



# Politically Motivated Hungarian Migration to the Netherlands in (the Second Half of) the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Data, Concepts, and Consequences

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**Abstract.** This paper draws on an empirical research on the acculturation of Hungarian refugees in the Netherlands. After the bloody repression of the Hungarian uprising against the Soviet rule in 1956, approximately 200,000 people escaped Hungary. Out of them, 5,000 people started a new life in the Netherlands. Despite extensive documentation and memoirs, no systematic research exists on the fate of these Hungarians. With this research, we attempt to fill this knowledge gap by gaining insight into their integration path. By applying a qualitative–interpretative research method, we gathered personal narratives from Hungarian (‘ex-’) refugees in the Netherlands. We analyse their incorporation into the Dutch society according to various acculturation theories and discuss the (contextual) circumstances influencing these dynamics. The findings show that these Hungarians have successfully acculturated into the host society. They got entirely embedded in the institutional, sociocultural, and economic fabric of their new home country (assimilation) while also maintaining their original culture and identity (integration). Determining factors are the reception and opportunity structure in the host country, the refugees’ young age and willing attitudes to integrate, their grown hybrid identities as well as cultural compatibility.

**Keywords:** (Hungarian) refugees, migrants, integration, acculturation, migration to the Netherlands

## Introduction

Unlike the Hungarian anti-Soviet revolution of 1956, not much is known about the approximately 200,000 Hungarians who in its aftermath left the country and resettled somewhere else (Lénárt 2006, Várdy 2001). How did they make it through alienation, homesickness, and in a culturally strange environment? How

did they cope in times when world politics made home visits impossible and when digital information and communication possibilities did not yet exist?

This exploratory research attempts to fill some of these knowledge gaps by providing an insight into the experiences of these refugees. It is a complex development with loss and regeneration. Integrating into a new society is a creative process of exploration, shaping new homes and identities. Based on their past, perceptions, and motivations, refugees may differ from (voluntary) migrants that influence the path and outcomes of their integration in the host society (Gilad 1990, Black 2001, Joly 2002, Barlay 2006).

This micro-sociological study focuses on a small segment of Hungarian refugees. Our aim is to shed light on the nearly 5,000 Hungarians who settled in the Netherlands. Based on various theories on refugee and acculturation processes, we have developed a conceptual framework for our fieldwork in order to answer the following research question: *What are the main characteristics of the acculturation process of the Hungarian refugees in the Netherlands?*

By applying oral histories, this paper investigates how these Hungarian people experienced the circumstances of their refuge and their acculturation in their new country. We have gathered personal narratives by conducting in-depth individual interviews with twenty-four Hungarian ex-refugees and, in some cases, their family members.

We aim to contribute to the body of related literature by adding empirical insights in the integration dynamics of a specific, understudied group of refugees within a specific historical context. A further merit of the research is testing various theories in a micro-level reality.

Besides contributing to the social history of both the sending and reception countries, the unfolding global events enhance the public relevance of this research. Politically, economically, and environmentally driven large population shifts generate fierce discussions in the political and societal arena in the question of integration. The paper hopefully provides politicians and societal organizations more understanding of the role of contextual influences and critical factors in refugees'/immigrants' successful integration in the country of settlement.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Based on a literature and documentation study, Chapter Two provides an overview on Hungarian migration waves and their circumstances in the period between the end of the Second World War and 1956/57. Chapter Three presents various refugee theories and acculturation concepts. Subsequently, in Chapter Four, we present our conceptual model applied for studying the acculturation of politically motivated Hungarian émigrés in the Netherlands. In Chapter Five, we evaluate the research findings, which finally lead to our conclusions in Chapter Six.

## **2. Hungarian Migration Waves to the Netherlands in the 1940s and 1950s**

Based on a literature study, in this section, we explain the most important emigration waves from Hungary in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We also present their wider sociopolitical background in order to understand the flight, the orientation, and integration of the refugees in the land of exile. Our research concentrates on the refugees of 1956 who established their new home in the Netherlands. However, where possible, we also describe earlier refugee waves in order to compare immigration patterns, integration experiences, and outcomes across various refugee groups.

### **2.1. The 45ers**

This emigration wave around 1945 was mainly produced by the Second World War and consisted of some 70,000 Hungarians. They represented many shades of the societal stratification and political views (Borbándi 1985, Pomogáts 2000). The core of this migrant population belonged to the conservative political, social, and military elites of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and heavily patriotic people. ‘Aristocracy, gentry and upper middle classes, including the professional military and gendarme officers, the upper and middle level state bureaucracy and many of the professionals of interwar Hungary’ (Várdy 2001: 322). The represented petty bourgeoisie included ‘village teachers, shopkeepers, artisans and some of the well-to-do members of the landed peasantry’ (Id.: 323). In addition, both Hungarian Nazis and Jewish survivors characterized this group.

The motives of their flight were diverse too. A large share of them remained loyal to the old social system of the Monarchy and refused the democratization of 1945. They often had something to fear and were reluctant to subjugate themselves to the Soviet military occupation. Based on Kunz’s definition (1969, 1973), we could describe them as events-alienated refugees: the communistic regime labelled them as enemies, which marginalized them in the mainstream society (Borbándi 1985, Szarka 2002). They are anticipatory refugees (Kunz 1969, 1973) because they foresaw political developments which they perceived unfavourable and unacceptable. Their financial means and high education level enabled them to prepare and permit the flight before the further deterioration of the politico-societal situation.

After the first period of their stay in Austria and Germany, the majority of these displaced people emigrated overseas, mainly to North America. To a lesser extent, they fled to countries in Europe or in other continents (Israel was a favourite destination).

They were initially convinced that, after the collapse of the Soviet domination, they would soon return home. During their exile, they perpetuated their previous ideological views and social conventions (Szarka 2002, Rainer 1988). They expected to resume their social and political positions when they would go home to Hungary. They launched political activities by establishing schools to educate the younger ones in political, religious, and ideological fields: This ‘was a virtual copy of the pre-war system [in Hungary], which in those days still centred on the highly regarded slogan “God, Motherland and Family”’ (Várdy 2001: 324). They cultivated their standpoints at their places of settlement ‘until the very end’ (Ibid.).

## 2.2. The 47ers

The following huge refugee wave from Hungary set out in the years 1946–1947–1948. This layer of refugees had already direct experiences of the Soviet occupation and the institutionalized new political order. However, they were not necessarily against the new developments. They understood certain regulations such as the abolition of the old privileges and aristocratic titles, the land reform, the installation of the republic, and the life improvements for the lower social classes (Borbándi 1985, Kósa 1957).

The Communist Party received only a minority of the votes during the free elections in 1945. Nevertheless, it was able to gradually grab the power since it received the backing of the Soviet military power (1956-os Intézet 2000, Rainer 1998).

