

## SOME ASPECTS OF TRANSITION PROCESS IN HUNGARY FROM SOCIOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW

(Economic Background, Youth Attitudes,  
Youth Unemployment and Youth Subcultures)

LÁSZLÓ BOROS

The first aspect of our analysis is the youth unemployment in the East-Central-European region and some characteristic elements of Hungarian situation. Yet I don't like speak only about the facts but I try to analyse some connections between the new historical situation (that is the transition process) and its real social background. The unemployment of young people is not only a constant challenge but a test of responsibility of our societies. And we can't do anything useful if we don't know the social positions in own reality. We can't help and can't give hope without exact knowledge of the social background. As an old researcher of this background, I would tell it: the present social situation of our countries is much more complicated than it seems to be looking from outside.

I have more general thesis which constitute the basis of my logic and establish a framework for my study:

1. The basic problems of our geographical and historical region regarding the transition process;
2. The general problems of Hungary in this period;
3. The most important background's element in Hungary: the special 'second economy';
4. The main questions of youth's positions in our societies;
5. Youth problems, youth challenge, political integration of young people;
6. Youth subcultures.

The East-Central-European transition process has not only a lot of similarities in the different countries but more differencies as well. For instance, the fact of unemployment – as a new phenomenon – is a similar moment in the region, but the way to this situation, the rates of the mass unemployment and the possibilities of the certain countries in employment's management are very different.

This is a logical outcome of our history, because the genesis and the present conditions of this phenomenon are absolutely not the same in the different internal regions of Hungary. We could find dramatic divergences from the average unemployment positions in the counties of North-Eastern Hungary where there was a traditional development of this process, only in a particular 'socialist' way.

So the other countries should have still more specialities though the basic political framework had the same character. Some examples from the last years on the certain situations:

- Poland had more public political and economic crises (the others had mainly latent ones) in the seventies and eighties and a given level of the unemployment was well-known for Polish society, mainly for young people in the eighties.
- Before the unification of Germany the official unemployment was a totally foreign element for that very hard form of the 'socialism', which functioned in the GDR. The unification process, mainly the economic effects of the Western part made a dramatic situation.

But there are general problems. The first question is the dynamics of transition. There is no general dynamics of transition and it isn't not only to the effect, that there are differences for instance between two different countries, but to the effect of the general moving of the processes as well. My opinion – from a sociological point of view –, this process is first of all not a simple transition from somewhere to anywhere, but a twiching move. What's happening namely in reality? There are some steps forward and then some steps (not so many) back. Sometimes back to the history, to such historical solutions of political, legal, constitutional problems which were forgotten in Western democracies thirty-forty years ago. So this twiching move can produce on a lot of fields finally a stagnation. I mean, this is a common problem of the most countries in this region. Of course, there are a lot of differences and specialities as well. This is the actual side of the dynamics problem and there is an other aspect, namely the influence of historical differences after 1948–49. Well, this is a more profoundly existing process and I can interpret it in detail later, regarding Hungarian case.

There are very interesting theoretical problems in the background of our crucial theoretical question (the differences in the nature and the dynamics of transition). The first is the fate of the respective civil society which could be the key to the explanation of present situation. I'd like to focus the problem of 'de-statification' (it's a category very inventively created by Professor Heydebrand /New York University/). The roots of differences are founded first of all in this field, though not only in relation between state and respective civil society but for example in Hungary in a certain demand of

a special group of Hungarian reformer party-leaders, exactly that they wanted to form the most segments of the economic and cultural life, almost the whole 'everydays life' sphere to a civil (namely 'destatificated') framework. And this tendency was absolutely missing in the GDR and in Czechoslovakia, while in Poland at the same time a lot of organizations of civil society could be so stable, that they could function in spite of the other intensions of their party-leaders.

Hungary is full of contradictions today. All the important and interesting political and social questions are characterized by great freedom and small obstacles.

The characteristic element of Hungarian transition is the continuity. This is the reality in all such spheres of Hungarian society which are outside of political institutional system.

