations (Mauthner 1997). For this reason, use of the ‘secret-box’ that allows answers to sensitive questions to be given in written form is considered potentially beneficial.

In addition, the potential impact of parental presence must also be taken into account. We consider important the provision of detailed information to research participants about the investigation (its process and aims). Moreover, pre-meetings with families can be used to decrease the chance of parental presence by building trust in the interviewer.

Lastly, the practice of reflexivity is needed because of the sensitive nature of the issue, and of parental influence. Moreover, the circumstances of the research must be taken into consideration in the process of data analysis and interpretation.

Table 1: Methodological and ethical dilemmas related to research with children

Dilemmas	Recommendations	Authors' response/plan
<i>Unequal power relations</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • influence on research participation • issue of social desirability (reliability and validity) • impact of research location (having control) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – double effect of home environment: self-sufficiency vs. intrusion – researcher's diverse role in home environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehensive information, request informed consent • form partnerships with children • use innovative/task-based research methods • practice reflexivity, recognize ethically important moments • support freedom of choice regarding the research conditions/settings • keep reflecting on the researcher's presence in the home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehensive information, request informed consent from both parents and children • pre-meet families to establish confidential relationships • use individual interviews and integrate photo interviews and/or diaries • interview at home: influence of the research topic • establish boundaries in advance, support flexibility, continuously adapt to participants' needs
<i>Competence</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the issue of defining the target group: diversity vs. commonality in same age groups • choosing developmentally appropriate research methods • diversity in skills, competences • different linguistic abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical selection of cases by age, ignoring researchers' preconceptions; at the same time, being aware of developmental level of specific age group • use variety of research methods, a combination of traditional and task-based techniques • learn the child's use of language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define target group (12-16 years) according to research topic (technology use) and cognitive level of development when conducting individual interviews • involve other techniques (photos/diaries) • use experiences from pilot research to adapt to children's vocabulary
<i>(Parental) gatekeeping</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining research participation • double effect of parental presence • interviewing at home: reliability, data protection, right to privacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer detailed information about the research • revisit the child's choice to participate • allow answers to sensitive questions to be given in written form • take research settings into account in data analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform participants in written form and verbally • remain reflexive in terms of participation • integrate 'secret box' and other similar instruments to facilitate written answers • take parental presence and other influential factors of home environment into account in data analysis and interpretation

CONCLUSION

The new conceptualizations of childhood and the interpretation of children as a social group are enabling researchers to carry out comparative research (Christensen – Prout 2005). Moreover, this approach will help with combining the perceptions and experiences of parents and children in a forthcoming investigation of parental time. This paper has discussed the methodological dilemmas of research with children, focusing mainly on the qualitative interview.

The new sociology of childhood highlights the diversity of childhood but also emphasizes its universal nature. On the one hand, the conception of childhood as a social construct has allowed the recognition of childhood diversity. On the other hand, this has resulted in children being defined as a unified social group, with specific similarities (Christensen – Prout 2005). Therefore, in designing and conducting research with children it is highly important to find a balance between these viewpoints (diversity and commonality). The researcher's preconceptions about children and childhood significantly determine the research method, thus it is important to remain reflexive about these preconceptions at the stage of research design.

The most important source of ethical and methodological problems in research with children is the inequality of power between adults and children (researcher and participants). Concerning this issue, two key points are underlined. On the one hand, the importance of choosing an appropriate method has been highlighted. A combination of innovative, task-based techniques and traditional methods can support empowerment. On the other hand, addressing children's rights to make decisions related to participation, location, or the research process may contribute to building trust in the researcher.

Furthermore, the researcher's appraisal of how competent children are in terms of research participation is also a significant determinant of the methodological approach. The selection of method plays an important role concerning the issue of competence. Based on previous empirical experience, it is suggested that a combination of traditional and innovative techniques can be adapted to individual competences; moreover, this approach is interesting for participants and also supports a multifaceted process of data collection (Punch 2002a).

The research topic may also determine which age group will be investigated because of the common experiences of children in the same age groups. However, age-based selection should be done critically according to an appraisal of children's competences. The researcher should remain aware of their preconceptions, so that the diversity that exists within children of a single age group is represented.

While numerous researchers have argued for children's involvement in investigations because of their thus-far ignored perspectives and the need to support their participatory rights, the priority that must be given to protecting children can significantly affect their participation. Related to this, the role of parental gatekeeping should be underlined. Provision of detailed information about the aims of the research is one solution for avoiding parental presence, especially when investigating family dynamics. Otherwise, when interpreting and disseminating results potential parental influence should be taken into account.

In conclusion, in research with children the importance of reflexivity should be emphasized. The researcher should reflect on their own role and preconceptions; moreover, reflexivity should be evident in the choice of method, and present throughout the research. By this means, more ethical research can be carried out.

REFERENCES

- Aarsand, Pål André (2007), *Around the Screen. Computer Activities in Children's Everyday Lives. Dissertation*, Linköping University, The Department of Child Studies, <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:23606/FULLTEXT01.pdf?gathStatIcon=true> (2015. 10. 25.)
- American Sociological Association (2008), *Code of Ethics and Policies and Procedures of the ASA Committee on Professional Ethics*, Washington, American Sociological Association, <http://www.asanet.org/images/asa/docs/pdf/CodeofEthics.pdf> (2016. 10. 25.)
- Balázs Ildikó – Ostorics László – Szalay Balázs – Szepesi Ildikó – Vadász Csaba (2013), *PISA 2012 Összefoglaló jelentés [PISA 2012 Summary Report]*, Budapest, Oktatási Hivatal http://www.oktatas.hu/pub_bin/dload/kozoktatas/nemzetkozi_merekek/pisa/pisa2012_osszefoglalo_jelentes.pdf (2016. 10. 02.)
- Bocskor Ákos – Szilasi Katalin (2015), *“Baráti kapcsolatok és népszerűség hatodik osztályosok körében: Egy fókuszcsoporthoz tartozó kutatás eredményei és módszertani implikációi” [Friendships and popularity among students in sixth grade: results and methodological implications of a focus group research]*, Budapest, A bizonytalanság szociológiája. A Magyar Szociológiai Társaság és az ELTE Társadalomtudományi Kar konferenciája, 2015. november 19–21.
- Brannen, Julia. – O'Brien, Margaret (1995), “Childhood and The Sociological Gaze: Paradigms and Paradoxes”, *Sociology* Vol. 29, No 4, pp. 729–737. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0038038595029004011>

- Christensen, Pia – James, Alan (2000), *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices*, London, Falmer Press
- Christensen, Pia Haudrup (2002), “Why More “Quality Time” Is Not on The Top of Children’s Lists: The “Qualities of Time” For Children”, *Children & Society* Vol. 16, No 2, pp. 77–88. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/chi.709>
- Christensen, Pia – Prout, Alan (2002), “Working with Ethical Symmetry in Social Research with Children”, *Childhood* Vol. 9, No 4, pp. 477–497. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0907568202009004007>
- Christensen, Pia – Prout, Alan (2005), “Anthropological and Sociological Perspectives on The Study of Children”, in: Greene, S. – Hogan, D., ed., *Researching Children’s Experience: Approaches and Methods*, London, Sage, pp. 42–60. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781849209823.n3>
- Dén-Nagy Ildikó – Király Gábor – Paksi Veronika (2012), “A család változásai és az infokommunikációs technológiák” [Changes in family and infocommunication technologies] Budapesti Gazdasági Főiskola, Útkeresés és növekedés 11. Tudományos Konferencia (2011. november 10–11.), http://elib.kkf.hu/okt_publ/tek_2011_36.pdf (2015.01. 20.)
- Galinsky, Ellen (1999), *Ask the Children: What America’s Children Really Think about Working Parents*, New York, William Morrow
- Gibson, Jennifer E. (2012), “Interviews and Focus Groups with Children: Methods That Match Children’s Developing Competencies”, *Journal of Family Theory & Review* Vol. 4, No 2, pp. 148–159. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-2589.2012.00119.x>
- Greene, Sheila – Hogan, Diane (ed.) (2005), *Researching Children’s Experience: Approaches and Methods*, London, Sage
- Greene, Sheila – Hill, Malcolm (2005), “Researching Children’s Experience: Methods and Methodological Issues”, in: Greene, Sheila – Hogan, Diane, ed., *Researching Children’s Experience: Approaches and Methods*, London, Sage, pp. 1-21.
- Guillemin, Marilys – Gillam, Lynn (2004), “Ethics, Reflexivity, and “Ethically Important Moments” In Research”, *Qualitative Inquiry* Vol. 10, No 2, pp. 261–280. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1077800403262360>
- Hanafin, Sinéad – Brooks, Anne Marie – Roche, Gillian – Meaney, Bairbre (2014), “Methodological and Ethical Issues Arising in Carrying Out Research with Children and Young People”, in: Tourangeau, Roger et al., ed., *Hard-to-Survey Populations*, Cambridge, University Press, pp. 316–346. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139381635.019>
- Hedegaard, Mariane, (ed.) (2012), *Children, childhood, and everyday life: children’s perspective*, Charlotte, NC, Information Age Pub

- Hill, Malcolm (1997), "Participatory Research with Children", *Child & Family Social Work* Vol. 2, No 3, pp. 171–183. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2206.1997.00056.x>
- Hill, Malcolm (2005), "Ethical Considerations in Researching Children's Experiences", in: Greene, Sheila. – Hogan, Diane, ed., *Researching Children's Experience: Approaches and Methods*, London, Sage, pp. 61–86.
- Hill, Malcolm (2006), "Children's Voices on Ways of Having A Voice: Children's And Young People's Perspectives on Methods Used in Research And Consultation", *Childhood* Vol. 13, No 1, pp. 69–89. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0907568206059972>
- Hungarian Psychological Association (2004), "Pszichológusok Szakmai Etikai Kódexe" [Code of Ethics of Psychologists], Budapest, Magyar Pszichológiai Társaság, http://www.pszichoerdek.hu/Egyes%C3%BClet/Etikai%20K%C3%B3dex/mpt_szek2004.pdf (2016. 10. 25.)
- Hungarian Sociological Association (2001), "Tudományos Etika" [Code of Ethics], Budapest, Magyar Szociológiai Társaság, http://www.szociologia.hu/tudomanyos_etika (2016. 12. 25.)
- Hunleth, Jean (2011), "Beyond on or with: Questioning power dynamics and knowledge production in „child-oriented” research methodology", *Childhood* Vol. 18, No 1, pp. 81–93. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0907568210371234>.
- ICC/ESOMAR (2009), "ESOMAR World Research Codes & Guideline. Interviewing children and young people" World ESOMAR Research. https://www.esomar.org/uploads/public/knowledge-and-standards/codes-and-guidelines/ESOMAR_Codes-and-Guidelines_Interviewing-Children-and-Young-People.pdf (2016. 10. 02.).
- Jensen, An-Magritt – McKee, Lorna (2003), *Children and the Changing Family. Between Transformation and Negotiation*, London & New York, Routledge Farmer
- Jordan, Amy B. (2006), „Make yourself at home: the social construction of research roles in family studies", *Qualitative Research* Vol. 6, No 2, pp. 169–185. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1468794106062708>
- Jorgenson, Jane – Sullivan, Tracy (2010), "Accessing Children's Perspectives through Participatory Photo Interviews" *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, Vol. 11, No 1, Art. 8. <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs100189> (2016. 10. 25.).
- Kirk, Susan (2007), "Methodological and Ethical Issues in Conducting Qualitative Research with Children and Young People: A Literature Review", *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, Vol. 44, No 7, pp. 1250–1260. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2006.08.015>

- Kremer-Sadlik, Tamar – Paugh, Amy L. (2007), “Everyday Moments: Finding ‘Quality Time’ In American Working Families”, *Time & Society* Vol. 16, No 2–3, pp. 287–308. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0961463X07080276>
- LaRossa, Ralph – Wolf, Jane H. (1985), “On Qualitative Family Research”, *Journal of Marriage and the Family* Vol. 47, No 7, pp. 531–541. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/352256>
- László Miklós (2005), “Hírműsorok generációs szemmel”, http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2005_04_tel/03_hirmusorok/ (2016. 10. 20.)
- Mayall, Berry (2000), “Conversations with Children: Working with Generational Issues”, in: Christensen, Pia – James, Allen, ed., *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices*, London, Falmer Press, pp. 120–135.
- Mauthner, Melanie (1997), “Methodological Aspects of Collecting Data from Children”, *Children & Society* Vol. 11, No 1, pp. 16–28. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1099-0860.1997.tb00003.x>
- Mazzoni, Valentina – Harcourt, Deborah (2014), “An International Experience of Research with Children: Moving Forward on The Idea of Children’s Participation”, *Qualitative Research* Vol. 14, No 2, pp. 252–268. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1468794112468470>
- Milkie, Melissa A. – Kendig, Sarah M. – Nomaguchi, Kei M. – Denny, Kathleen E. (2010), “Time with Children, Children’s Well-Being, and Work-Family Balance among Employed Parents”, *Journal of Marriage and Family* Vol. 72, No 5, pp. 1329–1343. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00768.x>
- Morrow, Virginia – Richards, Martin (1996), “The Ethics of Social Research with Children: An Overview”, *Children & Society* Vol. 10, No 2, pp. 90–105. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1099-0860.1996.tb00461.x>
- Németh Ágnes – Költő András (szerk.) (2011), *Serdülőkorú fiatalok egészsége és életmódja [Adolescents’ health and lifestyle]*, Budapest, Országos Gyermkegészségügyi Intézet, http://www.ogyei.hu/anyagok/HBSC_2010.pdf (2016. 11. 27.)
- Phelan, Shanon K. – Kinsella, Elizabeth Anne (2013), “Picture This ... Safety, Dignity, and Voice – Ethical Research with Children. Practical Considerations for the Reflexive Researcher”, *Qualitative Inquiry* Vol. 19, No 2, pp. 81–90. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1077800412462987>
- Punch, Samantha (2002a), “Research with Children – The Same or Different from Research with Adults?”, *Childhood* Vol. 9, No 3, pp. 321–341. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0907568202009003005>
- Punch, Samantha (2002b), “Interviewing Strategies with Young People: The ‘Secret Box’, Stimulus Material and Task-Based Activities”, *Children & Society* Vol. 16, No 1, pp. 45–56. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/chi.685>

- Qvotrup, Jens (1993), “Societal Position of Childhood: The International Project Childhood as a Social Phenomenon”, *Childhood* Vol. 1, No 2, pp. 119-124. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/090756829300100207>
- Székely Levente (szerk.) (2013a), *Magyar Ifjúság 2012 [Hungarian Youth 2012]*, Budapest, Kutatópont, http://kutatopont.hu/files/2013/09/Magyar_Ifjusag_2012_tanulmanykotet.pdf (2016. 11. 11.)
- Székely Levente (2013b), *Média Multitasking. Az új generációk megváltozó médiafogyasztási és kommunikációs szokásairól [Media multitasking. The changing media consumption and communication of the new generations]* Budapest, Corvinus Egyetem PhD-disszertáció. doi: 10.14267/phd.2014015 http://phd.lib.uni-corvinus.hu/766/1/Szekely_Levente.pdf (2016. 11. 02.)
- United Nations (1989), “1991. évi LXIV. törvény a Gyermekek jogairól szóló”, New Yorkban, 1989. november 20-án kelt Egyezmény kihirdetéséről, http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=99100064.TV (2016. 11. 04.)
- Warin, Jo (2011), “Ethical Mindfulness and Reflexivity Managing a Research Relationship with Children and Young People in a 14-Year Qualitative Longitudinal Research (QLR) Study”, *Qualitative Inquiry* Vol. 17, No 9, pp. 805–814. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1077800411423196>
- Zartler, Ulrike – Richter, Rudolf (2014), “My Family through the Lens. Photo Interviews with Children and Sensitive Aspects of Family Life”, *Children & Society* Vol. 28, No 1, pp. 42–54. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1099-0860.2012.00447.x>

CAREER ADVANCEMENT AMONG WORKERS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

Babatunde Joshua Omotosho¹

ABSTRACT *Recent studies have argued that workers no longer enjoy upward mobility in their careers due to a number of challenges. However, little is understood regarding some of the factors responsible for this development. This study examined career advancement among workers in private and public organisations in southwest Nigeria. A total of ninety-six questionnaires were distributed among the same number of respondents at selected public and private organisations in Ado Ekiti. The study also used in-depth interviews to elicit qualitative information from a total of twelve adult male and female respondents. Results indicate that respondents feel they have not enjoyed the desired career advancement at their workplaces.*

KEYWORDS: *Career, Promotion, Workplace, Organisation, Gender, Occupational mobility*

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The importance of career development cannot be understated; most workers at most organisations desire to be upwardly mobile in their chosen professions. While it may appear that the benefits of such mobility are only enjoyed by workers, studies have shown that the government, individuals and employees all have a stake and thus all benefit when these three areas function together effectively (Foster – Purvis 2011). For organisations, the career advancement of workers is one viable method for attracting and retaining the best employees; the success of

¹ Babatunde Joshua Omotosho, Department of Sociology, Faculty of the Social Sciences, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria e-mail: babatundeomotosho@gmail.com

workers due to career advancement is equally the success of the organisations. Aside from this, promotion gives employees a clear sense of direction and purpose, as well as ensures that the necessary skills are imparted to workers. Purcell, Kinnie, Hutchinson, Rayton, and Swart (2003) observed that supporting career advancement is one of the key practices for encouraging organisational accomplishment. For individuals, careers have a “subjective component: the sense that people make of their own career, their personal histories, and the skills, attitudes and beliefs that they have acquired” (Arthur 1994). Apart from providing social and psychological satisfaction, career development involves a learning process: within any given organisation, advancement and learning are indivisibly linked (Schein 1978; Hall 1976). By implication, when opportunities for career advancement are lacking, all the above benefits are diminished or completely absent, and discouragement may set in for workers; this in itself becomes a problem for organisations because it threatens productivity, and in the long run constitutes a serious challenge to policy makers.