Despite their support of social transformations, a growing amount of people decided to flee as a result of terror, general oppression, and unlawful regulations (Borbándi 1985, Kerkhoven 2006). The large-scale nationalization, the oppression of the classes of the nation’s enemies (aristocrats, capitalists, middle-class citizenry, and land-owner farmers), and the government’s absolute loyalty to the Soviet Union were major elements in constructing the Hungarian version of Stalinism (Kósa 1957, 2006; Douwes 2006). People growingly saw emigration as unavoidable as they felt their life in danger and had no possibilities any longer for free speech and assembly (Borbándi 1985).

On the contrary to the émigrés of 1945, these Hungarians mostly acted individually. They dispersed throughout the whole of Europe or moved forward to overseas countries in North and South America and Australia. The extent of these refugee waves was substantially lower (around 44,000 persons) than the one in 1945, though their political significance was much stronger (Lénárt 2006, Borbándi 1985).

This refugee flow also had varied social and political patterns. Beyond individuals supporting the democratization, there were also people outside the political system and institutions of Hungary. They either participated in

the pre-1945 political system and considered refuge earlier as unacceptable or fought against the Nazi regime. Among them were also people who took part in establishing the new political order after the Second World War and were ready to accept a human and tolerant socialistic Hungary.

The totalitarian regime under the leadership of Mátyás Rákosi and Ernő Gerő thrust an essential part of democratic politicians into exile, together with numerous valuable people whose professional knowledge and capacities were badly needed for the nation (Gati 2006, Várdy 2001).

These refugees shared a common feature in that they represented a politically strongly committed group. They emigrated in order to pursue their political strive in exile and initiated political institutions and networks shortly after their arrival.

The relations among the waves of the 45ers and the 47ers were tense and hostile. The refugees of 1947 viewed democracy as an alternative to the communist system. They opposed the authoritarian regime which, on the contrary, most 45ers promoted. The antagonistic relations and the deep-seated animosity between these immigration groups were exacerbated by blaming each other for the political turbulence at home. The 45ers were accused of serving Hitler and assisting the deportation of their hundreds of thousands of Jewish compatriots, while the 47ers were held responsible for co-operating with Stalin and supporting the foundation of the communist system in Hungary (Borbándi 1985, Dreisziger et al. 1992).

From the view of the Hungarian diaspora, the refugees of 1947 had more opportunities and a better position to become successful. They could count on the sympathy of the West, which recognized the democratic government as a winner of the elections before the power take-over by the communists. The 45ers were regularly associated with the Nazi servants of Germany, which, despite their high intellectual and managerial capacities, had a (negative) influence on their fate (Puskás 1985).

### **2.3. The 56ers**

#### *Revolution and the Mass Flight*

Hungarians increasingly criticized the political regime with its immense oppression. They demanded the retreat of the Russian army and the restoration of national freedom and democracy. Spontaneous, unorganized assemblies in October 1956 swelled into a revolution (Barlay 2006: 16). Two weeks later, the Soviet intervention bloodily pulled down the uprising and the short independence (Douwes 2006, Hellema 2006). A new, Soviet-faithful government was installed, which, despite its conciliating commitments, shortly started the merciless reckonings (1956-os Intézet 2009, Segers et al. 2006).

Due to the still open borders and chaotic situation, around 200,000 people fled Hungary in this period. They were pouring into neighbouring Austria and later to Yugoslavia (Nemes 1999; Hellema 2001, 2006; Lénárt 2006; The Economist 1957).

### *Reaction of the West*

The Cold-War-induced political climate explains the extensive media coverage and concern of the West on the refugees' situation. On the one hand, Western governments had a sense of guilt due to their lack of support for the revolution (Nemes 1999, 56-os *Intézet* 2009). On the other hand, Western countries made use of the symbolic function of the Hungarian uprising. The ideological polarization in superpower politics boosted the combat between communism and capitalism: 'This fight has been a desperately serious threat to the Soviets, and strengthens all free countries, including ours, against world Communism' (The International Rescue Committee, 1957).

Hence, the Western world welcomed the Hungarian refugees with open arms. They, together with the UN, set up a grand programme to mobilize large-scale assistance (Hellema 2001, 2006; Barlay 2006; Lénárt 2006).

### *Destinations*

Nearly all refugees wanted a new life in the United States, being the traditional emigration destination for Hungarians. They had though no preference towards other countries, and their destination was often a matter of chance (*Table 1*). The problem of rapidly placing several thousands of refugees invoked arbitrary methods. Directing happened quickly after the refugees' confirmation to go to a certain country and a quick medical test: 'They arrived, often shocked and fearful, in a country about which they knew nothing but which they believed to be hostile' (The Economist 1957: 380).

**Table 1.** *Destinations of the approximately 200,000 Hungarian refugees*

<b>Place of resettlement</b>	<b>Share %</b>	<b>Number</b>
Canada	8	16,000
United States	16	32,000
Switzerland	6	12,000
Austria	23	46,000
Britain	11	22,000
Yugoslavia	9	18,000
West Germany	6	12,000
Other European countries	14	28,000
Rest of the world	7	14,000

Sources: *The Economist* 1992, *Douwes* 2006, 56-os *Intézet* 2009

### *Flight Motives*

According to *The Economist* (1957), Western countries made a great mistake ‘to think of the Hungarian exodus in terms of premeditated escape from communism’ (Id.: 379). Unsatisfied Hungarians could have left the country earlier since the destalinization process in the 1950s made border controls much less strict.

The literature review discloses a wide variety of motives of the Hungarian refugees. The uprising triggered the act of flight as ‘for most of these young men and women, their eventual escape was not a conscious journey to a paradise of western freedom and opportunity. Some seized the chance, others were blown out of their country as if by an earthquake...’ (Id.: 380).

Decisions to run away were made in ‘fear, anger and in the turmoil of a mass flight’ (Ibid.), and refugees had their own motives to escape: political reasons and fear for revenge and deportation, socioeconomic deprivation, adventurers who joined others in their escape, individuals in the hope of higher life standards in the West, or people with financial or family circumstances who cherished the wish to emigrate already before the revolution (Puskás 1985, Ten-Doesschate 1985, Kuyser 1963, Várdy 2001, Borbándi 1985).

### *Refugee Characteristics*

As opposed to the majority of the earlier political émigrés, often middle-aged people with a family, the greater part of the 56ers consisted of unmarried youth, around the age of 20. Nearly half of them had good transferable technical degrees from higher educational institutions or (technical) high schools. The other half included skilled or unskilled labourers, who could immediately get employed in the Western industrial societies. They were mostly males and originated from either Budapest or the Western regions of Hungary (KSH 1957, Lénárt 2006, Várdy 2001).

The politically conscious individuals had a wide range of ideological views. Compared to the 45ers and 47ers, this refugee wave represented different societal origins. These refugees were the products of ‘a forced social engineering’ and coerced indoctrination and ‘were saturated with the proletarian mentality of the communist world’ (Várdy 2001: 327).

The value system and social manners of the 56ers and those of the earlier migration flows differed sharply, which created tense relationships. The immigrants of 1956 had no respect for titles, positions, and hierarchies, which made them labelled by older Hungarians as proletariats and peasants, being ordinary, coarse, and boorish (Kerkhoven 2006, Nemes 1999).