Exactly in civil society and mainly in economy the Hungarian story is not the same as the other countries in our region. The speciality of Hungarian case is, that it has started not at the end of the eighties but in 1968. This year was the beginning of Hungarian economic reform which had a central purpose: the 'destatification' of the state economy. The plans were very dynamic, a lot of Hungarian economists, jurists and reform-politicians did a very intensive preparing work in 66-67. But the effective life of the real reform was very short, because the invasion against Czechoslovakia demonstrated the real goals and methods of the Soviets for Hungarian leaders. But they couldn't tell Hungarian people: 'The reform is out!' On the one hand they had to reduce the reform in reality and on the other hand they didn't declare the end of the process. Controversery, their public activity demonstrated again and again: the reform is continued.

#### *The special Hungarian 'second economy'*

It was necessary to give concessions for the different groups of Hungarian society in economic and cultural fields from time to time. They didn't dare to touch or still less to change the basic institutions of political system, but it was created by them such an absolutely special Hungarian 'second economy' which was different from all systems and institutions having this name all over the world.

The consequence of this process was that the institutions of Hungarian civil society, which are able to guarantee the continuity today, were organised not by illegal political groups and not in an illegal political position (though of course there were such groups too) but this economic sphere had a legally regulated part, a typically illegal field and an irregular dimension. So the fight between the state and the civil society didn't have a political framework because the economy could be the terrain of the struggle. The technocrats

(both the old intelligency and the young experts) could take a lot of positions (and influence) first in economic leading of the country, then slowly in political system as well. More younger political leaders could take positions in prospering part of second economy. Only a little group of the oldest and high-positioned leaders was out and against this process, though they had very close contacts to Moscow.

But the main task was to increase consumption at least in relative terms and to end the chronic shortage of goods. The means for these changes were only partly created in production. The greater part was financed from the budget as the shortage economy continued in practice and wages were kept at a low level.

The third layer of the mechanism was an experiment in agriculture, an aspect uniquely Hungarian. This process began earlier than the economic reform at least as far as concerns the official date of beginning. The creation of farmers' co-operatives and collective by force was followed by measures which allowed the emergence of true small private farms. Later, more and more private elements were allowed into the field of agriculture and into the life of the village.

The aim was to preserve the illusions of a reform. But all these steps remained half steps and half solutions due above all to protection given to big industrial enterprises and later due to the centralization and integration of farmer co-operatives into the overall planned economy.

Another very characteristic, typically socialist discrimination – i.e., another half-solution – also helped to reprivatize the everyday life of the village. Small household plots and the possibility to sell the produce at market places were allowed. This discrimination was caused by the need of the non-urban population to build their own homes and houses if they wanted a nice place to live, as had always been the case in the case in the past. So the idea of free or very cheap social housing – which later proved to be an illusion in urban areas as well, and which was used to justify low wages – never included the rural population of villages, even in principle. Its most absurd consequences could be seen when a major part of the rural population found jobs in industry, in commerce, or in the service industry as commuters yet assistance for them to build their own homes improved only slightly. This in turn caused a movement to urban areas even among that stratum of the rural population which was better off.

In the 1970s and 1980s, property ownership was allowed on a smaller scale for those who were dependent as employees in agricultural co-ops or in industry but whose private farms had never been incorporated into the framework of state redistribution and consumption. On the one hand, the existence of small-scale farms and on the other hand, the need to build their own homes produced some signs of a civil society under what were otherwise totally nationalized circumstances. In this way the first signs appeared of a

weak embourgeoisement and a weak civil society – however controversial – alongside the political subject and the agricultural-industrial working class. This process contributed to the “formation” of a middle stratum in Hungary in the last twenty years, a stratum which was able to accumulate wealth in a very unusual way. Indeed, one should call it an accumulation of natural resources through manual labor needs on small-scale private farms (houses, machines, livestock, agricultural produce).