One of the challenges that has bedevilled workplaces in recent times is the lack of desired career advancement (Foster – Purvis 2011). Workers may put in years of training, hard work, and commitment to an organisation, without commensurate upward career mobility. For instance, studies argue that when employees are laid off at minimal notice, those fortunate enough not to be sent packing do not enjoy any form of career progression (Foster – Purvis 2011). While there is a dearth of data that explains the advancement of workers along their career paths, the little that is available suggests that demotion rather than promotion is the experience of many workers. The findings of a study conducted by Dickens (2000) revealed that low-income employees are more likely to retrogress than progress in terms of career and income (Dickens 2000). The implication is that, as the income gap continues to increase, income mobility decreases (Dickens 2000; Stewart – Swaffield 1999). A number of factors have been employed to explain this phenomenon. Brüderl and his colleagues (1991) and Spilerman and Peterson (1998) attribute the career retrogression to organizational structures and personnel rules at workplaces, which in most instances are not negotiable. Brüderl et al. (1991) further cited a number of factors inhibiting promotion to include personal characteristics and gender. For instance, it is claimed that women are marginalised when it comes to promotion within the work environment. Factors ranging from chauvinism and sexual harassment (Zippel 2000); structuring the workplace in favour of men (Dickens, 2000); culture (Hartman 1979; Bryd-Blake 2004); and the glass-ceiling effect (Savage 2002) – among others – have been said to hinder women from climbing the career ladder. This indicates that a number of factors influence the career im/mobility of workers within a given organisation.

While abundant research efforts have been designed to explore the dynamics of occupational mobility within developed economies, relatively little is known about career development within the work place in developing economies. As a matter of fact, Kellard and Mitchel (2006) argue that information about progression within the workplace is entirely lacking. The presently described explorative study was designed to aid understanding of how workers perceive their career advancement within work places. For this purpose, a comparative study of opinions from within private and public organisations was conducted. Attention was paid to the fact that focussing on entry-level employment and labour market conditions (and so on) may not provide a clear understanding of the dynamics of career mobility within the workplace; a public-private investigation of how women fare was thus considered to be critical (Reinhart – Rogoff 2008; Verick 2009; Cahuc – Carcillo 2011; Bell – Blanchflower 2011; Schroeder et al. 2008). Aside from this, a number of phenomenon are identifiable in developing economies in the twenty-first century such as economic challenges, growth, and the uptake of information technology, along with less of a sense of commitment on the part of employers to their employees (and vice versa), increasing pressure on the work place (Tsui et al. 1997). Some studies have connected economic challenges with declining career mobility (Büttner et al. 2010; Barone et al. 2011). A ‘survival of the fittest’ approach appears to be gradually becoming the norm, and in the words of Valcour and Tolbert (2003), investigation of the career paths of the genders demands careful exploration. The authors of the present study therefore set themselves the task of investigating how workers perceive career advancement within the work environment. The research questions for the study are the following:

Research Questions

1. What are the perceived patterns of career advancement in selected organisations?
2. What are the determinants (as perceived by the respondents) of career advancement, and does disparity exist in the process, and, if so, what is (are) the cause(s)?
3. What are the perceptions of selected respondents about occupational mobility in selected organisations?
4. Do respondents perceive any hindrances to career advancement in the selected organisations?

Based on the research questions, the following study objectives were defined:

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study was to examine the perceptions of workers about career advancement in selected public and private organisations in southwest Nigeria. Within the selected organisations the specific objectives were to:

1. Understand the perceptions of respondents about career advancement.
1. Examine the trends of career advancement for male and female respondents.
1. Explore the factors that enhance advancement.
1. Assess the perceived constraints to advancement.

BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the years, the belief has largely been that individuals within the workplace undergo unhindered career progression; that workers never change jobs, and that promotion, good pay and job satisfaction dominate almost all career paths (Valcour – Tolbert 2003). These kinds of beliefs are gradually declining in the modern era as evidence suggests that employment insecurity, a decline in organisational tenure, and difficulty in climbing the ladder of career development are gradually becoming common. Further, employers are no longer committed to employees, and the loyalty of employees is equally declining (Tsui et al. 1997). What is also interesting is that the gender composition of the work environment has changed considerably, such that there has been an increase in the number of women in the work force (Blau et al. 2002). These issues have together placed considerable pressure on organisations, meaning that they are no longer able to give their best to their workers.

The above situation supports the need for better understanding the factors that determine mobility within workplace, and the dimensions and impact of gender within the work environment as well. In explaining what a career connotes, Arthur, Hall and Lawrence (1989) and Blair-Loy (1999) refer to it as an arrangement of a person's work history and practices. To understand these past references and experiences, one of the factors that should be taken into consideration is how individuals move along the mobility ladder (up or down) within and across organisations (Valcour – Tolbert 2003). Schroeder et al. (2008) argued that while it is important to make such distinctions regarding career mobility, it is equally important to investigate whether groups or individuals are disadvantaged in the process of mobility, and whether the prospects are there for certain types of respondents in terms of making available to them the experiences and expertise that foster mobility (Schroeder et al. 2008).

It is clear from the foregoing material that more empirical evidence about how workers move along the career ladder is needed; especially in developing countries with hitherto insufficient data for explaining these dynamics. This study intends to fill this gap by adding to the existing body of knowledge about how social and cultural factors within and outside the work environment influence the career paths of workers in both private and public establishments in Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHODS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The study was conducted in Ado Ekiti, in southwestern Nigeria. Being a relatively new state, quite a number of corporate bodies from within and outside the country have found their way to the state capital. The focus of the study was to increase understanding of the perceptions of workers about career advancement within public and private organizations, and it was easy to systematically select such organizations within the city for research. Two types of organizations were purposively selected for this study: public services owned by the state, and banking institutions owned by private individuals and bodies. The reason for selecting these two types was the fact that they have well-structured administrative systems, and they offer relatively high average salaries compared to other organizations within the state, meaning that employees desire to work at these institutions. From the two types of organizations, individuals were selected from one ministry (department) and two banks. Due to its large size of the ministry, a simple random procedure was adopted to select 43 respondents, while all the respondents in the professional and administrative cadres in the private establishments were selected for interviewing, totaling 53 respondents. A total of 96 respondents were thus included in this study. For the qualitative data, the study used in-depth interviews to elicit information from a total of 12 adult males and females within work settings (six males and six females). Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS software. Frequency distribution tables were plotted to analyze all the issues. Several variables were also cross-tabulated to understand the relationships between them. The hypotheses formulated for the study were also tested using chi square statistical methods. As regards the in-depth interviews (IDI), these were analyzed individually and quotes are included verbatim, where necessary, to support findings from quantitative data.

Table 1: Gender, Age and Marital Status in selected Public and Private Organisations (Frequency of Responses of Respondents) (%)

	ORGANISATIONS				Frequency	%
	Public		Private			
Gender	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Male	28	65.1	27	50.9	55	57.3
female	15	34.1	26	49.9	41	42.7
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Age	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
21-25	7	16.3	8	15.1	15	15.6
26-30	4	9.3	35	66.0	39	40.6
31-35	8	18.6	8	15.1	16	16.7
36-40	5	11.6	2	3.8	7	7.3
41-45	9	20.9			9	9.4
46-50	4	9.3			4	4.2
51 +	6	14.0			6	6.3
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Marital Status	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Single	12	27.9	38	71.7	50	52.1
Married	30	69.8	15	28.3	46	46.9
Separated	1	2.3				1.0
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Educational Qualification	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Diploma	13	30.2	16	30.2	29	30.2
HND	5	11.6	11	20.8	16	16.7
B.Sc.	14	32.6	19	35.8	33	34.4
M.Sc.	6	14.0	1	1.9	7	7.3
B.Sc.+ Other Certificates	3	7.0	5	9.4	8	8.3
Others	2	4.6	1	1.9	3	3.1
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0

The table above presents socio-economic and demographic characteristics about the respondents. As regards the gender composition of the study, a total of 41 females and 55 males participated in the study (42.7 percent and 57.3 percent, respectively). From the public organisation, 28 males (65.1 percent) and 15 females (34.1 percent) were represented in the study, while 27 males (50.9 percent) and 26 females (49.9 percent) participated in the study from private organisations. During the sampling procedure it was observed that there were more males workers in the public organisations than the private

ones. IDI clarified that the services of women were more needed in the banking sector (private) than those of their male counterparts. However, no explanation could be given for the male-female population ratio within the public sector. Findings about age showed that the majority of the respondents could be classified into the 21-45 age cohort for the public service, and 26-30 for the private (66.0 percent of the total). However, no respondents of age 41 or above were found in the banking profession. Findings from IDI revealed that the work force is usually concentrated within those age brackets because working in the banking profession is demanding. As regards marital status, 69.8 percent and 28.3 percent of the samples from the public and private organisations were married, respectively, while 27.9 percent and 71.7 percent (respectively) were single.

Findings about educational qualifications should not be thought unusual considering the strong educational pursuits of Nigerians at all levels, while Ekiti, the study area, is also noted for its strong drive to promote education. Within the city of Ado Ekiti alone, there are over four tertiary institutions, with another two tertiary institutions within the towns adjoining the city. This, of course, may make it easy for interested workers to acquire further education qualifications. Further, a number of institutions in the country also run distance-learning courses which may make it easier to attain higher-level educational qualifications.

The table above illustrates the percentage distribution of respondents according to their perceptions about the promotional exercise and procedures for employees in selected public and private organizations in Ado Ekiti. Respondents that joined their workplaces before 1990 in both public and private accounted for 9.3 percent and 5.7 percent, respectively; those that joined between 1991 and 2000 9.3 percent and 1.9 percent in both public and private organizations; those that joined public and private establishments between 2001 and 2010 in constituted 20.9 percent and 5.7 percent, respectively, while those that joined from year 2010 until the survey date in both public and private establishments constituted 60.5 percent and 86.8 percent (resp.). The majority of the labour force within both organisations joined their place of employment at some point after 2001. Respondents were asked whether promotion was a regular phenomenon at their work place; a majority of respondents of public organizations affirmed this, as did 42.7 percent of respondents from private establishments. The remaining respondents (32.6 percent and 57.3 percent) in both public and private organizations (respectively) were asked to state why this was not so. In response, 85.7 (85.5) percent from public and private establishments (resp.) responded that it depends on the positions available within their units.

Table 2: Perceptions about Procedures and Exercises for the Promotion of Employees in selected Public and Private Organisations (Frequency of Responses of Respondents) (%)

	ORGANISATIONS				Frequency	%
	Public		Private			
Year of Employment	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Before 1990	4	9.3	3	5.7	7	7.3
1991-2000	4	9.3	1	1.9	5	5.2
2001-2010	4	20.9	3	5.7	12	12.5
2010 until date of survey	26	60.5	46	86.8	72	75.0
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Is promotion a regular practice?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	29	67.4	12	22.6	41	42.7
No	14	32.6	41	77.4	55	57.3
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
If not, why?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Depends on available positions	12	85.7	33	80.5	47	85.5
Depends on the need for it	2	14.3	8	19.5	8	14.5
Total	14	100.0	41	100.0	55	100.0
How do employees get promoted?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
When management feels like it	1	2.3	17	32.1	18	18.8
After a stipulated period	28	65.1	33	62.3	61	63.5
Others	14	32.6	3	5.7	17	17.7
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0

Respondents were further requested to explain the procedures for promotion within their work places. Employees of both public and private organizations (65.1 percent and 62.3 percent) claimed that promotion takes place after a stipulated period. However, 2.3 (32.1) percent of employees in public/private organizations claimed that promotion only takes place when the management feels like it. It appears that private organizations mainly follow this practice; IDI shed further light on this:

Promotion is a function of so many factors; you may have spent the statutory years, and the management may decide that you are not going to be promoted even when you have not committed any offence. I have a friend who has been at a particular

grade for five years without being promoted. The reason the management gave was that the organization simply didn't have the financial capacity to do that [make a promotion] (Female, IDI, Private establishment, Ado Ekiti).

These findings are not unusual: studies have confirmed that career advancement is a product of many factors which can be subsumed under the categories 'objective' and 'subjective'; objective factors include those factors that can be categorised as human-capital related (experience, education, continuous work history, and tenure), demographic (gender and marital status), interpersonal processes and organisational (mentoring) (Whitely et al. 1991; Whitely – Coetsier 1993). Subjective factors may not be directly observable, yet they are correlated to perceptions about the above issues and how they relate to career satisfaction and job satisfaction. In most instances, these are the issues generally considered by management when deciding on promotions. Workers equally have their own perceptions about what deserves or determines promotion, and in most instances such perceptions dominate those of the organisations, especially when the former are unable to meet the requirements of the organisation for career advancement.

Table 4: Number of times respondents have been promoted, and whether procedures for promotion are specified in selected Public and Private Organisations (Frequency of Responses of Respondents) (%)

	ORGANISATIONS					
	Public		Private			
Do well-defined criteria for promotion exist?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	42	97.7	38	71.7	80	83.3
No	1	23.0	15	29.3	16	16.7
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
No of times promoted	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1	6	14.0			19	19.8
2	21	48.8	13	24.5	59	61.5
3	3	7.0	38	71.7	4	4.2
4	4	9.3	1	1.9	4	4.2
5	4	9.3			4	4.2
6	3	7.0			3	3.1
7	1	2.3			1	2.1
8	1	2.3	1	1.9	1	1.0
9	1	2.3			1	1.0
Total	43	100	53	100.0	96	100.0

Table 4 illustrates the existence of criteria for promotion for respondents within their work places. A majority (97.7 percent public, and 71.7 percent private establishment) of respondents confirm the existence of defined processes. IDI further support this:

For you to be promoted at the workplace, you must have spent a minimum of three years at that level, and must have been assessed by your immediate boss to behave well and be fit for promotion. Once this is done, there is usually a management meeting where a decision is made regarding whether you are qualified for promotion (Male, IDI, Public establishment, Ado Ekiti).