Due to their one-sided (technical) education, they were deficient in human and classical subjects, which contributed to their ‘low level of national pride and

consciousness' (Várdy 2001: 329). It was reinforced by the 'denationalization' of the Stalin-type regime, which made patriotism a crime.

On the contrary, the exiles who arrived in the years 1945–1948 were patriotic or nationalistic owing to their deep knowledge of the country's history. Maintaining Hungarian traditions and fostering glories of the past shaped their way of thinking (Hellenbart 2009, Kósa 1957).

Despite the strained relations among the Hungarians, the Revolution was a crucial common issue in the diaspora. Therefore, the already settled Hungarians could only think of narrow co-operation with the newcomers (Borbándi 1985).

### *Reception*

The warm reception in the Western societies had an encouraging influence on the personal and professional progression of '56 refugees. While the West treated the earlier waves of post-war exiles as nearly war criminals, they greeted the 56ers as anti-Communist heroes.

However, the initial guilty emotions, sweeping over the capitalist world, had a short life. The refugees' stories became tedious in the reception societies, and 'the sense of responsibility spent itself without awakening much curiosity and understanding' (The Economist: 379). Integration troubles occurred in some countries where the population did not understand what was going on in the minds of the escaped Hungarians. These refugees landed in a capitalistic country, which they learned to despise and fear.

If receiving countries were more imaginative and organized concerning the refugees' reception, many problems could have been avoided (Hellenbart 2009, Kritzwiser 1957, Hellema 1995). Around six percent of the refugees returned shortly to Hungary. Most returnees were from Belgium (15%), the Netherlands, and Switzerland (7–8%) (KSH 1957). Their decision of homecoming was driven by a variety of issues such as their detrimental personal fate, their disillusionment in the West, homesickness, social and cultural clashes in the new environment, and illusions about opportunities at home (Tóth 2009, Lénárt 2006, Borbándi 1985).

## **3. Refugee and Acculturation Theories**

In this part, we present various concepts regarding the integration of refugees in their new country. Beyond acculturation models, we include elements of refugee theories, which explain the dynamics and consequences of the newcomers' resettlement.



### *Definition*

Although the distinction between refugees and (voluntary) migrants is often blurred, this study accentuates their difference. According to various authors (Kunz 1981, Black 2001, Joly 2002, Barlay 2006), the refugee is a distinct social type as s/he moves from his/her home country to a new place against his/her will. The doubt to uproot oneself and the lack of positive migration motives to resettle somewhere else are the refugees' main characteristics, deviating from voluntary migrants (Kunz 1981, Oravecz et al. 2005). In this research, we apply Bernard's description:

Refugee exodus, by individuals or groups, is forced, sudden, chaotic, generally terror-stricken, and at least initially productive of social and psychological disruption.....Some refugees, it is true, have fled because of less dramatic pressures. They have felt intellectually stifled, politically oppressed, economically or culturally regimented, and to such an extent that they believed they were compelled to leave and could no longer stay even if they were tempted to do so for other motives. The vast majority of refugees, however, are afflicted by the more overwhelming fears of death and loss of freedom. (Gilad 1990: 52)

### *Homeland-Related Factors*

Refugee theories are comprehensive in that they enable to better understand the relationship between the various phases of displacement and incorporation within a new societal setting. These phases refer to the preceding situation including the refugees' characteristics, perceptions as well as the homeland-related circumstances, the flight itself, the resettlement and post-resettlement periods including the experiences and integrating outcomes in the host society (Kunz 1981, Pedraza-Bailey 1985, Black 2001, Oravecz et al. 2005, Bolzmann 1994).

The previous section illustrated the role of motivational factors in the dynamics of leaving the home country (e.g. *anticipatory or acute types* of Hungarian refugee movements). In this chapter, we highlight contextual dimensions of refugee theories which may affect resettlement outcomes.

Various theories on refugees (Kunz 1981, Bolzman 1994, Joly 2002) emphasize individuals' ideological-national orientation in the host country, which may affect their integration. Attitudes towards the home country define the refugees' behaviour in as well as their commitment and adaptation to the receptive society.

For instance, certain groups lead a life in an idealistic settlement according to their specific religious, ideological, etc. motivations, while others invest all their efforts to prepare a revolution in the home country to overthrow the political

system. Clinging firmly to their political commitment, their past and homeland, they consider themselves temporary inhabitants in the place of exile. They take the new society into account as far as it has relevance to their partisan endeavour and return project (Joly 2002).

Refugees might also feel guilty because they do not share the fate of their left-behind countrymen. They can perceive every attempt to integrate into the new society as treason. The ethnic community can play a strict social control over the individuals. They can request from members to show solidarity, historical responsibility, to strive for the freedom of their compatriots at home, and get prepared for the return (Bolzman 1994, Kunz 1981). Again others will head for a full assimilation process and for material success in order to forget the past and get rid of disgrace.

Beyond these more extreme attitudes, the realists aim at an integrated accommodation (Kunz 1981) in the new society, in which they acknowledge their societal role of both the past (there) and the present (here). After recognizing the point of no return, these refugees re-orientate themselves within the reception society. They develop a positive attitude towards their country of resettlement and a new beginning. They may fully assimilate if they, prior to the flight, did not form a community and if the host country encourages it. Fragmentation within this refugee population occurs if these refugees were not part of a minority group in the home society that may further intensify due to intra-group competition and by forces of the host society (Joly 2002, Bolzman 1994).

Eloquent sociopolitical changes in the native land, for instance, democratization processes, may confront one-time refugees to distinguish myth from reality: either to return to their homeland or to stay in their second home. This post-exile stage may force refugees to evaluate their adaptation in the one new society. The time spent in the host country, the disparities of the economic level between the two countries as well as supportive measures of governments may influence their choice (Pedraza-Bailey 1985: 14, Kunz 1981, Joly 2002).

### *Factors Related to the Host Society*

The structure and nature of the host country is of elementary importance for the refugees' resettlement chances and outcomes. At their final destination, the refugees start to re-orientate by exploring the norms and practices of the receptive society. Their vital purpose is to find a 'niche' for themselves in which they can consistently combine their past and their future expectations (Kunz 1981, Bolzman 1994, Oravec 2005).

*Table 2* provides an overview of the three main aspects of the host society, which influence how the refugees adapt to their new surroundings. Cultural compatibility refers to the sociocultural distance between the home and the host society, such as language, values, or traditions. A linguistically strange

environment may give the refugee the feeling of loneliness, while the inability to accept unaccustomed habits can aggravate it by diminishing social contacts.

Population and economic policies, including the opportunity and labour market structure of the host country, can also have determining effects. Countries with an augmentative strategy and shortage in manpower welcome refugees and migrants and provide them with opportunities. Desirable newcomers are seen as contributors to the national economic progression (Salomon 1991, Gold 1993, Lucassen 2005).