On the other hand the creation of an incentive for that population working or employed in agriculture either part-time or full-time put an end to a demand-oriented agricultural market, at least for the country as a whole. Agricultural products available at a reasonable price reduced the absurd dependence which usually characterized the population's situation in a socialist planned economy. This simple development was sufficient to make the working class, considered as subjects. Less dependent on the state as consumers of agricultural goods. It helped the emergence of a middle stratum. Moreover, the gradual process of increasing consumption did not stop at food. It was extended to other areas: industrial products were more readily available, although their quality and the selection in shops remained poor by West European standards. Buying more industrial products and dressing more fashionably – this also became incorporated in the strategy of “marking” a middle stratum. Despite restrictions and political controls, growth in the flow of information played a similar role, especially the illusion that official information came from different sources. This meant that information on Western societies came not only from Eastern sources but from Western sources as well, albeit selectively. A substantial part of the society was transformed from being totally oppressed subjects of socialism. They then became people for whom the basic essentials of life and entertainment and recreational possibilities were taken for granted to some extent. They did not consider them as a gift or a privilege. Very gradually, another favor was granted by the Hungarian political elite following the increase in consumption: it was freedom of travel. This strengthened the belief among certain groups that they belonged to the middle stratum, although throughout this era (and even after the collapse of the system) travel remained a favor. This was true all the more so due to its financial aspects (lack of hard currency), but it still gave cosmopolitan illusions to civil servants, the lower-middle, and intelligentsia layers of the middle stratum. It gave them a chance to live up to their pretensions to some degree. When entrepreneurial and accumulative areas opened up travel became of vital importance for semi-privatization in commerce, an area in which people could compete with the state administration with some possibility of success. A great number of developments rationalizing the economy were inseparable from travel. These partially improved the chances for swindlers and yet partly contributed to embourgeoisement at its very beginning.

The first phase in the emergence of the special Hungarian middle stratum was what we have just described. In broad outline, it was already what in Western political journalism came to be called "Goulash communism and refrigerator socialism". Two important remarks must be made here. The first is that this middle stratum is not analogous in any respect to the middle classes of developed societies. Its structural character and social quality is completely different. A "real" middle class is always a stratification unit, and its place is between the upper and lower classes, and in this respect it is simply insignificant whether this group belongs to a narrow elite of the society and consequently they are few in number or whether the majority of the society belongs to the middle class. If we consider the sociological quality of the middle class, it has a reasonable homogeneity in its structural components. This is in contrast to the Hungarian middle stratum which is a heterogeneous mass. Its stratification position escapes all definition. The gradual and slow increase of consumption as its organizing force had the effect that it included factory workers with an average income, underpaid university professors, manual workers employed in industry, agricultural workers, and civil servants in towns and villages who had opportunities to obtain supplementary income. The political leadership created the middle stratum in place of true reform. It consisted of three-quarters of the society and it allowed a narrow political, economic, artistic, scientific, and entrepreneurial elite to rise while the mass slid downwards in a vicious circle of disadvantages.

The process of course did not end in its first phase. The source that was able to fund this increase in consumption dried up very rapidly. This source, of course, was the gains made by replacing the earlier directed economy with more liberal economic regulations and other steps towards rationalization. Movement from a totally irrational system in the direction of a more rational one thus had its profit. When this came to an end (1972-73), recentralization was introduced again and the budget started to finance the increase. A budget deficit began in 1973. These means proved to be insufficient after a few years as well, and foreign loans followed to the end of the 1970s. Finally, the debt trap destroyed the illusion of the Hungarian reform, and the last card was played: subsidized extra work was made possible. This became the second great source of pseudo-embourgeoisement, and unbelievable idea of the political leadership: allow employees and most pensioners to work an extra 4-6-8 hours in addition to their normal hours, if they do not want to lose the quality of life achieved in the decade after 1968. So they came to enjoy, even if only as a political favor, a second job, extra work, or a work permit to open a small enterprise. In this way a broader stratum - not only those working in agriculture - acquired the possibility to "privatize" their income sources and the consumption of goods.

