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Editorial Foreword

It is a truism that the launching of a new journal always constitutes a challenge in many respects. This was the case of the *Social Analysis* as well. The fact that chronologically we are the latecomers among the *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae* series can be traced back to a number of reasons which we briefly mention here.

We appreciated that in today's Romania there are nearly as many social science – or more specifically, sociological – journals as there are sociological departments, and this consideration applies more or less to other countries of the region as well. Given the restricted nature of the sociological research during the communist regime, this proliferation can be well explained in terms of institutional rehabilitation. Meanwhile, the rising number of sociological journals can be explained also through the imperative of scientometry: in a context wherein academic performance is measured, among others, through the number of publications, to launch a journal seems a taken for granted step. Whatever the reason, there remain many questions which make the decision of launching difficult and dilemmatic. How to differentiate between these journals? Or is it necessary to outline a specific profile for each of them? How to attract authors (others then the members of the departments launching the journal in question)? How to ensure quality? How to respect deadlines and the objective proposed?, etc.

After a relatively long period of deliberation we finally decided to initiate our journal. Our major task consisted in how to determine a specific profile. After screening a consistent number of social science journals throughout the country and the world, we finally concluded that in a context wherein the two extremes are defined by genuinely internationally and extremely locally focused journals, to take a middle course would be a smart decision. Thus, we opted for a journal focused explicitly on the analysis of various social phenomena and processes taking place in the post-communist Europe.

In terms of methodology, our screening proved that one of the extremes is represented by extremely sophisticated quantitative approaches and the other side is dominated by extreme reflexivity. We intended to take the middle course in this sense as well and to provide a stance for comparative perspectives and multiple methodologies in the approaching of various social themes.

After setting the agenda, the question of how to attract authors was, in turn, a challenge. In the light of the questions above, to send an article for a newly founded journal constitutes, by no means, a risky issue. In disseminating the call for papers, we relied on various newsletters and also on the members of the

editorial board. As expected, the diversity of the authors who sign the articles of this first issue, especially in terms of their geographical region and departmental affiliation, is quite limited, but hopefully it will be much diversified in the future. We are however contented that for this first issue, we received a sufficient number of manuscripts among which to trial (through the method of double blind peer review) those thematically and methodologically divergent articles which corresponded to the above criteria and which present, indeed, various social phenomena and processes taking place in the post-communist Europe (particularly Hungary and Romania). Let them be briefly mentioned here.

The first article, written by György Lengyel raises the question of *How do the rich smile?* The answer provided by the author is based on a visual experiment with student participants. In a classroom experiment the author asked students to recognize social status by visual information alone (photos of three multi-billionaires) and then he investigated how students' opinions changed when visual and verbal information were combined. According to the findings, the majority of the participants mentioned upper or upper-middle class as regards social status and the positive features outnumbered the negative ones. However, as the author notes, smiles did not only divide the spectators but also elicited more negative than positive associations. When verbal information was added to the photos, it considerably boosted the number of positive attributes and decreased the negative ones. This article not only revealed a number of important aspects of the sociology, respectively social psychology of perception, but also brought into discussion the fact of how richness is perceived in the context of a post-socialist country.

László Személyi and Márton Csanády discuss one of the most salient social issues of the post-socialist world, that of migration. The article, titled *Some sociological aspects of skilled migration from Hungary*, is concerned however not with migration in general, but with the particular phenomenon of brain drain, in connection with which the authors, based on an online survey, show the motivations, circumstances and opinions of those involved in this flux. Among other facts, the authors note that the emigration of highly skilled people from Hungary occurred in waves in accordance with macro-level socio-political changes (e.g. EU accession). Regarding the target countries of the skilled migrants, the results confirm the centre-periphery theory of migration: Hungarian skilled emigrants went mostly to the USA and Western Europe. On the micro-level, the authors found that the main push factor of the emigration is income, followed by professional development and career opportunities.

Márton Papp approaches a not less salient issue than migration, that is, the social economy in the case of a Hungarian region. The paper, titled *Social economy, as a special section of the informal economy in the Northern Great Plains region of Hungary* is based on a sociological survey and shows that two decades after the regime change, social economy, understood as a not monetized, not registered and

accounted, but legal activity which is not parasitic to the regular economy still plays an important role in the economic behaviour of the residents of the post-socialist countries, especially in rural areas and among certain social groups.

Adél Kiss and Ildikó Fejes turn towards another issue and in their paper *Knowledge and regulation through quality assurance. An analysis* explore some aspects in relation with quality assurance in pre-university education in Romania. By taking a meta-view on a number of narratives collected through interviews, they conclude that the policy of quality assurance represents much more a normative than a functional regulation, and thus practically outlines the bottlenecks associated with turning policy into action.

Two other articles can be grouped together under the generic title Sociology looks to history. In one of them, titled *A sociological school from the communicational perspective. The case of Dimitrie Gusti's Monographic School*, Zoltán Rostás presents and discusses the PR activity of Dimitrie Gusti in relation with promoting early Romanian sociology abroad. The various attempts made by the founder of the Bucharest Sociological School (including here media presence, social pedagogy, monographic activity, international conferences and participation at the world exhibitions in Paris in 1937 and in New York, in 1939, etc.), bring a solid ground to the author's concluding remark that "any intellectual group that wants to make a place for itself in the network of organisations and institutions of the age must develop a public image strategy".

Traditional vs. rational farming. A less known study by Gyula Szekfű in the light of Weber's sociology is the article by László Kupa in which the author looks back to history and presents a particular approach issued by Gyula Szekfű, one of the leader personalities of Hungarian historiography and cultural policy of the early 20th century. Kupa shows that Szekfű considered Hungarian 'spiritual constitution' when approached the contemporary entrepreneurs (i.e. wine producers). In the author's opinion, spiritual factors outlined by Szekfű are relevant for the present day as well, since they can at least partly explain why residues of 'traditional farming' still exist in the East-Central European region's countries with a post-communist past.

In the review section of the journal, Julianna Bodó takes us back to the issue of migration. In her article, *Labour migration in the Seklerland after the regime change. A review of an anthropological research programme*, she presents the main conclusions of a broad research programme centred around migrants and emigrational experiences. She concludes that albeit the researched region is very particular (a quite peripheral region of Romania), two decades after the regime change migrants' experiences and the patterns associated with emigrational flows present the typical characteristics of transnationalism described in the international literature.

Hungarian approaches to social stratification and mobility as reflected in the Szociológiai Szemle journal is a review issued by Balázs Telegdy and provides an inquiry into the process of social transition in Hungary as reflected through changes in social stratification and social mobility, according to theoretical and empirical research published in *Szociológiai Szemle*, the journal of the Hungarian Sociological Association. As a general conclusion, the reviewer assumes that the theory of capitals provides an adequate framework for describing the ongoing changes in the transitional societies. The author concludes also that increased social mobility, which lasts until the crystallization of the newly evolved mobility channels, is an inherent feature of transition. Regarding the middle class, Telegdy notes that in the light of the articles there are two things that can be observed: the middle class in Hungary is very fragmented and provides the highest level of social mobility, consequently, individuals belonging to this stratum comport the most risk of losing their social position.

The book review written by Orsolya Gergely on the Romanian edition of David Kideckel's book *Getting By in Postsocialist Romania: Labor, the Body, and Working-Class Culture*, that is *România postsocialistă. Munca, trupul și cultura clasei muncitoare* (Iași: Polirom, 2010) brings in discussion the adequacy of anthropology in approaching the everyday life of a very specific part of the Romanian public, that is, miners and workers who poise at the edge of communism and post-communism.

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