**Table 2.** *Host-related factors*

<b>Cultural compatibility</b>	Language
	Values
	Traditions
	Religion
	Politics
	Food
	Interpersonal relations
<b>Population and economic politics (opportunity and labour market structure)</b>	Augmentative, growth-oriented
	Self-sufficient
<b>Social attitudes</b>	Monistic-assimilationist
	Pluralistic-integrationist
	Sanctuary societies – tolerant

*Sources: Kunz 1981: 47, Lucassen 2005*

Demographically self-sufficient countries are less keen on receiving large swaths of refugees. Notwithstanding, these societies are not preoccupied with the question of immigration and could provide a more tolerant environment. More mature and self-assured countries in the 1960s, such as the Netherlands, Great Britain, Switzerland, or France, accommodated the refugees’ own choices to preserve their traditional values and homeland orientation (Kunz 1981, *The Economist* 1957).

The (lack of/) presence of a supportive social space of the host country to stimulate positive acculturation is influential too. Monocultural societies tend to have less generosity towards immigrants – clinging to their own culture – than pluralistic ones. Integration-oriented policies inspire migrants to assimilate, though homeward-looking individuals are often exposed to stress due to emotionally laden decisions (Kunz 1973, 1981). The availability of rights is vital in that they can assure opportunities to generate cultural, economic, and social capital (Hatoss 2003: 71, König 2009).

Furthermore, if the refugees in the new environment meet people from their own cultural and national/ethnic background, the integration process can accelerate. Their guidance on the reactions and behaviour from members of the

receptive society can motivate the newcomers to identify with the new country (also Hatoss 2003, Bosswick et al. 2006).

Finally, geopolitical circumstances can affect the way states relate to refugees and immigrants. The enmities of the Cold War fundamentally changed the approach of Western countries towards refugees (Salomon 1991, Gold 1993): setting up generous programmes were not based ‘on humanitarian motives but the desire to discredit the communist nations from which they [had] fled’ (Gold 1993: 202, Salomon 1991). Political refugees thus ‘became touching symbols’ upon which legitimate foreign policy could be built (Pedraza-Bailey 1985: 7, Barlay 2006).

### *Acculturation*

When refugees recognize that their stay is not temporary anymore, their attention towards the host society intensifies. This phase of mobilizing resources to reposition in a new surrounding is at the core of acculturation theories. They comprehend ‘those phenomena which result when groups of individuals from different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with each other, and subsequently, there are changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups’ (Navas et al. 2007: 68). We enrich this definition with the concept of ‘psychological acculturation’ (Graves 1967), which does not only entail ecological, sociocultural, and institutional group changes but also mental adjustments in attitudes, values, lifestyles, and identity.

Berry’s (1974, 1980) acculturation model (*Table 3*) categorizes immigrants according to their orientation. At their first intercultural encounter in the dominant (host) society, they are confronted by two major questions: 1) Is sustaining the original cultural heritage important? 2) Is it necessary to engage in contacts with the members of the dominant receptive country? (Ward 2008: 106).

**Table 3.** *Berry’s acculturation model*

Participation	Cultural maintenance	
	Yes	No
Yes	Integration	Assimilation
No	Separation	Marginalization

*Source: Ward 2008: 106*

The answers lead to four possible acculturation outcomes (*Table 3*). For instance, integration occurs if both cultural maintenance and intercultural contacts are important, while, if neither dimensions are crucial, migrants become marginalized (Bosswick 2006: 11).

In studies in the 1920s and 30s, integration and assimilation were interchangeable concepts, where assimilation referred to successful integration into a new society.

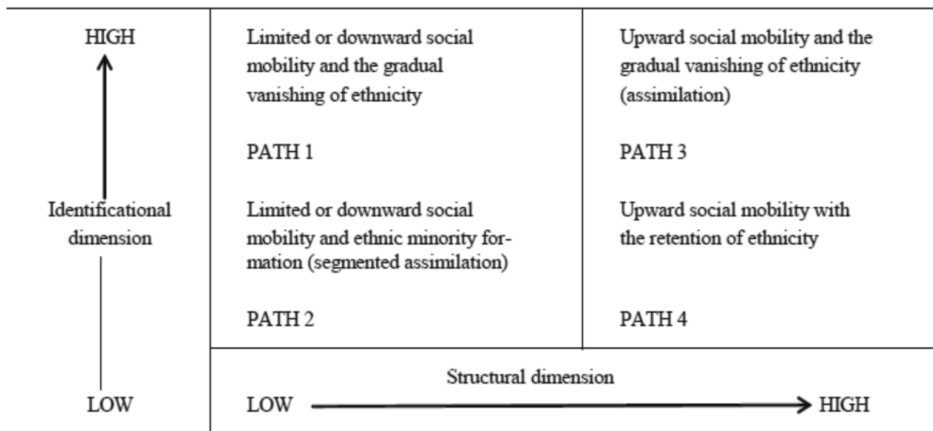
However, academics have since then developed a sharp demarcation between the two notions (Navas et al. 2007, Hoffmann-Nowotny 1986, Bolzman 1994).

Assimilation is seen as a ‘one-sided process in which immigrants and their descendants give up their culture and adapt completely to the society they have migrated to’ (Bosswick et al. 2006: 4, Bolzman 1994). However, others (Alba 1999, Esser 2004) argue that this term has become so distorted that it only implies a ‘unidirectional and suppressive process’ (Bosswick, 2006: 6). In their opposition, they claim that assimilation is much more about the lessening of social difference between groups, such as values or income disparities.

The term integration signifies the process of intensifying relationships within a societal scheme and including new actors into its institutions. Hence, integration is the outcome of the ‘conscious and motivated interaction and co-operation’ between persons and groups (Bosswick et al. 2006: 2, Lockwood 1964). Based on Berry’s model, numerous empirical examinations indicate that integration is the most preferred strategy by immigrants and refugees. In psychological and sociocultural terms, they found integration the most adaptive process that produced the most positive outcomes (Ward 2008: 106).

In their understanding acculturation as a complex non-exclusionary process, other researchers (Navas et al. 2007, Lucassen 2005, Reinsch 2001, Doomernik 2002, Dreisziger et al. 1982, Esser 2002) developed a more integral and nuanced framework.

They split acculturation into two various domains – structural and (cultural-) identificational –, which can result in divergent strategies and outcomes (*Figure 1*). For instance, ‘assimilation’ may occur in certain spheres of life in order to survive (work, economics, labour market), while other areas (culture, identity, language, family, religion, ways of thinking) may show the patterns of ‘integration’.



Sources: Lucassen 2005

Figure 1. A revised acculturation model

The structural dimension (*Figure 1*) refers to the socioeconomic position the individual gains in the new society. This signifies the achievement of status in several fields such as economy, labour market (professions), systems of education, welfare, and housing. The position acquired in the central institutions of the reception society, and not in (ethnic) subsystems, indicates the level of being recognized (Phenninx & Martiniello 2004).