Table 5: Does gender have anything to do with promotion in selected Public and Private Organisations?

(Frequency of Responses of Respondents) (%)

	ORGANISATIONS				Frequency	%
	Public		Private			
Do you think your gender affects your promotion	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	4	9.3	33	62.3	37.59	38.5
No	39	90.7	20	37.7		61.5
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Which of the genders has better experience with promotion?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Male	7	17.0	15	26.3	22	23.0
Female	6	14.0	9	17.0	15	15.8
Not sure	30	69.0	29	54.7	59	61.5
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Do you think there is equality in promotion between genders?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	18	41.9	28	52.8	46	47.9
No	25	58.1	25	47.2	50	52.1
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0

Respondents were asked to list the number of times they had been promoted within their work places. The majority of respondents in public organisations (48.8 percent) claimed they had been promoted two (2) times. A majority of respondents in private organisations (71.7 percent) also claimed that they had been promoted two times since they had joined their organisation. From the table above it can be seen that respondents enjoyed promotion commensurate with the number of years they had put into their jobs. Interestingly, respondents are well

aware of the rules that determine promotion within their workplaces. This may of course be responsible for the advancement they have enjoyed in their careers. However, respondents from private establishments seem not to have enjoyed the kind of promotion enjoyed by their colleagues in public establishments. According to Spilerman and Peterson (1999), the focus of related research over the years has been the nature of the barriers to movement; i.e. on earning income, rather than on what really constitutes career advancement within the organisation. Investigation of the internal structural arrangements of a firm, with its attendant implications for individual career advancement, is a difficult and emerging topic of research. Moreover, obtaining the necessary information regarding organisational structure and the work history of employees can be difficult, posing further challenges to researchers (Spilerman – Peterson 1999).

Table 5 presents responses to the question whether gender has any relationship with promotion. Findings suggest that there is no relationship between gender and workplace promotion in public organisations (90.7 percent of all respondents said that gender does not affect promotion). However, the situation is different in private establishments, where 62.3 percent of respondents claimed that gender does affect promotion within their workplace. Respondents were further asked to describe which of the genders has better prospects of promotion. 17.0 (26.3) percent claimed that males are more likely to be suitably promoted than females, while 14.0 (17.0) percent opined that females are more often promoted than males in public and private organisations (resp.). However, 69.0 (54.7) percent of respondents from public and private organisations (resp.) claimed they were not sure which of the genders had better experiences with promotion. This finding contradicts what was initially claimed by respondents regarding whether gender disparity exists regarding promotion. It appears that the majority of respondents were not willing to provide a categorical response to the question which of the genders gets promoted more, and the number of ‘not sure’ responses given by respondents clearly attests to this fact. The IDI session, however, throws some light on the perceptions of respondents regarding the trend of career advancement of respondents in relation to gender:

Of course, we all know that when it comes to men and women accessing opportunities, women always have a better chance than men, and the same scenario may be applicable to the work situation but that doesn't mean that women are not hardworking or that they cut corners to get promoted within the work environment (Female, IDI, Public establishment, Ado Ekiti).

Respondents were asked whether they think gender equality exists regarding promotion within their work setting. Responses revealed that 41.9 (52.8) percent

in public and private organisations were of the opinion that it does exist. However, 58.1 (47.2) percent of respondents in public and private establishments (resp.) submitted that it does not exist. From the table it can be seen that a little more than half of all respondents felt that there was gender disparity in promotion. The IDI session helped clarify the situation:

There is disparity in promotion between males and females in any organisation. Women always know how to corner men, they always get what they want at any time; they always know someone that knows the people who decide about promotions (Male, IDI, Public establishment, Ado Ekiti).

Respondents believed that gender affects career advancement. Some studies have confirmed this position, arguing that career advancement differs according to gender status (Bateson 1990; Gallos 1989), although others have argued that gender and career progress are not correlated (O'Neil et al. 2008). There has evidently been a lot of improvement regarding gender differences and career advancement. Studies show that gender may not be an impediment to career advancement, a more significant effect being played by other factors such as education (Peter – Horn 2005). However, considering the present study, while the statistical evidence may not support the presence of a link between gender and career advancement, interview reports clearly suggest otherwise. The perception of respondents is that the issue of gender affects career advancement at certain times. Quite a number of respondents were still of the opinion that gender differences still determine career advancement.

This section examines the factors that enhance occupational mobility and how it affects respondents at the workplace. To start with, respondents were asked whether there are factors that enhance mobility in productivity at their work place; in their responses, 86.0 (81.1) percent of respondents in public and private establishments affirmed this, while 14.0 (18.9) percent of respondents (public and private establishments, resp.) disagreed. Following up on this question, respondents were also requested to identify the factors that they felt enhanced productivity at their work place; 9.3 (52.8) percent of respondents in public and private organisations attributed this to training, while 90.7 (47.2) percent in public and private organisations (resp.) ascribed this to leave and holidays. Respondents were further asked whether these factors were consistent within their work places. A majority of respondents (86.7/ 73.6 percent) in public and private organisations responded positively. Respondents were further asked whether these factors were binding for both males and females. Their responses were affirmative, as 90.7 (92.5) percent of

respondents in public and private establishments (resp.) agreed. Some of the responses obtained from the IDI session are that represent the arguments of the respondents included below:

We go on our annual leave when this is due...both males and females have access to this at any time they like, but it's not everybody that has the opportunity to go for training (IDI, Male, Public Organisation).

Table 6: Factors enhancing career mobility in selected Public and Private Organisations (Frequency of Responses of Respondents) (%)

	ORGANISATIONS					
	Public		Private			
Are there factors that enhance productivity at your workplace?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	27	86.0	43	81.1	80	83.3
No	6	14.0	10	18.9	16	16.7
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
What are they?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Training	4	9.3	28	52.8	32	33.3
Leave/holiday	39	90.7	25	47.2	64	66.7
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Are these factors consistent?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	36	83.7	39	73.6	75	78.1
No	7	16.3	14	26.4	21	21.9
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Are these factors binding for both genders?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	39	90.7	49	92.5	88	91.7
No	4	9.3	4	7.5	8	8.3
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
What are the criteria for promotion?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
-Educational qualifications	7	16.3	4	7.5	11	11.5
-Years of experience	25	58.1	26	49.1	51	53.1
-Connections	2	4.6	15	28.5	17	17.7
-Availability of position	9	20.9	8	15.1	17	17.7
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0

Further, respondents were asked to describe the criteria for promotion at their workplaces; 16.3 (7.5) percent attributed it to educational qualifications/ attainment; 58.1 (19.1) percent to years of experience; 4.6 (28.5) percent to connections (i.e. who you know at management level to fast track your promotion) while the rest (20.9/15.1 percent) attributed it to the availability of positions within the work settings (all findings correspond to public/private establishments, respectively). IDI, however, identified some contrasting comments, some of which follow:

Promotion is a function of management interest. If you are not giving them what they want in terms of productivity, certificates, years of experience and all the formal issues may not count (IDI, Male, Private Organisation).

Another respondent:

Experience and hard work matters when it comes to promotion, but you need to know people where it matters that can assist you ... (IDI, Male, Public Organisation).

To explain the determinants of career advancement within the workplace, each organisation usually defines patterns or requirements for promoting its staff and for achieving its aims. These are typically understood and in line with employees' goals. Studies emphasise the importance of creating synergy between employees' personal goals and organisational ones (Sturges et al. 2001). However, from the study it appears this may not occur in reality: respondents clearly have their own goals and perceptions which, in the long run, enable them to form opinions about what constitute criteria for promotion at their workplace.

Table 7: *Hindrances to career advancement in selected Public and Private Organisations (Frequency of Responses of Respondents) (%)*

Barriers to staff promotion	ORGANISATIONS					
	Public		Private			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Transfers	36	83.7	46	86.8	82	85.4
Laziness	1	2.3	1	2.3	2	2.1
Incompetence	1	2.3	3	5.6	4	4.2
Appraisals	2	4.7	1	2.3	3	3.1
Productivity Issues	1	2.3	1	2.3	2	2.1
Absenteeism	2	4.7	1	2.3	3	3.1
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0

Are there other considerations for promotion, apart from the established benchmarks?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	35	81.4	28	52.8	63	65.6
No	8	18.6	25	47.2	33	34.4
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
What are they?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Economic situation	25	58.1	17	32.1	42	43.8
Management interest	18	41.9	36	67.9	54	56.2
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
Who often benefits from these other considerations?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Male	23	53.5	25	47.2	48	50.0
Female	20	46.5	28	52.8	48	50.0
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0

The table above examines the hindrances to career advancement as perceived by respondents. Respondents were asked to highlight the barriers to staff promotion. A majority of respondents (83.7/86.8 percent) in public and private establishments (resp.) specified transfers. This may be considered unusual as transfers may not have much to do with promotion. However, during the in-depth interviews, respondents shed light on this idea by arguing that, in most cases, promotions are often accompanied by transfers, and employees are not willing to move, then there is no promotion. Further, respondents were asked to explain whether there are other considerations that their organisation takes into account in making promotions, apart from those documented, or those used as benchmarks. 81.4 (52.8) percent of respondents in public and private establishments claimed that such criteria exist. Following this, respondents were asked to describe such criteria. 58.1 (32.1) percent of public and private establishment respondents (resp.) attributed it to the prevailing economic situation, while 41.9 (67.9) percent attributed it to management interests. IDI shed more light on some of these responses:

Management often acts in a way that is not black and white regarding promotion – if they claim they don’t have enough funds to handle promotion there is nothing anyone can do; one would rather be careful so that one is not laid off: half a loaf of bread, as they say, is better than none (IDI, Male Public Organisation, Ado Ekiti).

Further, respondents were also asked about which gender benefits more from other criteria that are not documented; 53.5 (47.2) percent of respondents in public and private establishments claimed that males benefit more, while 46.5

(52.8) percent of respondents in public and private organisations (resp.) argue that females tend to benefit more.

Newman (1993) submits that, within organisations, career advancement may be limited by the following factors; human capital (deficient education, domestic restrictions, inadequate financial resources and deficient experience), socio-psychological (social psychological obstacles including sex-role labels/role prejudice, undesirable perceptions about women's capability for managing, doubtful motivation, and limiting self-concepts) and systemic barriers (isolation of sexes in the labour force, discrepancy in career ladder opportunities, sex-based segregation of domestic labour, limited access to professional training, restricted access to informal networks, lack of advisors, lack of power, sexual harassment, perceived lack of compatibility, and a lack of female role models). The beliefs and attitudes of members of the workplace have always been considered to have the greatest impact (Cooper Jackson 2001). Workers form views and perceptions about the workplace and are of the opinion that organisations operate using procedures for making promotions which are not clear to them, coupled with a perception that the opposite sex is a hindrance in this regard. Interestingly, most studies have tended to emphasise male-female differences (particularly the claim that females are short-changed by males) as the major hindrance to career advancement, with less emphasis on the beliefs and values held by members of the organisation. Our research suggests that males also believe that women hinder them from advancing in their careers.

Table 8: Gender and career advancement in selected Public and Private Organisations (Frequency of Responses of Respondents) (%)

	ORGANISATIONS					
	Public		Private			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Do women experience challenges with promotion?						
Yes	13	30.3	26	49.1	39	
No	9	20.9	18	34.0	27	
Sometimes	21	48.8	9	16.9	30	
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	
Are there issues that hinder women from being promoted?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Unwillingness to be transferred	5	11.6	19	35.8	24	25.0
Motherhood and childbearing	6	14.0	4	7.5	10	10.4
Education	25	58.1	22	41.5	47	49.0
Unforeseen family problems	7	16.3	8	15.1	15	15.6
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0

The table above illustrates how gender differences constrain the career advancement of respondents. Respondents were asked whether women generally experience any form of challenges when it comes to the issue of promotion; 30.3 (49.1) percent of respondents in public and private establishments (resp.) said 'yes', while 20.9 (34.0) percent of employees of public and private establishments said 'no'. However, 48.8 (16.9) percent of respondents from public and private organisations claimed that women sometimes experience some challenges with promotion. IDI responses from two respondents are summarised below:

Promotions have nothing to do with gender. The reason is that there are benchmarks that are measurable and must be achieved before promotion can take place, so it is not an issue of an individual being male or female (IDI, Male, Public Organisation).

Another respondent:

I agree that women may be at a disadvantage when it comes to promotion, and this is because of factors such as family, motherhood, and children, but I believe it is up to the woman to organise herself (IDI, female, Private Organisation).

As a follow up to the questions above, respondents were asked to describe activities that they think could hinder the promotion of women within the workplace. From the table above it can be seen that 11.6 (35.6) percent of respondents within the public and private establishments attributed this situation to the unwillingness of women to be transferred when asked to; 14.0 (7.5) percent in public and private establishments attributed it to motherhood and childbearing; 58.1 (41.5) percent attributed it to education and training issues, while the rest (16.3/15.1 percent, resp.) attribute it to unforeseen family issues. The IDI session further corroborated this data. Some of the respondents' responses are summarised below:

Even after marriage, it is still easier for a man to afford to further his education. By implication, a man will have time to obtain a professional certificate or such a thing at any age, but it may not be entirely possible for a woman to do this. This may be because of pregnancy, or childbirth, or the demands of the workplace; these phenomena increase her responsibilities greatly; that is, she is more likely to be burdened with family matters than a man (IDI, female, Private Organisation).

As discussed earlier, workers within every organisation are guided by their perceptions and beliefs. According to the above findings, women still believe that they are short-changed in terms of their access to benefits within the workplace based on the roles associated with their gender.

Table 9: *How to improve the career advancement of employees in selected Public and Private Organisations*

(Frequency of Responses of Respondents) (%)	Organisations				Frequency	%
	Public		Private			
How can employees' career prospects be enhanced?	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Prompt payment of salaries and benefits	16	37.2	17	32.1	33	34.4
Regular training	7	16.3	6	11.3	13	13.5
Regular promotions	20	46.5	30	56.6	50	52.1
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0
How can gender disparity in workplace promotions be reduced	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
-Increase education for women	10	23.2	10	18.9	20	20.8
-Increase equal opportunities at workplace	20	46.5	26	49.1	46	48.0
-More dedication to women in government policies	2	4.7	3	5.7	5	5.2
-Management policies	7	16.3	1	1.9	8	8.3
Total	43	100.0	53	100.0	96	100.0

Respondents were asked to explain how employees' careers can be further enhanced within the workplace. In response, 37.2 (32.2) percent of respondents within the public and private organisations (resp.) submitted that there should be prompt payment of their salaries and benefits. Further, 16.3 (11.3) percent of respondents from public and private establishments believed that their careers could be further enhanced through regular training and workshops, while 46.5 (56.6) percent believed that their careers could advance through being promoted when this is due at the workplace. Some of the responses given by respondents during the IDI session are included below to corroborate these submissions.

I think that management should endeavour to promote when it is due; the result would be more money and prestige, and one would be able to fulfil one's career dreams before retirement (IDI, Male, Private establishment, Ado Ekiti)

Further, respondents were requested to suggest ways in which disparity in gender promotion could be addressed. 23.2 (18.9) percent (public/private, resp.) emphasized the need to increase education for women; 46.5 (49.1) percent stated a preference for increasing equal opportunities for all in the workplace; 4.7 (5.7) percent specified more dedication by women; 16.3 (1.9) percent emphasised the importance of government policies, while 9.3 (24.5) percent argued that management policies must be better targeted. IDI sessions corroborated these findings; some responses are detailed below:

A big change would occur if men within the management circle changed the way they saw women in general; they need to see them as equals and not as subordinates, and of course judge individuals by what they can do, not by what they feel or think (IDI, female, private establishment, Ado Ekiti).