The third phase of this development came about in the second part of the 1980s, by which time three-quarters of the active population had grown

accustomed to a minimum of 12 hours work a day. Now, however, the extra income from this source was not enough to keep their budget in balance. Consequently, the genie of the peculiar Hungarian enterprise was let out of the bottle. The small enterprise controlled from the center became a real peculiarity, historically speaking, especially because it created a kind of an entrepreneurial class who were allowed many things short of possibilities for real regulations, that of what is allowed and what is not. The government played a dirty game as professional gangsters and the reaction on the side of successful participants was a dirty game in reply. They were driven into a limited course of action and their intention was to become rich under these restricted circumstances. And this is exactly what most of them did, while they paid no attention to respecting the two fundamental principles of the classic capitalist enterprise: a reasonable profit and fair business practice. There was only one course of action left: to become rich as quick as possible. This kind of "limited" enterprise produced a new type of entrepreneur but not a middle class, no "citoyen" and no "bourgeois". But some civic elements, of course, appeared in this group too, and the last sub-class of the Hungarian pseudo-middle class – unchecked entrepreneur – made his appearance on the social scene.

Several authors have treated these three subgroups without making any distinctions between them, as a semi-civil society. This is a mistake, a false artificiality. In reality only two things happened: the borders of a middle stratum were drawn and its main constituents were formed of that historically exceptional conglomerate, which was later called the second economy. Only part of this second economy corresponds either to the shadow economies of market economies or to the black markets of planned economies. The rest is peculiarly Hungarian and cannot be separated from developments in the 1970s and 1980s.

This special Hungarian political and economic tendency was on the top already in the middle of the eighties, the above characterised situation was standardized on a very stable level. In this way when the political change started, the transition process divided in two different dimensions. The first was the system of political institutions, where a lot of new people and some of old colourchanged politicians took the positions, and the second sphere consisted of the professional apparatus of the former leading institutions, the most important professional economic positions. In this second part of the system relatively young but higheducated and experienced experts remained and worked on. That group of young people which worked on middle level of political system in the last period before change, during the transition process changed the former position on an entrepreneurs-position.

They could make use of the new situation because they had only a lot of very important economic information. This special framework of the new system gave (and gives) the essence of the hardest conflict between the new political leaders and the civil society.

The legal system, mainly the practical institutions has a bufferrole in this conflict. On the one hand the legal system also has to tackle the conflict between those generations of jurists which were born after World War II and the conservative government which is leaded by an old generation. On the other hand from the beginning of the system change there is a very intensive influence by political processes in the legal institutions. A demonstrative situation of this fact was studied by public opinion in 1992 when the Minister for Justice appointed the presidents of the county courts (this is the seconde level of Hungarian Court System) and he appointed from 19 cases for 12 courts an other person as who was voted by judges of certain courts. This conflict was focused in political fight.

What is the situation today? The mein structures of social reproduction have not changed, while the political system experienced a radical structural change. What effect does it have on our chances of embourgeoisement? The change in the political structure did not put an end to the earlier character of the middle stratum. It only modified the structure of opportunities making it easier for some groups and more difficult for others. Some of the main events were not consequences of change in the political structure but rather cause of the former. Besides international events, the most important tendency was that the middle stratum lost its balance and confidence. To be precise, the lower layers of the middle stratum unexpectedly fell into the lower classes and this undermined the stability of the structure and the system. The ideologically-based actions of the intelligentsia enjoyed only limited public support and had nothing to do with the collapse of the old system. Whwen the security of the familie's economic situation (kept in balance on several bases, i.e. on several income sources) seemed to be in denger, when it became evident to the pseudo-middle class workers, rural families and urban employees that reform opportunities were a two-way street, that gradual and slow increase and maintenance of an achieved life style can also end in utter failure, when this happened, the day-to-day confidence in the system collapsed. The controlling mechanism could not longer give viable answers to challenges such as the double bondage to the ? (through the debt, trap) and to Moscow (through the Eastern bloc). All this reduced possibilities for finding new means to preserve the balance. The ond of the tacit pact between the middle stratum and the political elite opened the way for real reformers. When they removed the key obstacles of the now impotent mechanism, agreements made possible the self-organization of new political formations. Finally, the 'winning party' assumed control. This whole process, on the one hand, did not include real political parties but rather only in the highest layers of politics.