Identificational integration (*Figure 1*) relates to the process of gaining the necessary knowledge, cultural standards, skills and competencies which enable the refugee to act successfully in the new society. It implies individual cognitive, behavioural, and attitudinal transformation and also whom/what immigrants and their descendants identify themselves with (ethnicity, nationality, culture, etc.). Immigrants' identification with the central societal institutions of the host society and sharing its goals are necessary to integrate. Cultural and identificational acculturation is a pre-condition to become structurally integrated (Bosswick et al. 2006).

Identificational integration relates to the connection to both the new home country and the level and ways refugees handle their original culture and identity.

The abrupt transformation of the sociohistorical context produces a multifaceted challenge for migrants and refugees. Migration is an experience of a 'wholesale loss of one's meaningful and valued objects: people, things, places, language, culture, and it not only puts one's identity on the line but puts it at risk' (Bledin 2003: 99). Adults can find themselves thrown back to their adolescent period with identity confusions (Ward 2008).

People become aware of their cultural-ethnic identity when it gets separated from its original environment (Rapport et al. 1998, Sengun 2001). In the act of 'othering', individuals and groups set their own cultural frameworks against external ones (Crang 1998, Rapport et al. 1998). Such cultural boundaries secure an own identity. Members of a(n) (imagined) community (Anderson 1983) collectively experience the belonging to the same species and culture (Crang 1998, Bledin 2003).

However, social exchanges in the new environment trigger refugees to re-establish their self-image. Change and continuity are intertwined, meaning adaptation to a new (critical) situation while also considering the past: the person in question is not only an 'immigrant to' but also an 'emigrant from' (Bledin 2003: 101, Hatoss 2003). As a consequence, initial 'othering' can gradually give way to embrace both the original and the new culture.

Immigrants with dual cultural identities and sense of belonging feel emotionally attached and committed to the country of resettlement while maintaining their positive affinity towards their roots. Multiple identities and bicultural competencies can function as an enrichment rather than competing and can become an asset for both the individual and the host society (Bolzman 1994, Hatoss 2003, Collier et al. 1988, Lavie et al. 1996, Sik 2000, König 2009).

Nevertheless, Bosswick et al. (2006) warn that biculturalism will result in additional resources only in the case of highly educated migrants. Semi-biculturalism and semi-bilingualism, characteristic of low-skilled individuals, often turn into mobility trap and loss of opportunities (Bolzman 1994, Côté 2006).

Furthermore, dual identity can also result in ethnocultural identity conflicts (Baumeister et al. 1985, Ward 2008). The multiply referred selves can become incompatible and compete with each other. Such a cultural distance occurs most conspicuously in case of migrants whose native countries do considerably differ in culture and language from those of their new society. Such identity struggles lead to the absence of commitment to the place of resettlement or intergenerational conflicts (Ward 2008).

The mobilization of co-ethnic individuals in the form of associations or organizations can be an initial mechanism to create a sense of belonging in a new environment (Bozic 1999). Community networks can support entrepreneurship, economic possibilities, sharing the language, and maintaining of ethnic traditions (Bolzman 1994, Gold 1992). However, the sole integration into (ethnic) subcultures, outside the core institutions of the new country, can give rise to 'segmented assimilation' (*Figure 1: Path 2*), which produces societal marginalization.

Moving to a new sociocultural milieu implies a more mobile and broader concept of home and belonging. For the ones alienated from their native country, home is something plurilocal, 'it is neither here or there...rather, itself a hybrid, it is both here and there – an amalgam, a pastiche, a performance' (Rapport et al. 1998: 7). Diaspora members live in 'third time-spaces' (Rushdie 1991), imaginary homelands, wherein they occupy a space between two cultural assemblages of the country of settlement and 'back home' (Lavie et al. 1996, Crang 1998). This socialization process demands creativity, acceptance, and approval from immigrants in order to avoid isolation and rejection (Bledin 2003, Bhabha 1994).

Identity construction, similar to other aspects of acculturation, has a multifaceted, selective, and dynamic nature and is further influenced by a wide-ranging array of elements such as the refugees' personal features, resources as well as the societal background in both the home and host society. For instance, the new ways the society at large categorizes immigrants also influence their self-definition (Hatoss 2003, Oriol 1984).

## **4. Conceptual Framework**

Based on the previously elaborated theories, we constructed a conceptual framework for our empirical investigation. The model introduces potential relations between factors that may influence the refugees' acculturation form and degree.

The framework specifies two main acculturation dimensions – structural and (cultural-) identificational – which interrelate with each other. The individuals' own assets, such as personal traits, background, and resources, may have a determining power on acculturation. We stress the importance of external agencies – the home- and host-related components – by illustrating their potential effects on the individual(s) or groups that on their turn indirectly lead to specific acculturation outcomes.

Since 'refugees do not live in a vacuum' (Pedraza-Bailey 1985: 4) but at the intersection of personal troubles and historical issues (C. Wright Mills 1961), the wider sociopolitical context is of substantial importance. These forces impact on the refugees' fate, perceptions, and actions concerning their flight and acculturation. In order to find an answer to our main research question, we draw on the linkages of the conceptual model to postulate the following sub-questions:

1. What characterizes the refugees' behaviour and orientation towards the home country and the land of exile?
2. How have the receptive attitudes and the opportunity structure of the Netherlands effected the acculturation progression of the Hungarians?
3. Which dimensions did the Hungarian refugees perceive as the most critical in their acculturation development?
4. What characterizes the relationship among the members of the Hungarian community in the Netherlands and what is the function of Hungarian associations?
5. How do the Hungarians identify themselves in relation to either cultural/national identity and sense of belonging?
6. To what extent do acculturation outcomes differ in the case of various refugee waves?

## **5. Evaluation of the Research Findings (2000)**

Although the limited number of interviewees does not allow general statements, the personal narratives enable us to sketch regular patterns of the acculturation of Hungarians in the Netherlands. Along the themes of the sub-questions, we structure and present our findings in this chapter.

### **5.1. The Refugees' Orientation towards the Home Country and the Land of Exile**

The majority of the interviewed Hungarians did not deal with political issues before the exile, and this did not change in the reception society. They considered fighting against the Hungarian dictatorship from abroad impossible: 'What could



we have done then? Against the strong military grip of the Soviet Emporium on the country?’<sup>1</sup>

Initially, many 56ers hoped to return within a few years ‘if the communist system was going to be brought down at home’ or if the situation would have ‘normalized there within 10 years’. At the outbreak of the 1956 uprising, many refugees of the earlier migration waves also thought that their return was near.

Despite these hopes, refugees quickly recognized the need to adapt to the new situation. Accepting the norms of the Dutch society was natural for them. Already from the outset, learning the language, finishing studies, or acquiring a job were their priorities: ‘To make it in life, to succeed in the career and get material advances’. The interviewees agree that starting anew somewhere is ‘to take up the rhythm of the new country and to adjust....otherwise it will not work’. They had no illusions of the rich West either. They did not expect to get things for free as they knew that they would have to work very hard to achieve something.