This statement is of course the expression of the values and beliefs of an employee and, as earlier argued, organisational goals should always support individual needs in the organisation, for it is in such cases that both parties can achieve their goals and objectives.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses formulated for this study are stated and discussed below in alternative forms.

Chi-square Test of Association

The first hypothesis claims that *a significant relationship exists between gender and career advancement*. With a Chi-square of 3.841, it appears that a significant relationship between the variables does not exist. What this finding suggests is that the gender of respondents may not have much to do with career advancement, as respondents claim. This finding contrasts with the IDI reports,

as respondents were of the opinion that women stand to benefit more at the workplace than men when it comes to career advancement. This finding is further correlated with the earlier arguments. There are different perspectives regarding gender differences and career advancement. What becomes clear is that individuals within the workplace hold different values and opinions which shape their attitudes towards goal achievement (e.g. career advancement).

Factors responsible for promotion in the workplace	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Educational qualifications	4	7	11
Years of experience	5	12	17
Qualification plus level of experience	19	32	51
Influence/connections	12	0	12
Dedication to work	2	3	5
Total	42	54	96
Chi-square=3.841, df=4, p=.000			
Educational Qualifications	Do promotions regularly happen at your workplace?		Total
	Yes	No	
Diploma	3	7	10
HND	3	7	10
B.Sc.	20	26	46
M.Sc.	5	3	8
Dedication	9	8	17
Other Certificates	2	3	5
Total	42	54	96
Chi-square=11.070, df=5, p=.000			

The second hypothesis posits that *a statistical significant relationship exists between educational qualifications and the career advancement of workers*. However, findings (11.070) show that there may not be a significant relationship between the variables. In other words, education alone may not be a strong determinant of career advancement. This finding, however, does not agree with the conclusions of earlier studies that claim that education has a considerable effect on career advancement. A number of factors can bring about career advancement, including organisational goals that extend beyond education.

CONCLUSION

Career advancement in the selected public and private organisations may not measure up to the expectations of respondents. This is frustrating; the respondents were of the opinion that management devises procedures for promoting their workers which are not known to them. Further, what constitutes career advancement to respondents in private organisations is seen a bit differently by those in the public sector. Respondents in public organisations emphasised training more strongly. However, respondents also believed that career advancement involved regular payment of their salaries and benefits, and prompt promotion to the next level when due.

REFERENCES

- Arthur, Michael B. – Douglas T. Hall – Barbara S. Lawrence (1989), “Generating New Directions in Career Theory: The Case for a Transdisciplinary Approach”, in: Arthur, M.B. – Douglas T. Hall – Barbara S. eds., *Handbook of Career Theory*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 7–25.
- Bell, David – David Blanchflower (2011), “Young People and the Great Recession”, *IZA Working Paper* No. 5674.
- Barone, Carlo – Mario Lucchini – Antonio Schizzerotto (2011), “Career mobility in Italy”, *European Societies* Vol. 13, No 3, pp. 377-400. DOI: 10.1080/14616696.2011.568254
- Bateson, Mary Catherine (1990), *Composing a Life*, New York, Plume Books
- Blair-Loy, Mary (1999), “Career Patterns of Executive Women in Finance”, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 104, No 5, pp. 1346-1397. DOI: 10.1086/210177
- Blau Francine D. – Marianne Ferber – Ann Winkler (2002), *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work. The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*. 4th Ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ, Prentice Hall
- Brüderl, Joseph, - Andreas Diekmann – Peter Preisendorfer (1991), “Patterns of intraorganizational mobility: tournament models, path dependency, and early promotion effects”, *Social Science Research* Vol. 20, No 3, pp. 197–216. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0049-089X\(91\)90005-N](https://doi.org/10.1016/0049-089X(91)90005-N)
- Büttner, Thomas – Peter Jacobebbinghaus – Johannes Ludsteck (2010), “Occupational Upgrading and the Business Cycle in West Germany”, *Economics: The Open-Access, Open-Assessment E-Journal*, 4 (2010-10), pp. 1–37. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5018/economics-ejournal.ja.2010-10>

- Byrd-Blake, Marie (2004), "Female Perspectives on Career Advancements", *Advancing Women in Leadership Journal* Vol.15., (online) DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18738/awl.v15i0.178>
- Cahuc, Pierre – Stephanie Carcillo (2011), "Is short-time work a good method to keep unemployment down?" *IZA Working Paper* No. 5430.
- Cooper Jackson, Jenny (2001), "Women middle manager's perception of the glass ceiling", *Women in Management Review* Vol. 16, No 1, pp. 30-41. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09649420110380265>
- Dickens, Richard (2000), "Caught in a trap? Wage mobility in Great Britain: 1975-1994". *Economica*, Vol. 67, No 268, pp 477-497.
- Foster, Sarah – Andrew Purvis (2011), "Career Advancement: A Review of Career Advancement Services and Their Role in Supporting Job Sustainability", *Remploy*, Leicester
- Gallos, Joan (1989), "Exploring Women's Development: Implications For Career Theory, Practice, And Research", in: Arthur, Michael B. – Douglas T. Hall – Barbara S. Lawrence eds., *Handbook of Career Theory*, Cambridge , Cambridge University Press, pp. 110–132.
- Hartmann, Heidi (1979), "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism:Towards a More Progressive Union", *Capital and Class* Vol. 3, No 2, pp. 1-33
- Hall, Douglas (1976), *Careers in Organizations*. Glenview, Scott Foresman
- Kellard, Karen – Leighton Mitchell (2006), "In-Work Support and Job Sustainability: A Brief Review", in Kellard, Francis Mitchell ed., *An evaluation of the wise group 'next steps' and one plus 'sustainable employment' projects*. Edinburgh, Scottish Executive. <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/179621/0051063.pdf>. Retrieved October 10, 2016.
- Newman, Meredith Ann (1993), "Career advancement: does gender make a difference?" *The American Review of Public Administration* Vol. 24, No 3, pp. 361-385. DOI: 10.1177/027507409302300404
- O'Neil, Deborah A. – Margaret M. Hopkins – Diana Bilimoria (2008), "Women's careers at the start of the 21st century: patterns and paradoxes", *Journal of Business Ethics* Vol. 80, No 4, pp. 727-743. DOI 10.1007/s10551-007-9465-6.
- Peter, Katherine – Laura Horn (2005), *Gender Differences In Participation And Completion Of Undergraduate Education And How They Have Changed Over Time*, Washington, DC, *US Dept. of Education*
- Purcell, John – Nicholas Kinnie – Sue Hutchinson – Bruce Rayton – Juani Swart (2003), *Understanding the People and Performance Link: Unlocking the Black Box*. London: CIPD <http://opus.bath.ac.uk/22252/>.
- Reinhart, Carmein – Keneth Rogoff (2008), "Banking Crises: An Equal Opportunity Menace", *NBER Working Paper* No.14587.

- Savage, Adrian (2002), "The Real Glass Ceiling", <http://www.wipcoaching.com/downloads/the-real-glass-ceiling.pdf> Accessed on 20th August, 2015.
- Schein, Edgar (1978), *Career Dynamics: Matching Individual and Organizational Needs*. Reading MA, Addison-Wesley.
- Schroeder, Anna – Andrew Miles – Mike Savage – Susan Halford – Gindo Tampubolon (2008), "Mobility, careers and inequalities a study of work-life mobility and the returns from education", *Centre for Research on Socio-Economic Change (CRESC)*, University of Manchester
- Spilerman, Seymore – Trond Petersen (1999), "Organizational Structure, Determinants of Promotion, and Gender Differences in Attainment", *Social Science Research* Vol. 28, No 2, pp. 203–227. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ssre.1998.0644>
- Stewart, Mark – Joanna Swaffield (1999), "Low Pay Dynamics and Transition Probabilities", *Economica*, Vol. 66, No 261, pp 23-42. DOI: 10.1111/1468-0335.00154
- Sturges Jane – David Guest – Neil Conway – Kate Mackenzie Davey (2001), "What Difference Does It Make? A Longitudinal Study of the Relationship between Career Management and Organizational Commitment in the Early Years at Work", *Academy of Management Proceedings*, CAR: B1-B6 DOI: 10.1002/job.164
- Tsui, Anne S. – Jone L. Pearce – Lyman W. Porter – Angela M. Tripoli (1997), "Alternative approaches to the employee-organization relationship: does investment in employees pay off?" *Academy of Management Journal* Vol. 40, No 5, pp. 1089–121. doi: 10.2307/256928
- Valcour, P. Monique – Pamela Tolbert (2003), "Gender, Family and Career in the Era of Boundarylessness: Determinants and Effects of Intra-And Inter-Organizational Mobility", *International Journal of Human Resource Management* Vol. 14, No 5, pp. 768-787. DOI: 10.1080/0958519032000080794
- Verick, Sher (2009), "Who is hit hardest during a financial crisis? The vulnerability of young men and women to unemployment in an economic downturn". *IZA Discussion Paper* No.4359.
- Whitely, William – Thomas Dougherty – George Dreher (1991), "Relationship of Career Mentoring and Socioeconomic Origin to Managers' and Professionals' Early Career Progress", *Academy of Management Journal* Vol. 34, No 2, pp. 331-351.
- Whitely, William. T. – Pol Coetsier (1993), "The relationship of career mentoring to early career outcomes", *Organization Studies* Vo. 14, No 3, pp. 419-441.
- Zippel, Kathrin (2000), *Sexual harassment and transnational relations: why those concerned with German-American relations should care*, Washington, American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, John Hopkins University Accessed January 2015.

PREVIEW

**(UN)MAKING EUROPE: REPORT ON THE
13TH CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN
SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
(29TH AUGUST – 1ST SEPTEMBER 2017, ATHENS)**

Ildikó Hrubos¹

The European Sociological Association (ESA) organized its 2017 conference with a thought-provoking title: *(Un)Making Europe: Capitalism, Solidarities, Subjectivities*. It is generally characteristic of the biannually held ESA conferences that they deal from a specific sociological perspective with issues considered important on a European level, and within it a region or specific countries. This time the program was dominated by questions regarding Europe's destiny as a whole. Europe can be made or unmade, and this is especially true since the financial and economic crises of 2008. European society, and even the very idea of Europe, is under threat – says the welcome note of the conference. The plenary and semi-plenary sessions examined the three elements included in the conference title (Capitalism, Solidarities, Subjectivities) in great depth, and among the themes of the sections subdivided according to the special fields of sociology (Research Networks, RNs) there were several that discussed problems which are considered of critical importance, as well as the results of their related research. The keynote presentation of the conference was provided in the form of a lecture by an American professor, David Harvey (City University of New York), which was presented at the opening ceremony, entitled *When Money Betrays Value*.

The conference's venue was of symbolic significance, since the epicenter of the complex European crisis is Greece. The country's situation and ongoing processes were topics very frequently discussed at the event. The largest university in Greece, the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (a university with a classic structure and seventy thousand students, established in

¹ Ildikó Hrubos is professor emerita at Corvinus University of Budapest; e-mail: ildiko.hrubos@uni-corvinus.hu

1837), offered to host the conference. However, this offer was withdrawn in the preparatory phase of the conference because of financial difficulties. Thus, other venues had to be found quickly. Two “younger” universities in Athens offered to organize and manage the conference: Panteion University, which is expressly a university of social sciences (established in 1927, it currently has eleven thousand students), and Harokopio University, which on the other hand is a rather small university with a highly specialized profile (Environment, Geography, Applied Economics, Digital Technology, Health Science and Education; established in 1990, it currently has 1,150 students). The two host universities did not have the capacity to provide a venue for every conference event. This is how it happened that certain sections held their sessions in the luxury conference rooms of the nearby Athenaeum InterContinental Hotel, while the plenary sessions were hosted by other representative cultural institutions in the city. This was indicative of the widespread joint efforts that promoted the success of the conference.

“Capacity” was very much needed at this conference, since over 3,500 participants attended who could select from among 850 section sessions organized by 37 research networks and 10 research streams. There were a total of 2,900 presentations in the program.

From the perspective of content, reports about the characteristics of conferences of this magnitude are unavoidably subjective and selective, so here I present experiences and impressions regarding only a few topics, and only briefly.

As expected, the phenomenon of migration received considerable attention at the conference, the topic being discussed in semi-plenary and special plenary sessions. At the RN sections there was also practically always a presentation based on theoretical or empirical work that introduced a specific problem that was somehow connected to this subject. The Sociology of Migration RN, which has been institutionalized for a long time, obviously analyzed this topic area, but it also received significant attention in the Disaster, Conflict and Social Crisis RN, and among other areas it appeared in the program of the Sociology of Culture RN and the Urban Sociology RN.

I present a few examples here to reflect the diversity of approaches and lectures that were aimed at less widely known terrains and correlations. In one of the sections of the Disaster, Conflict and Social Crisis RN, two papers were presented regarding the research of Turkish sociologists, which analyzed changes in settlement structure, the extraordinary increase in the proportion of urban population, and resulting social problems. The lecture, entitled “The Effects of Mass Migration on Urban Life Standards in Turkey”, described the two great waves of migration that Turkey went through in the period between 1990 and 2017. These partially coincided in time, thus their combined effect

has caused and is causing extraordinary social burdens and challenges. Starting in the 1990s, enormous internal migration started occurring which mostly represented the flow of rural population into cities as a consequence of the economy's structural transformation. The other form of migration involved the flood of external refugees that commenced in the 2010s. The living conditions of previously relatively well-to-do social groups were severely degraded. A critical evaluation of this process is very significant for the planning of future post-migration processes and for the creation of livable cities. Specifically, in the course of these processes, traditional, socio-cultural, psycho-social, economic, legal and institutional coordination must equally be considered.

A lecture entitled "The Middle East Refugees, Turkish Efforts, and a New Urban Planning Agenda", as a sequel to the former lecture presented research that had analyzed the operation of currently functioning international networks and projects, and the general legal framework of refugee policies that deal with the issue of settling refugees. The presenters concluded that these are inadequate from the perspective of both the local population and refugees. Researchers formulated proposals for the renewal of spatial planning policy, a goal which may not only be relevant in Turkey, but also in other cities affected by migration in the Mediterranean region.

In this same section, a lecture entitled "Refugee Crises and Global Labor Relations" presented the work of a Polish research team who had studied the situation of migrant workers in Germany and Turkey. Their research focused on Syrian refugees. They explained their choice with the fact that Syrian refugees constitute a relatively well-educated group, whose labor market situation is substantively comparable to that of local employees. The researchers prepared interviews with families living in Turkish refugee camps and German cities, as well as those who are "on the road" in refugee camps in Greece. The respondents were primarily among those who had found employment in the textile industry. Thus, the researchers were able to gather multifaceted information and opinions from a well-delineated and specific sample. They summarized their findings with the concept of Economic Racism, which a significant portion of the migrant population experiences, but those who are the poorest and most defenseless suffer from more intensely, resulting in their considerable exploitation. The main issue is the limited access to labor rights of refugees and migrants. Current migration policies, labor law regulations, the violation of labor rights and segregation affecting labor affairs have contributed to an emergence and increase in inequality between the local population and the migrants. All of this is a substantial impediment to fitting in, and social integration.

Following my personal professional interests, I mostly participated in the Sociology of Education RN section. The classic subject, the development of

social inequalities and their reproduction, dominated the field as expected. Among the presentations I consider important was one entitled “Quality versus equality in European higher education policy”. It introduced a phenomenon that is well-known to those who professionally deal with higher education, but is not generally expressed with such clarity and subtlety. This is related to one of the important consequences of the expansion of higher education. In the first phase of the expansion (the 1960s and 1970s), massification commenced with generous government support, which was a step towards the realization of equal opportunity in education and conformed to the principles of social justice and social cohesion of the welfare state. By the 1990s it had become clear that attention in the meantime was being transferred to the topics of quality and efficiency. Circumstances and conditions support the development of the market-driven university, which fits the concept of knowledge society and places the responsibility for learning on the individual. The state only effects control through intermediary organizations, specifically based on performance criteria. This is the path of the withdrawal of the welfare state, primarily during times of crisis. The large European projects – the Bologna-process and the Lisbon Strategy – implicitly but intensely support this process.

The issue of migration also emerged in research into the world of education. Among the related presentations were two that particularly attracted my interest.

A lecture entitled “Italian Educators’ Views on Education for Integration in Multi-Ethnic Societies” called attention to the fact that education policy must urgently think through what concepts and practices are capable of dealing with culturally-diverse students and integrating them into national education systems. It argued that intercultural integration can be successful in the new multi-ethnic society. Therefore, it is not already recognized multicultural solutions that should be preferred, but rather intercultural ones. In practice, this means that from the perspective of the curriculum, getting to know the culture of students’ own countries should be awarded equal weight with learning about the culture of the host country. For example, Italian may be listed as the second language of students: this is the principle of multilingualism. It must also be recognized that some refugees will eventually return to their home countries, if the living conditions there are consolidated. Their children must be prepared for this possibility as well. For all of this to happen, a great number of teachers trained in this concept are necessary, thus the introduction of the new model also represents a great challenge for teacher training.

In the roundtable discussion that dealt with higher education we heard a contribution entitled “Contesting Knowledge in Higher Education: Ethnocentric Syllabi in Universities”. A professor from the University of Liverpool described the nowadays intensifying campaigning on British university campuses that has

become known for its question-based slogans such as ‘Why is my curriculum white?’, and ‘Why is my professor not black?’ These questions are being asked by students with an immigrant background and affect the fundamental content elements of university education. They raise the issue that university textbooks frequently only discuss themes from the Western perspective, and the time has come to integrate non-Western knowledge into curricula. For example, among the great sociologists of sociology, from Max Weber to Pierre Bourdieu and contemporary Western scientists, Arab, Chinese, Indian, Indonesian and Iranian concepts and thinkers are not even mentioned. This urgent change in mindset poses great challenges for Western universities (and naturally, other levels of the education system).

The General Assembly of the association took place in the framework of the conference. President Frank Welz (Austria) stated that the number of members has risen to 2,741 (in 2015 it was 2,118), which suggests that despite the negative predictions, interest in the profession of sociology is growing. Young people are continuously joining the organization, and the two now-regular Summer Schools for PhD students are obviously contributing to this. One of them is organized between the two conferences – its purpose is to provide concrete forms of professional assistance to students as concerns finalizing already written drafts of publications (in 2016, 25 participants were selected to attend from among 55 applicants). The other is the Pre-Conference Summer School, also on the subject of publication activity, and including theoretical and practical approaches. This year it took place in the two days prior to the conference (25 participants were selected from among 106 applicants). This year the subject of media appearance was the special theme.

The Executive Committee has continued its efforts in the past two years to strengthen ESA’s voice in sociology by intensifying collaboration with two important European organizations: the European Alliance for Social Science and Humanities, and the Initiative for Science in Europe. In the area of international relations outside of Europe, a new element is that the Chinese and Indian sociological associations have indicated their interest in cooperation, the preparatory steps for which have already been taken (in the previous cycle, the Arab Sociological Association institutionalized its relationship with the ESA).

In the field of the Association’s own publication activity, one new development is that the ESA Newsletter has been given a new title (“European Sociologist”) and a more member-friendly format. A decision was made regarding the commencement of publication of a third periodical (proposed title: “European Sociological Debates”) in an open-access format, in addition to the Association’s two periodicals (“European Societies”, “European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology”).

Other significant progress includes a new website and logo. The website has improved not only in terms of image but also in its functionality of use by Research Networks and in terms of member participation. The Monthly Bulletin is now called “ESA news” and will be linked to announcements on the website (“Opportunities”).

The General Assembly’s mandatory duty include the election of new officials, and a vote for a new President and members of the Executive Committee. The new president is Sue Scott (UK). A decision was made regarding the venue for the 2019 conference, which will be Paris.

**THE 8TH EUROPEAN SYSTEM
DYNAMICS WORKSHOP (EUSDW-VIII):
MODELLING SUSTAINABILITY PATHWAYS:
BRIDGING SCIENCE, POLICY AND SOCIETY
(31ST MAY – 2ND JUNE 2017, LISBON).
AN ADMITTEDLY PERSONAL ACCOUNT FROM AN
OUTSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE**

Gábor Király¹

System dynamics (hereafter: SD) can be considered a special field in several senses. Proponents of this research area do not necessarily share a common disciplinary background, but they do have a common methodological commitment. First, this school of thought stresses that systems should be understood from the inside; that is, it focuses on the internal structures and operation of systems and not on external forces or shocks. Secondly, it maintains a comprehensive outlook about situations or problems. This means that instead of attempting to analyse individual causal mechanisms, it strives to lay out and model the complexity of the web of causes of a given situation. Apart from these features, there is also a strong emphasis on visual representation – that is, on the delineation of causal relations in a clear and understandable manner. This commitment towards ‘graphic elicitation’ and understanding, alongside the presupposition that models can be built through utilising several sources of and forms of knowledge, also makes SD’s approach a suitable match for participatory research projects.

In relation to these characteristics, one of the fundamental presuppositions of SD is that structure drives behaviour, so it is very important to reveal and understand the structure that lies behind certain events. This workshop’s structure was set up in a way that fostered professional development by maximising the amount of feedback authors could get from colleagues. There were three intensive sessions during the two days: one about participatory SD,

¹ Gábor Király is research professor at the Corvinus University of Budapest and at the Budapest Business School; e-mail: gabor.kiraly@uni-corvinus.hu

one about sustainable decision-making processes, and one about earth SD. Two or three 30-minute-long papers were presented at each of these sessions. The conference papers had been sent to discussants² before the event, so the latter also prepared with a short presentation in which they raised questions about the papers and pointed to the possible weaknesses of the text with a view to their further development. After the discussant's comments, the members of the audience also addressed questions to the presenter and/or to the discussant. This set up created a lively but at the same time friendly atmosphere during the workshop. Although several critical remarks were made, they were given in a constructive and friendly manner. Moreover, due to the diverse disciplinary backgrounds of the participants, new and fresh insights were offered in relation to the papers.

The three sessions also highlighted three possible ways of utilising SD. First, it can be utilised to construct models as boundary objects which can i) instigate discussion, ii) help with identifying the underlying causes of common problems, and iii) contribute to building consensus about a specific course of action in a given community. Kyrstyna Stave's paper delineated the different ways that the added value of participatory SD processes can be studied scientifically. Presenting cases where different types of participatory processes had been used, Stave was able to point out the possible benefits (and drawbacks) of using SD tools in participatory processes. Bent Erik Bakken presented a complex participatory SD process involving several stakeholder groups as a way to bridge diverging worldviews about energy futures. The complexity of this multi-stakeholder process raised interesting methodological dilemmas about how one can manage the involvement of different parties with different vested interests (and time zones). Király (the author of this short piece) reviewed the empirical literature on participatory SD approaches and their characteristics.

Second, other papers utilised SD as a way to support and/or model sustainable decision-making. Birgit Kopainsky presented an experiment in which Zambian farmers had to choose between short- and long-term land-use strategies in a simulated environment based on an SD model. While the paper managed to demonstrate individual decision-making strategies under conditions of scarcity, it also provided learning opportunities for the farmers involved by highlighting the mutual interdependences in market relations and the possible consequences of their decisions on their future. In a similar fashion, Paulo Gonçalves presented an SD model created for learning purposes which aimed to demonstrate the messiness and complexity of humanitarian emergencies. This paper raised

2 Discussants at the event were Andreas Größler, Silvia Ulli-Beer, José Luis Casanova, Jürgen Strohhecker, Carmine Bianchi, Enzo Biavona, David Lane and Meike Tilebein.

awareness of the fact that NGOs and other actors in the field compete for scarce resources (hotel rooms, translators, helicopters, trucks, media attention, funding, etc.) which leads to several negative effects. These include lack of coordination, duplication of efforts, and concentration of resources in the most accessible areas while at the same time leaving other areas without aid. Since these negative effects cost lives during a humanitarian emergency, it is important to test different solutions in a simulated environment.

Third, other papers highlighted that SD can be utilized to gain theoretical insight and scope concerning given phenomena. Vincent de Goyceert's paper offered a model based on former empirical studies and analyses of related business acquisitions. He emphasised that while it is common knowledge that acquisitions often fail and lead to a decline in financial performance, our knowledge about the precise mechanisms behind this situation are limited. To shed light on this phenomenon he developed a parsimonious model focusing on the interrelationship of the magnitude and timing of downsizing and employee engagement. Steven Lade's presentation focused on a world-level SD model that simulated the possible effects of feedback between loss of biosphere integrity and climate change. This paper highlighted that while some research has been done about various planetary boundaries individually, we know very little about the interrelationship of these areas and how changes in one field can instigate changes in other fields. Last, David Collste and Theresa Bennich presented different theoretical narratives about sustainable transitions and proposed a way to connect future studies with SD. Their thought-experiment involving structural backcasting might inspire interesting methodological innovations for devising possible and desirable future visions by utilising an SD perspective

It is worth mentioning that, despite the tight schedule, the organisers also squeezed a short participatory exercise into the programme. The second day started with a World Café exercise with the students of the European Master's in System Dynamics as table hosts. During this exercise students presented models on green growth policies in Portugal that they had developed as school assignments, and SD practitioners gave them feedback and suggestions about how to develop and further elaborate these models. This shows both the thoughtfulness of the organisers and the approach of the whole workshop: learning was at the very heart of the event for everyone involved. The event was organised by CENSE (Centre for Environmental and Sustainability Research) at the NOVA University Lisbon.

RISK SOCIETY IN HOUSING: RESPONSIBILIZATION AND THE SOCIALIZATION OF RISK

Vera Csilla Horváth¹

The concept ‘risk society’, a term coined by German sociologist Ulrich Beck, was discussed in depth both by Beck himself and English sociologist Anthony Giddens. Both authors use the term to theorize modern societies in the context of intensifying globalisation, where the most relevant risks to members of a modern society are ‘manufactured’ (man-made) rather than naturally occurring. While Giddens maintained that society’s class structure moderates these risks, Beck’s work remained more closely centred on the concept of risk society itself, complete with a rich terminology of related phenomena, and the claim that ‘risk society’ will eventually transform ‘class society’.² Beck’s writings proved inspiring to researchers, but also attracted criticism. In the context of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and the subsequent ‘Great Recession’ after 2008, a number of researchers who addressed the housing and household-related finance consequences of the crisis also incorporated the notion of the risk society and some of the related concepts into their analysis. This was inspired not only by Beck’s (and Giddens’) works, but also by the realization that households have come to bear a far greater share of the risks of financing housing than in previous major economic downturns due to the long-standing, gradual ‘socialization’ of these risks. These accounts suggest a public policy discourse in which risks are presumed to be evenly or ‘fairly’ distributed among social actors; however, in real life outcomes they prove to more significantly affect lower income and vulnerable social strata. In this sense, risk society does not replace class society – instead, the distribution of risks reinforces or even exacerbates class divisions.

1 Vera Csilla Horvath is a Ph.D. student at the Doctoral School of Sociology, Corvinus University of Budapest; e-mail: vera.horvath@mri.hu

2 Beck, Ulrich 1992, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: SAGE. More recent writings that add to and refine the concept of ‘risk society’ and elaborate its terminology include *World at Risk* (Cambridge: Polity Press 2009); and ‘Why “class” is too soft a category to capture the explosiveness of social inequality at the beginning of the 21st century’ (*British Journal of Sociology*, 64(1), 63–74, 2013).

Rather than reviewing a single volume, this review paper sets out to explore the (so far limited) literature on the scalar and sectoral shift of ‘manufactured risk’ associated with financing housing production and housing provision from central governments and financing institutions to increasingly lower levels of government, third-party actors and private households through a process of ‘socialization’ of risks, ‘responsibilization’ of households, and ‘organised irresponsibility’. While the articles described here are diverse in focus, they all discuss phenomena related to the evolution of housing affordability, household indebtedness, and a shift from housing provision in the framework of the welfare state to not only the privatisation and marketization of housing, but also an overall shift from housing finance-related risks from central state bodies and financing institutions to private households.

Although the term ‘risk society’ is connected to both Giddens and Beck in relation to social phenomena brought about by recent intensifying globalisation, Beck’s work focuses more closely on centring the understanding of modernity on the notion of risks brought about by human action; he has also produced a rich set of terms useful in analysing a range of social processes, even outside his intended fields of analysis. Beck argued that in traditional societies risks were largely limited to natural hazards, whereas in modern society economic and technological development has led not only to growth in wealth through the increase in the production and distribution of goods, but as a systemic side effect it also entails the ‘social production of risk’³. The types of risk most relevant to human society, he argues, are man-made, like climate change, financial crises, or nuclear threats; and in a system of organised irresponsibility, a major risk event typically cannot be traced to a single accountable person. Beck postulated that ‘risk society’ would replace ‘class society’, as major risk events affect people regardless of their social standing.⁴ He later came to acknowledge a geographic gradation of risk, distinguishing ‘risk donor countries’ and ‘risk recipient countries’;⁵ but continued to emphasize the incalculability of risk and its consequent transcendence of class divides. More recently he exemplified major risk events: ‘Chernobyl, 9/11, climate change, the financial crisis, Fukushima, the euro crisis’⁶, but maintained that ‘risk logic’ is fundamentally different from ‘class logic’.

A fair share of criticism of Beck’s assumption that social class loses its significance in relation to risk has pointed to the role of class position in

3 Beck 1992:19

4 Beck 1992:227.

5 Beck 2009:30.

6 Beck 2013:64

mitigating risks, including man-made ones. Sociologist Dean Curran went a step further and highlighted the ways in which the social production of risks may in fact *increase* the relevance of class.⁷ In a 2013 article, Curran gives a detailed overview of the main arguments against Beck's claims that class distribution will be replaced by risk distribution by repeatedly demonstrating that class remains relevant to structuring the distribution of wealth, and through it, life chances.⁸ He then goes on to diametrically oppose Beck's view on risk and class, stating that the theory of risk society 'contains the basis of a critical theory of class relations of risk society',⁹ which reinforces rather than fundamentally transforms the logic of social distribution, even in the context of increasing man-made risk. According to Curran, risks are not only gradable within a single society, but their stratification follows class lines. Even in the case of maximum risks that threatens all life in a region or even on Earth (like a nuclear disaster or environmental pollution), only the initial distribution of risk is independent of class. After a disaster event with lasting consequences, people with adequate means will move to the least affected areas, while those with limited resources continue to occupy the exposed spaces; risk positions will therefore be structured by class positions. Curran not only claims that class structure reflects wealth distribution, which in turn continues to have clear relevance to life chances – in fact, 'in the risk society, inequalities *in themselves* become the means of exacerbating exposure to hazard and risk'.¹⁰

In a more recent article¹¹ Curran further develops his framework using Beck's terminology to conceptualize inequality in differing risk positions in the events leading up to the 2008 GFC and subsequent recession, giving an account of 'the social production and distribution of systemic financial risk in a context of *organized irresponsibility*'.¹² While in his 2013 study Curran pointed out that major risk events not only replace or reproduce but actually deepen existing unequal class positions, in this article he takes a look at whether the same relationship between risk position and class position holds true for systemic *financial risk*. In the economic and housing market boom preceding the crisis, economic actors in key positions deployed a number of increasingly complex and innovative financial

7 Dean Curran 2013, 'Risk society and the distribution of bads: theorizing class in the risk society.' *The British Journal of Sociology* 64(1) pp. 44-62.