In the dictatorial period of the 1950s, Hungary was an isolated country wherein inhabitants ‘knew nothing about the world and did not speak any languages’. The novelties in the new country, their curiosity and learning appetite were overwhelming. Leading a loose life, being free to do anything one wanted were entirely new life aspects, unusual in the tyrannical climate of the home country.

Hungarian refugees established associations and clubs in order to nurture their cultural heritage (see more details below). The social elite of the diaspora aimed to cultivate and educate their compatriots according to democratic values and historical awareness.

The majority of the interviewed did not feel guilty for leaving their homeland as the flight was necessary to save life. Only few of them blamed themselves because of the left-behind Hungarians. They felt guilty or as traitors because friends or relatives were cut off from any opportunities at home or had a tragic end: ‘It was not us who were the heroes....the heroes are those who remained in Hungary and got through all of this.’

The refugees kept their contacts with their family and friends in Hungary. This happened through letters by a coded language or occasionally by telephone since a personal visit was impossible in the first 10 years. The post-revolutionary retaliatory measures in Hungary would have exposed them. With the softening political regime in Hungary at the end of the 1960s, they started to visit Hungary. As of the early 1970s, the Hungarian regime, in dire need of cash and hard currency, initiated a charm offensive in the form of tourism or investments to attract back ‘our compatriots broken away’. The secret police, nonetheless, kept record of Hungarian visitors from the West.

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1 In the followings, the quoted parts of the interview were translated into English by the author.

## 5.2. The Receptive Attitudes and the Opportunity Structure of the Netherlands and Their Effects on the Acculturational Development of the Hungarians

The Dutch reacted fiercely and enthusiastically upon the political uprising in Hungary (Hellema 1990, 2006). Prominent people and politicians in The Hague condemned the Soviet intrusion and expressed their disgust and worries for human rights violation. Spontaneous demonstrations and protest gatherings swept over the whole country (Douwes 2006, Herczegh 2002). This firm standpoint in the Netherlands can be explained by the long tradition of anti-communism as well as by opportunism, evolving by the actual geopolitical circumstances (Hellema 1995).

Nevertheless, Cabinet Drees reacted reserved and declared that the Netherlands could not do much for Hungary. They refused the first requests for political asylum (Hellema 1995: 180). Dutch cabinet members disagreed whether and to what extent the Netherlands should take refugees. The actual economic difficulties and the housing problems in the country reinforced the unwillingness. Finally, labour market shortages played a decisive role to allow some 5,000 Hungarian refugees. The condition was that the new migrants would only temporarily stay in the Netherlands. However, other countries were reluctant to accept more refugees.

The First Chamber criticized the cabinet for its opportunistic attitude of making virtue out of necessity by recruiting people for national socioeconomic targets. The Dutch selection team in the camps severely screened the refugees to choose people who were politically trustworthy and not communist, not poor and not gypsies (Hellema 1995: 181, 2006; Kövi 1987). The Dutch government behaved as a 'tight book-keeper' (Hellema 1995: 181) to keep state expenditures minimal. The share of the Hungarians in the Netherlands was therefore significantly lower than in other states (Nemes 1999; Douwes 2006; Hellema 1990, 2006).

However, upon their arrival, Hungarian refugees had a very warm and impressive welcome. Queen Juliana greeted them personally. A National Commission for the Hungarian Refugees was set up to coordinate all tasks concerning their reception and integration (Van der Graaf, 2006, Tóth 2006; *Figure 1*). The civil society extensively contributed too to ease the suffering and difficulties of the refugees (Douwes 2006, Kerkhoven 2006).

Even after 50 years, the interviewed people express their enthusiasm and gratitude for their reception in the Netherlands. The respondents pointed to the liberal, open, and tolerant attitude of the Dutch as main causes of this sympathy. They have not encountered discrimination because of their Hungarian origin.

The personal chronicles also recollect the abundant economic and institutional opportunities. Although they were moneyless those days, Hungarian refugees did not have to suffer hunger or any inconveniences. With the support of the

University Asylum Funds (Universitair Asielfonds), a high proportion (95%) of the refugee students acquired a university degree within a few years.

The newcomers could benefit from the Dutch opportunity structure and labour market. 'Everyone could get a job where he or she wanted [to] or to start up studies at preference'. Working-class people were offered to follow trainings of craftsmanship and could shortly find a job in factories and mines. Their fair remuneration was suitable to lead a decent life and secure stable home circumstances for the family.

Although in that period no official integration policy existed in the Netherlands, the Dutch state did its utmost to encourage the incorporation of the refugees into the economic and social structure. Having learnt from the integration problems of the Ambonese in the early 1950s, the authorities prevented the geographical clustering of the Hungarians. The refugees were gradually distributed in and within Dutch municipalities (Jansen 2006: 120).

The respondents who arrived with the wave of 1947/48 did not receive such a devotion. They came individually and not in a mass flight after a thwarted liberating revolt. At the beginning, the Dutch distrusted them as Hungary used to be an ally of Germany in the war. Some experienced an initial hostile treatment of a Nazi collaborator. Other respondents, though, valued the good-willing, supportive, and polite Dutch. While in Germany Hungarian exiles always remained 'Der Ungarn', the Dutch approach put their personality and deeds centrally.

### **5.3. The Most Critical Dimensions in the Acculturation Development**

Being torn out of their home and family, the first times were difficult for the Hungarian exiles. The unfamiliar environment with its different cultural practices, not knowing the language and, for many, the long process of acquiring a university degree 'all required a great deal of patience, deliberation and endurance of us'.

At the same time, their accounts relate to a smoothly-going integration, a fluent life switch in the Netherlands. They recall that 'we simply accepted that this is another culture, and this is the key of success'. Due to their young age, they could be flexible, and they avoided conflicts. Their zealous efforts to build up a new life, their suddenly gained freedom and joy and 'the possibility to live as a human' probably faded the cultural differences. They recollect no homesickness or alienation.

Despite post-war hostilities, emigrants of the 1947/48 waves could continue in the Netherlands the type of life they had conducted in pre-communist Hungary. They recognized a similar societal structure and way of life.

Nevertheless, oblivion and the long time passed ever since can clarify the overtly positive personal accounts. Hungarian psychologist Professor Ottó Táborzsky, who assisted the refugees at the beginning, argues that both students

and workers went through significant ordeals in the first stages. Young refugees were confronted by two major aspects: to get used to a strange environment so that it does not feel alien anymore and to accept that the homeland had been lost.

The refugees' acclimatization occurred in various phases.

The first, short phase was an optimistic period in which the exiles thought that everything was possible in a free country. Their euphoria bore high expectations.

This joyous chapter was soon followed by a longer period of disillusionment. Confronted by a culture shock, they endured estrangement and emotional problems. They sought each other's company to reflect on the new setting and to criticize the Dutch customs. Eating habits, the religiously pillarized society, and boarding-house lodgings were the most unpleasant experiences. They felt alone, insecure, and not being loved, which could lead to depression, paranoia, or aggression. They distrusted both the Dutch and the fellow Hungarians. Many suffered from homesickness, some committed suicide.