8 Curran 2013:45-46.

9 Curran 2013:46.

10 Curran 2013:53.

11 Dean Curran 2015, 'Risk illusion and organized irresponsibility in contemporary finance: rethinking class and risk society.' *Economy and Society* 44(3) pp. 392-417.

12 Curran 2015:392.

products, with the help of which they not only produced risk and value (and increased their profit and bonuses), but were also able to avoid the consequences of failed high-risk ventures, producing a clear case of organised irresponsibility. While some people gained excessively from heightened risk production, these were not the same people who were left to suffer the consequences when the ventures failed.¹³ In the decades preceding the crisis, banks gradually transformed from cautiously behaving partnerships to increasingly more risk-taking and profitable publicly traded companies, in which owners and senior bankers diverged, and the new commercial banking system ‘socially instituted a particularly extreme relation of organized irresponsibility, in which senior bankers could benefit from the risks they created without bearing the consequences of these risks’.¹⁴ By the 2000s, financing institutions were applying increasingly risky strategies to maximise gain. Innovative financial products had already been around for decades, but by the early to mid-2000s large-scale and complex instruments had been developed to shield senior bankers from financial risk, the brunt of which was shifted to investors, ranging from professional institutions to private borrowers and mortgagors. High-risk banking was not the single cause of the GFC, but it did contribute to the production of systemic financial risk, while incremental innovation in retail loan products spread this risk over huge segments of society. In conclusion, Curran reiterates that ‘the social production and distribution of risk in a context of organized irresponsibility’ in the years leading up to the GFC and during its unfolding was not only strongly affected by class relations, but with all its outcomes and consequences considered, it in fact contributed to deepening class divides.

The 2016 edited volume *Risking Capitalism* specifically examines risk-shifting among housing market actors, inspired by insights similar to Curran’s: while the socialization of housing finance-related risk was a gradual process lasting decades, the GFC indicated that the amount of financial risk shifted from large-scale professional actors to private individuals would inevitably have severe social consequences. While the increasing wealth produced through innovation in housing finance benefitted wide segments of society who aspired to become home owners, the brunt of the associated risks was shifted to borrowers on the one hand, and the public sector on the other. Two articles in particular treat the issue of housing and the socialization of housing finance-related risks, departing from a multi-decade overview of the risk-shifting process from both the private sector and central governments to private households and lower levels

13 Curran 2015:394-396.

14 Curran 2015:405.

of governance.¹⁵ While these articles do not explicitly address the connection between risk exposure and class position, both point to the more vulnerable position of lower-income social groups in a context where mainstream political communication seems to imply an even or ‘fair’ distribution of risks.

Adrienne Roberts examines the consequences of the GFC on the UK housing and food crisis, particularly its long-term effects on low-income segments of society and persons at risk of homelessness, with two primary foci: financialization, and the privatization of social reproduction.¹⁶ After theorizing the concept of financialization, social reproduction, and the financialization of social reproduction through household indebtedness in the framework of feminist political economy, Roberts sets out to discuss housing related risks and debt, and the development of welfare provision leading up to the post-GFC food crisis. With regard to housing risk, she provides an account of the deregulation and marketization measures of housing finance in previous decades. Mortgage markets were liberalized since the 1980s, and financial institutions were able to pass much of their budgetary risk to investors – including small scale investors – through securitization instruments. In the same period, much of public task housing was privatized, and central housing subsidies were heavily cut. These measures stimulated private investment in housing by investors and private households; but they also deepened the financialization of the housing sector, and the depletion of public task housing. Private households accumulating debt to secure their housing became the social norm, a strategy which is particularly risky for low-income families; and this was accompanied by the individualization and marketization measures through which ‘the risks of the financial sector were socialized’,¹⁷ that is, associated risks were increasingly shifted to private households. After the GFC, the adverse consequences of the risks taken by the financial sector were further socialized through bailout mechanisms. In the end, Roberts concludes, while the British economy seems to have begun to recover after the crisis, the financialization of social reproduction continues as if the recovery had never happened. The working class, the poor, and single-parent households in particular absorb much of the risk – and the cost – of widespread household indebtedness and post-crisis tax and benefit restructuring.

15 Susanne Soederberg (ed.) 2016, *Risking Capitalism*, Research in Political Economy, Volume 31, Emerald Group Publishing.

16 Adrienne Roberts 2016, ‘Household Debt and the Financialization of Social Reproduction’ in Susanne Soederberg (ed.) *Risking Capitalism* (pp. 135-164).

17 Roberts 2016:144.

In the same volume, Walk and Simone¹⁸ present the case of Canada's housing sector, looking at the relationship between 'neoliberalisation', financialization, and the evolution of risk management. They present the way financialization shifted risk not only among sectors but also among different scales of government and institutions, from the federal state to lower levels of government, third-sector organisations, and private households. The authors seek to understand the changes in risk associated with the Canadian housing sector through housing finance and policy development, basing their analysis on the concept of risk society alongside financialization, and point out the importance of organized irresponsibility. In an overview of Canadian housing policy, the authors describe changes in the loci and bearers of risks associated with financing housing since World War II, from the Fordist-Keynesian post-war decades to the 'privatized Keynesian' approach of incentivizing private households to stimulate the economy through taking on increasing debts, and then to the 'neoliberalisation' period starting in the mid-1980s, when market-based mechanisms were introduced into public housing provision to improve efficiency.¹⁹ By the late 1990s, housing-related spending by the state was almost entirely reduced to mortgage insurance. At the same time, the responsibility to provide affordable housing was shifted further down to local providers and municipalities with limited financial leverage in times of crisis or recession.²⁰ Walker and Simone note that while the risks of household indebtedness are fairly well understood by policy makers, many federal politicians continue to argue for more access to credit for low-income households. By 2015, they write, 'each individual household fully bears their own risk of default' with the federal state only retaining the responsibility for mortgage insurance – insuring the lender, not the borrower.²¹ To illustrate the social risks this situation entails, the authors close the main text of the article with a quote from Bank of Canada governor Steven Poloz: 'Borrowers and lenders ... bear the ultimate responsibility for their own decisions at the individual and firm level. It is not the role of monetary policy to protect individuals from making bad choices.'

This process of risk shifting towards private individuals, referred to as 'responsibilization', is also a central theme of Stonehouse and colleagues, who present the case of low-income households facing housing risk in the post-

18 Alan Walks – Dylan Simone 2016, 'Neoliberalization through Housing Finance, the Displacement of Risk, and Canadian Housing Policy: Challenging Minsky's Financial Instability Hypothesis' in Susanne Soederberg (ed.) *Risking Capitalism* (pp.49-77).

19 Walker and Simone 2016:57-63.

20 Walker and Simone 2016:65-66.

21 Walker and Simone 2016:69.

GFC context in Victoria, Australia.²² This analysis emphasizes the process of responsabilization within the neoliberal political discourse, showing how political discourse underpins the shifting of systemic risk from public bodies and financing institutions to private households. This process is typically played out through invoking the concept of ‘self-reliance’, ‘fiscal responsibility’ and the threat of ‘welfare dependency’ in fields ranging from unemployment to poverty, health, education, and homelessness.²³ A ‘pathway to independence’ is expected of the subsidized population, which, in the case of housing, would entail a ‘transition into the private market’ through cutting off the ‘disincentive’ of public funding. In the authors’ view, however, housing risk is socially constructed and unequally distributed due to economic and social stratification. In their assessment, the risks of a market-based housing solution – whether debt-based ownership or private rented housing – are far from diminishing, and the private sector has repeatedly demonstrated its inability to provide affordable and adequate housing to vulnerable populations.

In conclusion, the concept of risk society and the associated terminology developed in Beck’s writing is useful for describing the social and economic processes affecting households at times when a major ‘manufactured’ risk event occurs. In the cited cases, the focal financial risk event was the Global Financial Crisis: its consequences reveal that numerous households had been shouldering much more risk than they could afford due to incremental regulatory and mortgage market changes over the previous decades. The crisis affected all social strata in most developed countries, with harsh consequences even for affluent middle classes; and in this sense it did correspond to Beck’s notion of a major risk event. However, its adverse effects were far from equally distributed; in the examined cases, they did follow class lines (a major source of risk in this case stemmed from the higher likelihood of those with a lower income taking on loans with very low or no own contribution, or opting for a higher-risk mortgage product with a lower initial cost). Whether Curran’s assessment is correct that major risk events further widen inequalities may depend on country-specific factors as well. Nonetheless, the events of the GFC do seem to suggest that while the concept of risk society may be a useful analytical tool for understanding certain phenomena in modern societies, it is unlikely to bring about the end of class divisions.

22 Stonehouse, Darran – Guinever Threlkeld – Jane Farmer 2015. ‘Housing risk’ and the neoliberal discourse of responsabilisation in Victoria. *Critical Social Policy* 35(3) pp. 393–413.

23 Stonehouse et al. 2015:396

STREET OF PLEASURE – HUNGARIAN SEX FOR EUROS¹ BY VERA MUNK (BUDAPEST, BOOKLINE BOOKS, 2017)

Fanni Dés²

This book by Vera Munk was written to reveal details about one of the red light districts in Germany. It examines a zone in Bremerhaven, Lessingstrasse, where women who work as prostitutes are legally allowed to work. The journalist examined the district for half a year, conducting interviews with nearly forty prostitutes, as well as – among others – pimps, clients, legal actors, social workers and police officers. Although one of the main aims of the book is to describe the situation of Hungarian prostitutes in Bremerhaven from an objective perspective in a descriptive way, the author often links the approaches of different feminist theories to the phenomenon.

Based on the information given in the book, there are 170 women working as prostitutes on Lessingstrasse in Bremerhaven, and Hungarian women are overrepresented. On the websites which advertise women who sell sex, and on the basis of the number of Hungarian prostitutes in Germany, ‘Hungarian women’ has become a distinct, searchable category. The German law on the decriminalization of prostitution offers no concrete guidelines for regulation at the local level (for example, in some areas of Germany it is obligatory for women who work as prostitutes to pay tax, while in others it is not). The book maps one woman’s road to prostitution and introduces her life in Bremerhaven at Lessingstrasse: we learn about her relationships in the red light district, her life in prostitution and at home, her clients, how she looks at her life, how she sees her job, and what her future goals are.

The book guides us through the phenomena which are well known from the literature about women from Eastern and Central Europe who are trafficked to Western Europe for prostitution: the deep poverty which ends up in women

1 Kéjútca – Magyar szex euróért

2 Fanni Dés is a Ph.D. student at the Doctoral School of Sociology, Corvinus University of Budapest; e-mail: fannides@gmail.com

being forced in to prostitution, the high prices of rooms and brothels in the host country, how pimps control women in prostitution, and the phenomenon of the ‘capo’ system, which refers to when male pimps stay in their country of origin and control women in prostitution through other women the literature call capos. The capo serves as an extension of the pimp’s hand, and in return plays a significant role in the lives of women who ‘belong’ to the pimp.

Although Berta, the main character in the book, is fictional, her life, circumstances and actions have all been copied from the author’s interviewees. Berta is from a little town in the area of Nyírség, which is one of the main sending regions of Hungary with regard to women who are trafficked to Western Europe in to the sex industry. Her road to prostitution starts with a ‘loverboy’ in Nyíregyháza (the literature calls the husbands or boyfriends of women who sell sex, as well as those who live from the women’s income, loverboys).

The book introduces how Krisztián slowly starts to isolate Berta from her mother, and the slow processes of manipulation that first leads to Berta starting to work as a dancer in a bar in Austria, and then as a prostitute in different countries, finally ending up in Germany. The book gives insight into how Berta looks at the process and her relationship with Krisztián, how prostitutes view their pimps. The author concludes that *‘There is no similar relationship between a sex worker and their pimp’*.

The book points out the fact that pimping rarely happens in a well-defined way, as women who are working in prostitution are usually bonded to their pimps, and it is very typical for trafficking activity to be masked by a ‘loving’ relationship. Trafficking frequently happens through techniques of manipulation: through romantic promises, marriages which never materialize, or husbands who take their wives abroad and exploit them. Women are also frequently recruited by friends. This makes it easy for males to avoid being defined as pimps, even though it is they who manipulate women into prostitution. The process also makes it harder for women to escape because of their emotional bonding.

Through the life of Berta and other women who work as prostitutes in Bremerhaven, the book also describes the everyday exploitation of women in the sex industry – their continuous anxiety concerning the need to collect the daily rental fee for rooms and windows in which they work, for which the rent is incredibly high, and the anxiety of earning the money they are forced to give to their pimp. Throughout the book, the author continuously raises questions about what can be called force, and what should be understood as choice. For example, Berta, after breaking up with Krisztián, chooses another pimp – based on her fear of working alone – and asks him if she can work with him. She – theoretically – has a less compromised relationship with Iván in the sense that Iván has a family in Hungary, but Berta also has a sexual relationship with him,

and when she is in Hungary spends time with Iván and his family. The author expresses incomprehension about why women share their income with someone else, usually male.

Violence against women who sell sex also happens in Bremerhaven's Lessingstrasse. Berta had a traumatic experience with a client who tried to choke her. The author also mentions a case from 2016 when two women who worked as prostitutes were murdered in the street. It is also well known that significant violence is associated with prostitution: death rates for prostitutes are forty times higher than average citizens³. Research that examined the situation of prostitutes in nine countries with the involvement of 854 people who worked in prostitution, and another piece of research involving five countries and 475 interviews with prostitutes found symptoms of PTSD⁴ in nearly 70 percent of women⁵. One theme that continuously runs through the book is that women do not want to work in prostitution, and that it is hard to leave the sex industry. The author states that: '*most of the women would stop being involved in prostitution but they do not have any idea how*'.

The book is based on important work and research: it is important to talk about prostitution and to fight against the romanticization of the phenomenon of prostitution, to reveal and raise awareness of the structures which surround the sex industry, and to try to increase awareness in society of this issue. Nevertheless, the author makes many improvident conclusions in the book, omitting mention of the structures and inequalities which surround the phenomenon of prostitution. It interprets different phenomenon and events – relationships between pimps and women in prostitution, the perspectives of clients, the question of choice and opportunities to escape – as if males and females had the same decision-making latitude, and as if class inequalities were not determining social factors in most cases in society structures, although it has been proven that class is a critical variable in relation to who becomes a victim of trafficking⁶. It is clear from the

3 Ekman, K. E. (2013). *Being and BeingBought: Prostitution, surrogacy and the splitself*. Spinifex Press.

4 PTSD, or post-traumatic stress disorder, is an anxiety problem that develops in some people after extremely traumatic events, such as experiences with combat, crime, an accident or natural disaster. People with PTSD may relive the event via intrusive memories, flashbacks and nightmares; avoid anything that reminds them of the trauma; and have anxious feelings they did not have before the event that are so intense that their lives are disrupted.

5 Farley, M., Baral, I., Kiremire, M., & Sezgin, U. (1998). Prostitution in five countries: Violence and post-traumatic stress disorder. *Feminism & Psychology*, 8(4), 405-426., Farley, M. (2003). *Prostitution, trafficking and traumatic stress* (Vol. 2, No. 3-4). Psychology Press.

6 Kligman, G., & Limoncelli, S. (2005). Trafficking women after socialism: From, to, and through Eastern Europe. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, 12(1), 118-140.

book just how deeply poverty determines women's lives and work as prostitutes, but when it comes to the interpretation of the present, to women's lives in prostitution, to their relationships with their pimps, clients, their decisions and opportunities, inequalities remain outside the interpretation. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of prostitution cannot be examined outside the social context. The phenomenon of prostitution is closely tied to social inequality, poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and marginalization.