Some interviewees complained that 'we worked like slaves for a few cents, they exploited us', what was opposed by other Hungarians, blaming their negative personal attitudes. Some also recalled miners in Limburg, who caused bad reputation for the Hungarian community. These people, in the hope of 'quick money without hard work', got disenchanted and returned to Hungary. Some of them had a tragic and derelict life as they could not find their place anywhere anymore.

Temperament was another major theme in the (perceived) cultural gap. Hungarians said to be accustomed to talk a lot and passionately about literature, poetry, history, and other cultural and life matters, while 'the Dutch are much more pragmatic and are prone to measure everything in material sense only'. However, others cherished 'the Dutch mentality of giving room to all opinions, fitting to my own way of doing and thinking'.

After learning the background of the local practices, the majority of the Hungarian refugees accepted the differences in the sense of 'live and let live'.

The next stage covered the period of realism when the refugees objectively compared the diverse cultures. This was exchanged by the last stage when the immigrants realized that cultural differences are normal in life. Dealing with this subject can even bore them.

#### **5.4. The Characteristics and Function of the Relationship among Members of the Hungarian Community and Their Associations**

The respondents evaluate the attitudes within the Hungarian community differently. This reveals that the Hungarians, despite the mass escape, did not form a group. They represented various social classes, had different political views and interests, and developed diverse lifestyles. The only mutual issue, the escape from Hungary, was insufficient to mould a staunch community.

The interviewed from the 1947/48 refugee waves made vast efforts to prepare the reception of their compatriots in 1956. They arranged the practical issues so that the newcomers could rapidly start to accommodate: 'they organized many things perfectly. They assisted as translators and set up trainings in Hungarian for the workers'. Being in the neighbourhood of the 'old' Hungarians gave them emotional support, encouragement, and friendship in time of exploring life in the new country.

Some from the 1947/48 streams were of opinion that the 56ers did not mix with them for some years as 'they wanted to be among themselves, sharing the same experiences'. Coming from politically different milieux, they did not understand each other at the beginning.

At the same time, the arrival of the new Hungarians meant a refreshment of blood in the extended network of existing associations. It resulted in a revival of activities related to the Hungarian culture, traditions, and sometimes preparation for liberating the beloved country of birth. Many shared the idea that an exile should adapt to the new society without ignoring the key features of its cultural and moral heritage: 'A refugee is, however, not simply an immigrant. He left his country for moral reasons! He left his country with an obligation for the country, for the people he left (...) You have your duties for both the Netherlands and Hungary in an ideal sense' (Tóth 2006).

The consolidation under the Kádár government brought political changes to Hungary in the 1970s. This produced conflict within the (elitist) cultural societies of the diaspora. Some saw the time ripe to carefully open towards Hungary and to invite writers, artists, and scientists. Others morally opposed any interaction with the official authorities of Hungary due to the lack of a democratic, pluralistic political system.

Club formations among Hungarians often took place through localized networks, based on, for instance, sharing similar education, religious background, and comparable societal values. However, many have not become members of Hungarian associations. They felt no need for a similar institutionalized framework or had no time due to their busy lifestyles. Many are satisfied with their friends of Hungarian, Dutch, or other origins, and intend to keep their relationships on personal ties.

Nowadays, longstanding organizations fight against extinction. 'There are many of us who have died....we are getting smaller and smaller'. They hope that the recently arrived Hungarians might be a solution, although their newly formed associations display other preferences to preserve ethnic practices.

### **5.5. Self-Identification Relation to Cultural-Ethnic Identity and Sense of Belonging**

For all respondents, the Hungarian identity means their historical, cultural, and emotional roots. This is something organic which dominates their minds and hearts. They remained Hungarians, and externalities cannot overrule it. The Hungarian spirit and way of thinking was sowed in their youth, by cultural customs and by reading literature, poetry, and history. Their (Dutch) spouses confirm this and add that their husbands have a typical Hungarian character.

Having Hungarian companionship did not only provide solace at the initial phase but also strengthened their feeling of belonging to the nation outside the territories of Hungary – just like visiting their country of origin as of the end of the 1960s.

Some underline that being a ‘real Hungarian’ should also be manifested by deeds – for instance, by participating in Hungarian activities –, while others do not need intense interaction within the community to maintain their Hungarian identity. Reading Hungarian books, journals, listening to Hungarian music, or watching Hungarian television are other ways to cultivate the ethnic legacy.

Notwithstanding, a dual mentality characterizes most respondents. They have an emotional world of a twofold belonging. After 50 years in the Netherlands, they consider it natural that they possess many Dutch features. In the socialization process in their new home, they internalized other ways of feeling and thinking.

Being a ‘Dutch with Hungarian origin’, a ‘Hungarian living in the Netherlands’, or ‘feeling neither Dutch nor Hungarian’ express their dual sense of identity and the sense of in-betweenness. Leaving an isolated Hungary half a decade before and nurturing an old and a new cultural identity made them respect and be open towards different cultures. Identity has a situational nature as they feel different everywhere: ‘in the Netherlands, I am a Hungarian, while in Hungary I am a Dutch’. Beyond a specific nationality, some respondents accentuate their European or cosmopolitan personality.

Multiple identities enriched these Hungarians instead of an internal conflict: ‘they get along well, they do not quarrel with each other’. Being Dutch equals with the issue of existence, based on rational grounds. Their thankfulness and solidarity towards the Netherlands fortify their Dutch identity.

Intergenerational upbringing was another way of fostering the cultural heritage. In households of Hungarian parents, they spoke Hungarian but also gave full attention to the Dutch language for the sake of their children’s educational advancement. They are disappointed that their efforts did not make their children ‘real Hungarians’ with a deep cultural and historical interest: ‘we tried everything, but it is not possible to bring the feeling over in a dominating alien society’.

In mixed households, which is most of the cases, Dutch is the *lingua franca*, which hindered even more to transfer the linguistic and cultural heritage. During an active professional life, Hungarian fathers could not have much influence. Most of the respondents take it as a realistic outcome and are satisfied with their children's sympathy towards their parents' old homeland.

This fits the notion of 'the economics of language' (Bordieu 1997), which discloses the gradual abandoning of a language that does not have a significant economic and societal function. Despite supply by the first generation, there is little or no demand from the second and third generations.

Their home is dual too. In the Netherlands, they built up their professional and family life, but during each visit to Hungary they feel at home too. They occupy no single cultural spaces and are entangled in circuits of cultural, social, and economic ties in both countries. Having a second residence there enables them a *diocious* life.

However, they did not intend to permanently return to Hungary, even after its democratization at the end of the 1980s. Due to their embedded existence in the Netherlands, they have not felt themselves refugees for a long time. They deliberately chose to start a new life and to remain in the new country. Also, the borderless world and the modern technologies make communication much easier nowadays. In addition, the old homeland became a different place from the one they had left behind five decades ago. They share the same language, but the words carry dissimilar meanings. Socialization in the democratic West and in a communist system produced various mentalities and world views.