Another questionable issue regarding the book concerns the objectivity of the author and the interpretation of the different approaches to prostitution. The author introduces the two main approaches to prostitution ('sex work' and the abolitionist view) as if they were two ends of a continuum, and as if objectivity could be defined as taking a position between the two. For example, Munk states that is her objectivity that leads her to believe that it is not easy to differentiate between voluntary and non-voluntary prostitution, although one of the main critiques of abolitionists concerns the inseparability of the two positions. Proponents of this perspective state that the phenomenon of prostitution is socially unacceptable, and as voluntary and involuntary prostitution are inseparable in most cases, it is impossible to base policies around 'voluntary' prostitution. Feminist theories take a critical view of societal structures and seek to analyze social phenomena through examining socially defined power relations. Seeking objectivity too often involves analyzing phenomena without questioning existing social structures; a position which is constantly taken by the author of this book.

I would recommend the book to anyone who seeks to learn more about the phenomenon of prostitution, although I would recommend reading it with a critical eye. The reader should constantly think about how structural inequalities (both gender and class) determine the concept of free choice, our relationships – especially the romantic relationships and how these structural inequalities are able to influence free choices of women in prostitution who have come from a background of deep poverty.

GYPSY ECONOMY: ROMANI LIVELIHOODS AND NOTIONS OF WORTH IN THE 21ST CENTURY BY MICOL BRAZZABENI, MANUELA IVONE CUNHA AND MARTIN FOTTA EDITORS (1ST EDITION. NEW YORK, BERGHAHN BOOKS, 2016)

*Anikó Havelda*¹

The gypsy economy is fully embedded into the market. This is the initial remark of *Gypsy Economy*. The book was edited by Micol Brazzabeni, Manuela Ivone Cunha and Marin Fotta, and the afterword to the book was written by Keith Hart (Centennial Professor of Economic Anthropology at the London School of Economics and Political Science). The volume originated in discussions that took place during a 2012 Exploratory Workshop supported by the European Research Foundation (ESF), the Center for Research in Anthropology (CRIA), and the Lisbon University Institute (IUL).

We all know about states that organize societies within territorial boundaries and apply laws and punishments, but what happens the outside these boundaries? This volume is a fine ethnographic collection, and the chapters provide a number of case studies about a variety of contemporary economic practices from different regions and countries (e.g. Slovakia, Portugal, Bucharest, Brazil, etc.). Most of the contributors to this book discuss societies without specifically mentioning the state, but they argue that the actors in these societies (Gypsies) do interact with states in a specific way, and that the activities of these actors are embedded in markets. The aim of the book is to enrich our understanding of the changing interrelations between the market and the state by anthropologically examining the economic practices of gypsy populations. The chapters of *Gypsy Economy* are based on intensive fieldwork that was conducted over the past decade. The main research questions that guide this volume are the following: Which creative economic strategies (formal and informal) do Gypsies employ to make a living? In which aspects of existence do they invest? How do they mobilize social, cultural, and economic resources in the context of vulnerability, indebtedness, and financial volatility?

The chapters of this book focus on the forms of social action to which Gypsies subscribe. Some of them describe the economic strategies of people living in such segregated communities and the dynamics of debt at the interface of state

¹ Anikó Havelda is a Ph.D. student at the Doctoral School of Sociology, Corvinus University of Budapest; email: aniko.havelda@gmail.com

welfare and poverty, but they do not limit themselves to describing these topics as the inevitable by-products of discrimination. The chapters always take into account the contextual dimensions and the historical context of the different Roma and gypsy populations.

The volume loosely revolves around four important themes concerning the economic activities of gypsy people. The first theme is money transfers (such as usury, begging, loans, and state grants). The second theme reflects on the historical dynamics that gave rise to specific economic strategies and forms of market interactions. The third theme describes economic performance, and the last one concerns the gypsy understanding of wealth and value in different forms.

The first two chapters in this volume focus on flows of money among Slovakian and Hungarian Gypsies. The author of the first chapter (Tomáš Hrustič) focuses on usury (the lending of money at excessive interest rates) as a strategy advantageous to both lenders and borrowers among the Tabori Roma who live in segregated settlements in peripheral regions of east Slovakia. Usury is considered criminal activity by mainstream society and state authorities, but the author argues that usury among the Taboris is viewed as a natural and effective means of investing money and escaping poverty. All usurers are aware of the fact that their business is illegal, but they see themselves as possessing an important virtue: the ability to think ahead. The Taboris are ambivalent about usury: on the one hand they appreciate the fact that usurers are the only people who are willing to lend money (Taboris are typically not able to obtain bank loans), but on the other they have a strong sense of injustice because of the high interest rates. The author addresses an important problem; namely, it is not possible to draw a dividing line between lenders and borrowers: Tabori Roma are at a certain times borrowers, and at other times moneylenders. In this way, the system of credit influences social relations according to who possesses money, and these new relations affect the concepts of identity.

In the second chapter, Judit Durst also analyses informal moneylending in its social context to show its social function. The author's intention is to contribute to our understanding of the moral grounds and economic logic of informal moneylending in rural gypsy communities in Hungary. In parallel with the findings of the first chapter, Durst also claims that usury is one of the rare opportunities for the unemployed to obtain badly needed income and demonstrate social mobility. The author emphasizes that we need to regard informal moneylending as a form of hierarchical redistribution, not a simple debt relationship, and that moneylenders may be seen as a part of the moral community due to their willingness to provide loans to marginalized people when they are most in need.

The following main topic of this volume reflects on the historic dynamics that gave rise to specific economic activities. In Chapter 3, Sara Sama Acedo discusses how economic interests are created and maintained by travelling and horse-trading among Portuguese Ciganos. The author argues that two sets of relationships must be examined in order to understand this way of life: first, intra-ethnic spatialities and forms of territorial exclusiveness that are maintained over time and regulate access to the spaces of economic activities, and second, the problematic relationship between Ciganos and civil administration. The economic activities of horse-trading Ciganos can best be approached as interstitial. They keep traditional trade alive, yet respond to new economic and bureaucratic requirements regarding horse breeding and trading. Chapters 4 and 5 provide detailed descriptions of the economic strategies of Gypsies in migration contexts. Jan Grill, the author of the fourth chapter, examines the oscillation between two economic strategies that occurs in networks of Slovak Roma migrants to the UK and Slovakia; namely, 'fixing up' money and 'hard work'. 'Fixing up' money refers to having knowledge of state systems, including how to apply for the various support schemes and benefits to which the Gypsies are entitled. This knowledge is connected not only to income-generating strategies, but also to degrees of social intelligence. 'Hard work' refers to menial, unstable factory labor. Grill argues that these two modes of survival often coexist in time and space. In the eyes of the Slovakian Gypsies, the 'great poverty' of the past decades has been replaced by the relative wealth of the present thanks to migration. The case study also provides a historical overview of the economic activities of the Tarkovce Roma. The author explains that these 'fixing up' financial activities already existed in the past, but these practices have been adjusted as inventive responses to a changing socio-economic context.

Marco Solimene presents a case study that explores the practical and symbolic implications of scrap metal collection ('going for iron') carried out by some Bosnian Xoraxané gypsy families living in the metropolitan area of Rome. The author shows how this activity contributes to the negotiation of group identity in relation to both the Roma and non-Roma, and demonstrates how collecting scrap metal responds perfectly to the ambiguities and contradictions of the Italian socio-economic system. The chapter evolves around the expression *Romani butji* ('Romani occupation') which represents an important and distinguishing marker between the non-Roma and the recently migrated Romanian Roma. Gypsies consider scrap-metal collection to be a proper job, unlike other 'gypsy activities' such as begging and stealing. Collecting scrap-metal is an entrepreneurial activity that involves turning waste into value and circumventing bureaucratic strictures and legal impediments. The most important remark from this study is that collecting scrap-metal does not merely involve adapting to the

opportunities offered by the wider socio-economic context. It fits the Italian social, political and economic landscape.

The third major theme of the volume is performance. The chapters that belong to this theme closely examine how gypsy people interact with each other (and with non-Gypsies). The first chapter in this section was written by Gergő Pulay, who describes how Spoitori Roma live on the streets in the most notorious ghetto in Bucharest. The Gypsies who are described in this chapter take advantage of the numerous resources and opportunities offered by the street, and strive to become entrepreneurs or ‘businessmen’ in an uncertain and constantly changing economic environment. They do so by gaining material and symbolic value from managing traffic.

Martin Olivera discusses how the economy among the Gabori Roma in Transylvania creates Roma society, while also ensuring complete symbolic independence. The author argues that the economy is not simply a part of the reproduction of social order, but is actively involved in the production of society. From this perspective, according to Olivera, we must look at the economy not only as a process of production, but also a form of ethics, and consider how Roma produce resources as well as how they spend them. Drawing on Shalin’s model of domestic modes of production (DMP), the author describes the dynamics through which Gabori Roma manage to establish a logic of abundance and take possession of the world. Olivera elaborates that the incomes of Gabori households are of two kinds: money earned from Rom work (*Romani butji*) and income from other activities. *Romani butji* is considered men’s work and this has consequences for Gabori conceptions about money. Unlike money from women’s work, which is associated with daily subsistence and the buying of food or new clothes, money from men’s work is not treated as a means of exchange, but appreciated for its use value. In the Gabori ideology, women’s work ensures the continuity of Roma society (i.e. ensures that members have enough to eat), while male labor maintains the place of the household in society: it helps motivate the development of relationships with other domestic groups. Money in this sense is the fuel for the engine of Rom sociability.

While this earlier chapter mainly focused on male moneymaking, in the next chapter Florencia Ferrari explores female moneymaking activities among the Calon Gypsies in Brazil. She concentrates on ethnographically illustrating the relationship between Calon Gypsies and non-gypsy Brazilians in the streets by examining palm reading as an economic activity. The author argues that notions such as shame and luck and conceptions of time are different between Calon Gypsies and non-gypsy Brazilians, which leads to tension and misunderstanding about the meaning of fortune telling itself.

The remaining three chapters revolve around the topic of wealth and value. In Chapter 9, Catalina Tesar writes about conspicuous consumption and the values of Romanian Cortorari Gypsy youth. She discusses the meanings and representations of consumption behavior in the light of the local conceptions about reproduction. Unlike Chapters 4 and 5, which provide descriptions of the economic strategies of Gypsies in a migration context, Tesar focuses on forms of investment in the home country. The consumption behavior of Cortorari can be best expressed by describing the symbolism of their houses. In the eyes of this gypsy community, large, visible and expensive houses represent the prosperity and well-being of the family. Houses are associated with the youth, the most economically active generation. The author argues that Cortorari consumption behavior accords with the model of conspicuous consumption developed by Veblen.

Martin Fotta examines the activity of the Calon men of Bahia in Brazil and the meaning of this activity, exploring how values arise from social relations and contribute to social reproduction. Unlike the Central European Roma of the opening chapters, the Calon of Bahia make money primarily through lending money to non-gypsies. The author shows that there are two major sources of social value among these gypsy communities: 'shame or honor'. All Calon 'posses' these, and such values embody their history as social persons, and 'strength or capability to manage an unstable environment'. The Calon attain the attributes of social persons in relation to these values through creating self-other relations that are constantly materialized in the movement of money, persons, households, and so on. By reinterpreting the specific content of their key values, Calon are able to assimilate and reflect broader socio-economic changes while remaining Calon.

The last chapter on the topic (and in the volume) continues with the theme of internal circulation and notions of personal worth. Nathalie Manrique, the author of this chapter, provides an interpretation of Spanish Gitano Gypsy society as structured by the logic of gifts. She elaborates that the identity of the Spanish Gypsy is bit different from other societal identities elsewhere in Europe. As Gitanos have never fitted easily into a strongly hierarchical Spanish society, gypsy identity is constructed from mobility; most importantly, the ability to accumulate goods, or to transmit the symbols of power and wealth. The author argues that interactions within the idiom of giving and receiving continuously confirm the ordering of individuals and groups into hierarchical categories. Gifting is the main way of controlling situations and initiating all interactions: to give is start or renew relations. When a Gitano Gypsy becomes a receiver, this means that he or she has become indebted. Accordingly, givers are seen as superior to receivers. Through this system of value dynamics,

wealth is rebalanced and undermines any individual attempts to accumulate money.

In conclusion, the contributors of this volume have tried to understand, analyze and interpret the economic activities of gypsies in their own context and using their own terms. It is obvious that the economic arrangements of gypsies are complex and closely related to and embedded in local social positions. The authors' intention was to explore these complexities by focusing on how economic activities and performance are embedded in markets. Gypsy societies are not the same. This volume attests to the diversity that arises from different ideas about economic issues, such as the meaning of work, the relationship between formality and informality, the nature of ethnic relations, ways of economic strategizing, understanding wealth and value, and so on. The chapters in this volume cover a manifold set of themes about the economy of the gypsies, and can be seen as pieces of a big puzzle. Each and every case study contributes to widening our knowledge about the economic activities of gypsies. However, as we can see, these activities are multifarious, and perhaps it is impossible to see the whole picture; the whole 'Gypsy Economy'. But one thing is common to the chapters in the book: each suggests that the economic activity of gypsy people in all the observed countries does not involve passive adaptation but active responses to the wider socio-economic systems within which they are embedded, and to which they contribute. I specifically recommend this book to those who are interested in anthropology, ethnography, or in the everyday lives of Roma in general. However, those who are interested in unusual economic processes will find this volume interesting too.

THE SHAPE OF THE NEW: FOUR BIG IDEAS AND HOW THEY MADE THE MODERN WORLD BY SCOTT L. MONTGOMERY AND DANIEL CHIROT (OXFORD, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2015)

Juhi Pandya¹

In this book, the authors talk about the ideas that have been of immense importance as the sources of decisions and actions that constructed the modern world – those ideas that have been and remain amongst the most central to the modern understanding of the nature and workings of human society. It was in the late seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when most of the ideas fundamental to modernity were born. The authors claim that contemporary society has been built over time from the materials of thought, and support the notion that ideas have been among the primary forces behind modern history during the past three centuries. All the different ideas that are discussed in the book – concerning the Enlightenment, politics, economics, social science and religion – have been put to many different uses since they first appeared, and show no signs of going away. One of the foremost goals of the authors in claiming the power of these ideas as primary historical forces is to identify their implications for the scholarship and teaching of both social sciences and the humanities. Each chapter takes a key domain of idea-making and traces its origins, logic, and relevance to the ongoing debate.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part ('Inventors of Modernity') describes the theories of Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Charles Darwin, as well as debates between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. The second part ('Secular and Religious Reactions against Enlightenment') deals with ideas that have arisen to confront the Enlightenment. This includes writings about Christianity and Islamic modernism, both of which surged in influence in many parts of the globe during the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. The writings referred to in the book portray the Enlightenment perspective on the

¹ Juhi Pandya is a Ph.D. student at the Doctoral School of Sociology, Corvinus University of Budapest; e-mail: juhupandya285@gmail.com

domain of ideas under discussion, particularly in relation to the Middle East, Europe, and the United States.

The introductory chapter presents the authors explanation for choosing the ideas they include, and explains the influence of these on the lives of people in the modern world. The authors think that the twentieth century world was built in substantial part on the ideas of Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Charles Darwin, but it was also the attention they attracted due to their enlightened vision of progress that was championed. Book chapters follow a specific framework: they start by providing detailed information, including a brief description of a scholar's personal life from birth to death, including family details and educational and career achievements. They also describe how the scholars started their research and produced the eminent work which inspired the world. Prominent relations with other scholars are mentioned within each chapter to clarify how such scholars were linked to each other during their lives. These readings hint that the surrounding environment plays a supportive role in nurturing ideas. The authors' aim is to synthesize what is known about these scholars and concepts into a coherent set of discussions about their diverse, long-term impact.

The chapter on *Adam Smith*, a humanist intellectual and moral philosopher who ventured into economics, briefly mentions his work '*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*' and his book '*The Wealth of Nations*'. The authors argue that Adam Smith's central concern was freedom, something that was revolutionary then, and remains vital today. The authors opine that Adam Smith favored two different groups of believers in the inherent value of capitalism as a progressive, efficient, and liberating way of organizing modern societies. On the one hand, he offers clear support for making the free market the single most important method of creating and spreading wealth. On the other hand, he includes those who agree with these goals, but who also consider the role of governments to be vitally important.

The chapter on *Karl Marx* includes information about dialectical materialism, methods of production, capitalism, and discontent. Authors describe how Marxism is connected to depression, war, Maoism, and revolution through the spread of communism in Europe and Asia. It was not communism itself, but the many forms of socialism, including that of the political parties of the late nineteenth century, which served as precursors to the emergence of the large socialist parties that existed around the world in the twentieth century. These were inspired by Marx, and were considered to follow his views. Powerful nations like the Soviet Union and Maoist China organized themselves around his theories. The pessimistic and affirmative effects of Marxism are discussed in this chapter of the book. In any case, where Marxism (mostly in the guise of Leninist and Maoist adaptations) did come to power, it produced economic

systems that succeeded for a short time, and then failed catastrophically. Marx's outrage about capitalism is today mainly manifested in the forces of anti-globalization and the strong anti-liberal reactions that are shared by many. The related literature is broad, and supports understanding of the views that have developed in the past in relation to capitalism.

The chapter on *Darwin* enlists work from his book '*On the Origin of Species*'. The book was influential around the world, claim the authors. The theories of Herschel and Paley, Lamarck and St. Hilaire were early influences on Darwin. No less important was Darwin's influence on Sigmund Freud. Literature about the consequences of eugenics and Darwinism in a European, Middle-Eastern, and Eastern Asian context is referenced. Social Darwinism and its associated problems are also discussed in the chapter. Critical literature speaks of the rejection of Darwin's ideas, especially among Catholics and Evangelical Protestants, and to some extent the French.

The '*Making Democracy*' chapter revolves around the role of the United States in institutionalizing and preserving Enlightenment liberalism. The debate is centered on the ideas of *Jefferson and Hamilton* about democracy in the United States. These thinkers both shared core ideas about what values the United States should most embody. The ideas represent two overlapping yet also conflicting dimensions of the enlightenment concept of freedom. Hamilton saw the need for strong central authority, a large military, a federally driven industrial economy and an active foreign policy, while Jefferson promoted a weak center, local militias, a nation of yeoman farmers and entangling alliances with nobody. Both understood liberty as an absolute good, and believed that freedom from oppression was an absolute requirement if man was to discover and develop his natural capabilities. Both men, therefore, saw power as the problem, and its control as the solution. The authors opine that the persistence of Enlightenment ideas in both forms has saved America many times from full-scale regression, and probably will again.

The second part of the book presents thoughts about the Counter-Enlightenment. Under this topic, the authors discuss the birth of modern reactionary politics and popular reactions against liberalism: the role of nationalism, the new anti-Semitism and the growing European rejection of liberalism. They also discuss the intellectual roots of fascism and varieties of fascism from Europe to East Asia, the Middle East and Latin America (Argentina). The profound effect of the rejection of enlightenment values is discussed by authors. The authors suggest that Counter-Enlightenment ideologies need to be analyzed seriously and met with equally learned and persuasive arguments. Otherwise, they will poison a whole era, just as they did much of Europe in the first half of the twentieth century and other parts of the world.

The following chapters address fundamentalist religions; namely, the largest and the most widespread in terms of the number of adherents – Christianity and Islam. Montgomery and Chirot discuss the background and context of Christian fundamentalism from post-classical times until the twenty-first century, and Evangelical Christianity and women's rights in terms of the United States, Canada, and Europe. Islamic modernism is also discussed. Enlightenment thinking has had a much harder time of it in the Muslim world. Some distinguished Muslim thinkers have tried to create a compromise between modern (even partly liberal) ideas and religious faith. The authors claim that there are economic and socio-political reasons for Salafism's rise and persistence. The Christian and Muslim rejection of modernity, particularly their denial of the core values of Enlightenment liberalism, are strikingly similar in a number of areas. The authors point out the fact that the establishment of these anti-Enlightenment ideas has made the world a far worse place, corrupted and enfeebled. Hence, the original ideas that support the anti-Enlightenment need to be refuted and replaced.

The book provides an overview of changes in the world that have occurred due to the most influential ideas that have emerged from the different domains of thinking that relate to human welfare. It is acknowledged that ideas have immense power to shape the world and society. The book represents a vast platform of knowledge due to the presence of its micro-level detail. This gives the reader a precise understanding of the occurrence of the ideas that are presented, as well as the opposition to them. Literature about Islamic and Christian modernism is a bonus. The authors believe that rejection is also a form of influence. One important component of the book is the description of incidents in the personal lives of the scholars that they reflect on, giving more power to the authors' ideas. However, the content is sometimes a little extended.

The authors thoroughly focus on the implications of their findings for scholarship and teaching in the social sciences and humanities. They posit that critical reading and discussion of the texts that have been immeasurably important in the creation of the modern world ought to be an essential part of higher education. They also state that the humanities are essential components of any system of higher education, because no program of learning that aims to engage and prepare students for the wider world, and for citizenship in that world, can do without the study, analysis and critical evaluation of ideas.

EDITORIAL

CONTENTS OF OTHER JOURNALS FROM THE REGION SZOCIOLÓGIAI SZEMLE

http://www.szociologia.hu/2017_2_szam/
Issue No. 2. 2017

Németh Krisztina, Beszédes hallgatás. A csend interpretálása és a megismerés dilemmái a társadalomtudományi kutatásban; Zombory Máté, A tanú elhallgattatása és a történelem visszatérése. A kulturális traumaelmélet kudarca; Vigvári András, Kettős kihívás előtt. A hallgatás megtörése és a megosztás felelőssége a kortárs terepkutatásokban; Virág Tünde, A közösségi narratíva szerepe az eltakart valóság megismerésében; Katona Noémi, Szégyen és hallgatás. A kutató szerepe a prostitúció elbeszélésében; Durst Judit, „De ugye biztos nem lesz ebből baj?": Posztterepmunka, kooperatív etnográfia, avagy módszertani reflexiók az informális gazdaságot övező félelem csendjének megtöréséről

SOCIO.HU

<http://socio.hu/>
Issue No. 3. 2017

Turai Tünde, Beilleszkedés és kiilleszkedés, otthon és otthontalanság. A társadalmi beágyazottság újrászerveződése a kelet- és közép-európai házi ápolók migráns életútjában; Durst Judit – Fehér Katalin – Németh Krisztina – Váradi Monika Mária – Virág Tünde, Kényszerű mobilitás: migrációs utak hátrányos helyzetű vidéki terekben; Hamar Anna, Romániai vándormunkások és áttelepültek a kertészeti idénymunka piacán; Takács Judit – P. Tóth Tamás, Megbélyegzett kapcsolatok az államszocialista Magyarországon

SOCIETY AND ECONOMY

<http://www.akademiai.com/toc/204/current>
Issue No. 4. 2017

Attila Tasnádi – Balázs Szent-Iványi, Editorial; Maria Csutora – Gabor Harangozo, Twenty years of carbon accounting and auditing – a review and outlook; Tereza De Castro Jana Vlčková Pavel Hnát, Trade and investment relations between the Czech Republic and China: The Czech Republic as a gateway to the EU?; Miklós Lukovics Erik Fisher, Socio-technical integration research in an Eastern European setting: Distinct features, challenges and opportunities; Daniel Gugan, Europe and its southern neighbors. Interdependence, security and economic development in contemporary EU-MENA relations; Ilona Miklós, The apricot story: Patterns in a local circular food chain in North Hungary; Eszter Kovács Erika Gulyás Tamás Sterbenz, Determinants of a nation's sport performance at different mega sport events; Anna S. Gogoleva Pavel S. Sorokin Azer G. Efendiev, Problems and perspectives in research into the quality of work life in organisational studies; László Trautmann, Jody Jensen and Ferenc Miszlivetz (eds.) Reframing Europe's Future: Challenges and Failures of the European Construction

INTERSECTIONS. EAST-EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF SOCIETY AND POLITICS

<http://intersections.tk.mta.hu/index.php/intersections>
Issue No.3. 2017

Manuela Caiani, Between Contextual Opportunities and Discursive Resources; Márton Gerő, Piotr P. Plucienniczak, Alena Kluknavska, Jiří Navrátil, Kostas Kanellopoulos, Understanding Enemy Images in Central and Eastern European Politics; Milan Hrubeš, Jiří Navrátil, Constructing a Political Enemy; Dániel Kovarek, Dániel Róna, Bulcsú Hunyadi, Peter Kreko, Scapegoat-Based Policy Making in Hungary; Justyna Kajta, Discursive Strategies of Polish Nationalists in the Construction of the Other; Ákos Kopper, Pál Susánszky, Gergely Tóth, Márton Gerő, Creating Suspicion and Vigilance; Luca Kristóf, Cultural Policy in an Illiberal State

POLISH SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW

<http://polish-sociological-review.eu/>

Issue No. 3. 2017

Jacek Bieliński, Political Legitimacy and Normative Disorientation in European Liberal Democracies; Rafał Riedel, Populism and Its Democratic, Non-Democratic, and Anti-Democratic Potential; Henryk Domański, Omnivorism of Eating and 'Highbrow–Lowbrow' Distinction: Cultural Stratification in Poland; Luís Cordeiro Rodrigues – Emanuele Achino, A Case Study on Moral Disengagement and Rationalization in the Context of Portuguese Bullfighting; Aleksandra Wilczyńska – Dominik Batorski – Joan Torrent-Sellens, Job Satisfaction of Knowledge Workers. The Role of Interpersonal Justice and Flexible Employment; Tatiana Kanasz – Iwona Zielińska, Emotional Labour of the Polish Social Workers: The Study in Sociology of Emotions; Łukasz Krzyżowski – Krystyna Slany – Magdalena Ślusarczyk, Care Issues in the Transnational Families. A Polish Research Review; Jolita Viluckiene – Jonas Ruškus, Configurations of Using Social Networking Sites and Perceived Online Social Capital Among Adults With and Without Disabilities

SOCIOLOGICKÝ ČASOPIS / CZECH SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW

<http://sreview.soc.cas.cz/en/issue/current>

Issue No. 5. 2017

Ivana Přidalová, Martin Ouředníček, The Role of Foreign Migration in the Changing Socio-Spatial Differentiation of Prague; Tomáš Doseděl, Tomáš Katrňák, Economic and Non-economic Returns to Higher Education during a Period of Educational Expansion in the Czech Republic; Marcela Petrová Kafková, Tatiana Sedláková, The Fourth Age as a Specific Field for the Expression of Agency; Zdeněk R. Nešpor, 'If You Leave Me, You Will Die...' The Academic Trajectories of Otakar Machotka and other Émigré Czech Sociologists after February 1948; Marek Skovajsa, Sociologie v Rakousku: spleť příběh s dobrým koncem; Jan Maršálek, Jan Keller: Evropské rozpory ve světle migrace; Tomáš Doseděl, Eliška Hudcová, Pavel Pospěch a kol.: Vynalézání venkova v ČR po roce 1989; Marek Mikuš; Ondřej Horký-Hlucháč, Tomáš Profant a kol.: Mimo Sever a Jih. Rozumět globálním nerovnostem a rozmanitosti; Jiří Podhajský, Erazim Kohák: Oheň a hvězdy. Filosofická zamýšlení nad morálním smyslem přírody

SOCIOLÓGIA – SLOVAK SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW

http://www.sav.sk/index.php?lang=en&doc=journal-list&journal_no=36
Issue No. 5. 2017

Hrubá, L., Social Determinants of High Parental Educational Expectations; Kopřiva, R. – Čopík, J. – Čmejrek, J., Decision-Making Mechanisms on Investment Aims and Budgets of Municipalities; Kusá, Z., Beyond Solidarity Boundaries. Defending the Principle of Dignity for All; Svoboda, A., The Concept of Subcultures in the Sociology of Sport; Šprocha, B. – Šťastná, A. – Šídlo, L., Childlessness – a New Phenomenon in the Life Courses of Women in Slovakia

REVIJA ZA SOCIOLOGIJU

https://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=toc&id_broj=15158
Issue No.2. 2017

Alistair Ross, Saša Puzić, Karin Doolan, Balkan and European? Place Identifications of Young People in Croatia; Tibor Rutar, Clarifying Power, Domination, and Exploitation: Between “Classical” and “Foucauldian” Concepts of Power; Davorka Matić, The Calling of Sociology: Beyond Value-detached Professionalism and Partisan Activism; Majda Hrženjak, A Qualitative Study of Labour Market Precarisation and Involved Fatherhood in Slovenia

SOCIOLOGIJA. ČASOPIS ZA SOCIOLOGIJU, SOCIJALNU PSIHLOGIJU I SOCIJALNU ANTROPOLOGIJU

<http://www.sociologija.org/books/issues.php?lng=english>
Issue No.3. 2017

Dušan Marinković, Dušan Ristić, Genealogy of The Transformations of Class Strategies: To See, To Speak, To Know; Todor Kuljić, Historical concepts: a connection of an analytical and creative aspect; Božidar Filipović, Rat i zločin kao izvori moralne obnove i jedinstva – republikansko nasleđe i njegova transformacija u delu Emila Dirkema; Nemanja Kostić, The use of St. Sava in setting ethnoreligious boundaries: sociological-historical approach Mladen Radulović – Sabina Autor – Dragana Gundogan, Parental Education and Educational Aspirations of Children: Cases of Serbia and Slovenia; Nataša

Krstić, The implementation of Children's Rights and Business Principles in the corporate social responsibility strategy of Serbian enterprises; Dragica Krsmanović – Dragana Radisavljević Čiparizović, Scientific bibliography of prof. Sreten Vujovic for 1968-2016 period

TEORIJA IN PRAKSA

<http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/en/journals/science-journals/teorija-in-praksa>
Issue No.5 2017

Rok Čeferin – Melita Poler, Journalistic Code of Ethics and Journalists' Liability For Damages: Analysis of the Case Law of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Slovenia; Tanja Kamin – Jernej Berzelak – Mirjana Ule, Mind the Gap: Social Aspects of Willingness for Post-Mortem Organ Donation in Slovenia; Filip Kokotović – Petar Kurečić, An Empirical Analysis of Voting Patterns in Four Battleground States of the 2016 US Presidential Election; Mojca Jakačič – Slavko Kurdiša, Analysis of Undecided Voters and the Question of Voter Turnout in the Case of Local Elections in Ljubljana; Dario Berginc: Strategic Factors Affecting Decision-Making in Firms; Drago Kos, Editorial; Drago Kos – Samo Pavlin: The Long-Term Development of Educational Programmes: The Case of The Slovenian Gymnasium; Marjan Hočevar, Conceptual Framework for Sustainable Mobility Structuration in the Circumstances of Supranational Integration; Simona Zavrtnik – Rebeka Falle Zorman – Živa Broder, Public Opinion and Migrations: Mechanisms of Classifications and the Refugee Crisis; Matjaž Uršič – Samo Pavlin – Primož Medved, Occupational Development in the Field of Sustainable Urbanism – The Case of Sustainable Neighbourhoods

EUROPEAN QUARTERLY OF POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND MENTALITIES

<https://sites.google.com/a/fspub.unibuc.ro/european-quarterly-of-political-attitudes-and-mentalities/>
Issue No. 4 2017

Dobrinka Peicheva and Lilia Rayceva, Framing Political Populism in Contemporary Media Ecosystem; Camelia Florela Voinea, On the Elites in the Eastern European Post-communist Countries. Political Elites in the Eastern European Political Regimes After the Fall of the Berlin Wall: An Interdisciplinary Methodological Approach