Their experience varies concerning how people in Hungary look at them. Family relations are mostly pleasant and friendly, and relatives in Hungary often provided them with moral support. They also experienced antipathy, misunderstanding, and prejudice: 'for you, it is easy to talk....you left and live cheerfully in the West'. This can make them feel ashamed. Furthermore, some returned *émigrés* displayed an arrogant attitude, feeling superior as Western citizens. The interviewed persons, nevertheless, understand why Hungarians reject the advice of their emigrated compatriots on their daily life and politics: 'They made it all through in the old system, they remained, and we took a flight.....people who left are definitely gone...they should now not tell Hungarians how to act.'

## **5.6. Acculturation Outcomes of Various Refugee Waves**

Despite the differing flight and arrival circumstances of the various refugee waves, Hungarians acculturated within the Dutch society very successfully.

They conquered the initial difficulties which were different for the various refugee flows. Due to the absence of a solid diaspora, the earlier migrants (of 1947/48) could not count on the help of other Hungarians in the Netherlands.

Nor did their arrival trigger sympathy among the Dutch people due to world war memories. They were more exposed to loneliness and had to counter the acculturation problems on their own.

On the contrary, the first stage of the 56ers' arrival was more favourable than their fellow sufferers a decade before. They were received in the Western world as anti-communist heroes and also supported by the Hungarian Diaspora. Therefore, their expectations were high concerning an easy adjustment and fast economic advances in the Netherlands. Being educated by communist ideology, some of them overestimated the role of the state in caring for its citizens. That explains the substantial amount of returnees to Hungary. Notwithstanding, the ones who remained emphasize their individual approach of will-power and point to their own determination to perform independently of external assistance and care.

The earlier refugee flows display no or limited return patterns. They arrived from a Hungarian (capitalistic) societal system which more or less matched the political and economic circumstances in the Netherlands. They considered strong individual responsibility and natural endeavour in order to integrate.

We cannot make a noteworthy distinction on the acculturation outcomes between the various refugee flows. The respondents perceive their own life and integration path satisfying. They could live up to their own personal convictions, lifestyles and could pursue their professional careers. They acquired good positions in many facets of the Dutch society: in the business, politics, science as well as in the domain of art and culture. Most working-class refugees could build up a pleasant existence too.

Respondents proudly stressed the successful achievements of the Dutch-Hungarians in general. They explain their success and recognition with their flexibility, adjustment capacities, and talent.

## **6. Conclusions**

The refugees of 1956 arrived to a very different country than left-behind Hungary. Landing in a free, democratic country was an appalling contrast to the state oppression, poor economic circumstances, and a widespread societal distrust in their homeland.

Their flight was involuntary though undertaken out of free choice driven by the (perceived) deterioration of the political and economic situation in the homeland and the anxiety of retaliation. They left suddenly, contrary to the earlier, anticipatory refugees, whose fear was not based on an imminent life-threatening situation.

Pre-'56 refugees refused life under the unfolding communistic regime while the 56ers already had tangible experiences of the Bolshevik experiment. After



a short period had passed, hoping to return, they realized that they would stay long or definitively. Their main concern therefore was to start to build a life in the new country.

Their immigration was twofold in that it meant the loss of homeland, on the one hand, and the challenge to create a worthwhile life to deserve the recognition of the host society, on the other hand. Their acculturation occurred in various stages. The initial hardships of alienation and homesickness were mastered by their strategies to tackle the difficulties.

The emigrant existence is the art of learning to surrender. It is about renouncing issues which used to be organic part of the past. The Hungarian immigrants strived for success, and they knew that they had to work harder for it than the natives. Acculturation is a creative and innovative process where they had to replace the losses of their home country, community, family, status, property, culture, and personal identity.

Hungarians from various refugee waves could entirely incorporate into the Dutch society. Their life paths show upward social mobility and active socio-institutional participation in the Dutch society with the retaining of their original culture. This verifies the theoretical insight of Navas et al. (2007) in that various life spheres show various acculturation patterns: while the societal-economic realm is characterized by assimilation, the maintenance of the original culture and identity underlines integration (*Figure 1: Path 4*).

The Hungarians accepted the social and institutional system of the Netherlands and its goals, without repudiating their cultural and national origins. The Dutch values and norms fit their cultural roots (cultural compatibility). They became active in the Netherlands while keeping narrow emotional and physical ties with their native land. Having fluid identities is a unique feeling that brings a particular state of emotions and consciousness. Nonetheless, their biculturalism was not hindering but inspirational to advance, to experiment, and to find a home.

The research reveals a combination of factors that contributed to their fruitful acculturation.

Their young age and thus flexibility, their friendly reception, and the opportunity structure in the Netherlands were decisive. Most of them entered into interethnic marriages that enhanced the pace and intensity of their adjustment. They put maximum effort to gain the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to be successful in the reception society. They fostered positive attitudes and behaviour towards the Netherlands and were willing to participate in the society. Their deliberate aspirations to reach self-reliance, work hard, and make their new life blossoming are crucial. Integration was for them a tool and not a barrier to progress in the new environment.

The availability of rights and crucial institutions in the host society, such as education, welfare, or housing, provided opportunities to create economic, cultural,

and social capital. The growth-oriented economic objectives of both the reception country and the refugees combined well for the successful outcome. In addition, the refugees' geographical spreading by the Dutch authorities helped to prevent settlement concentration, which might have hindered integration. Their interethnic relations were inclusionary in that group boundaries dissolved harmoniously. The interviewed Hungarians feel entirely accepted by the Dutch people.

The Hungarian community was a heart-warming experience for the refugees of 1956. Beyond emotional support, the collective fostered mutual symbolic resources such as the language, traditions, and the common history of their country of birth. The community did not function though as a mobility trap but as an adaptive support for getting embedded in the mainstream society in all aspects.

The majority does not intend to return to Hungary anymore. The time spent in the Netherlands, their family as well as the differing mentality, worldviews, and lifestyles of the émigrés and the Hungarians in the homeland are herein vital factors. They have become a different type of Hungarians of dual orientation, being entangled in circuits of cultural, social, and economic ties in at least two countries.

Nevertheless, a gradual assimilation process is taking place due to the vanishing Hungarian identity of their descendants. They could not or only partly transfer the cultural heritage to the next generations. Unlike the 'islands' of little Hungary in the US or Canada, for instance, the Hungarian community in the Netherlands is far too small to keep up continuity or call it a diaspora. It is weakening and threatened by extinction. A comparative study on the acculturation of Hungarian refugees in other countries would enable to better understand the relationship between context-specific determinants and integration outcomes.

Furthermore, research on the Hungarian newcomers of our times could provide insights into the differences and similarities of emigration experiences then and now. The geopolitical circumstances of the Cold War, making émigrés impossible to visit the native country, perhaps also played a role in the successful acculturation of the refugees. These times, Hungarian migrants do not face this anymore. In addition, today's information and communicational technologies assist contacts and lives in separate (virtual) worlds, regardless of time and space. Their impact on migration patterns is another promising research avenue for the future.

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