Since the significant legislative amendments have been introduced. The most important ones from our point of view are those which placed the right to property and the defense of this right in the constitutional framework and

those which abolished administrative-legal constraints on enterprises, especially with regard to the basic principles of their foundation and functioning. These legislative changes are natural conditions for regulating real embourgeoisement. On the other hand, however, many centralized elements have been preserved in the framework. These make the situation ambiguous and insecure, as does the fiscal short-sightedness vis-à-vis the everyday behavior of enterprises, of production and of accumulation in the field of taxation and social security. The main obstacle, however, is the lack of general legal regulations of ownership. This still allows the over-centralized but in many respects impotent power center to arbitrarily take the management of the unregulated situation into its own hands.

New positions were also created, primarily among the intelligentsia, who got their share in the new distribution of power. They would like compensation for their earlier lack of satisfaction. Now, they are enjoying power for power's sake (while the more responsible ones have already become anxious), some intellectuals are enjoying formerly forbidden or rare fruits (many travel as much as they can, while others have turned their attention towards business positions). A clever group of the former intelligentsia, who had good positions under the old regime, is trying to transform its intellectual basis, especially its connections and information, into capital. The traditional small entrepreneur continues to be in a difficult situation, they were not able to play – and to be honest, did not want to play – the dirty game in the last period of the former system, although this was necessary if one wanted to earn a lot of money. They expected that their decades-long struggle with the socialist bureaucracy would be rewarded with privileges from the new political system. On the contrary, their more or less transparent business activity is easy prey for the new-old administration, as well as for the local governments (e.g. licence fees). Swindlers and sharks, in contrast, hide their suspicious business activity from the eyes of the greedy public authorities.

Besides the groups mentioned so far, other groups can be distinctly viewed in Hungarian society today. I have already mentioned some parts of the old and mixed intelligentsia elite, those who joined the new political elite or became automatically part of the new elite in areas other than politics, even if they raise their eyebrows at the newcomer's amateur attitudes and at their confused ideologies. An example is the employed layers of the intelligentsia, which had until now a hard time remaining in the lower middle class. Their chief aim was nothing more prestigious than to secure quality education for their children. In most cases, this was successful. But now this stratum is more or less on the same situation: they can hardly keep up with the competition for prestige education and so they postpone basic investments overdue for a long time. In the last place, 'lagging' behind the other groups, we find three and a half million people who live below the subsistence level. This group, or layer, is also distinctly structured. We could include here those caught in a

vicious circle of disadvantages, those who had already lived outside the borders of society through the Kádár period, those who were not included in the tacit pact between the middle stratum and the political elite. The middle of the 1980's saw the fall into this layer of approximately 400.000 small-income pensioners who were forced to face the fact that four to five decades of hard work as well as a horribly disillusioning history were insufficient to give them the right to lead a decent life in their old age. Another unexpected fall into the lowest layer was youth, those who should have started.

### *Youth problems, youth challenge*

What were the youth positions after the beginning of the transition process?

Structural changes following the change of political system have had a great impact on redefining what it means to be young as well as the actual position of youth as a social stratum today. Economic, technological, and labor market changes caused by the transition to a market economy have brought new demands in the field of education and training and change in those social mechanisms that regulate the transition of youth. It is still much debated today whether young people's values, interests, future expectations, and attitudes are indeed changing, and if they are, in what way. To what extent to these changes have special consequences compared to changes in social structure? Are they independent of them, or do they constitute an integral part of these changes?

Undoubtedly, the concept of youth as a political category as defined by the former one-party system is quite useless today. Young people in Hungary have abandoned the role they were assigned by the previous regime, that of subjects of a paternalistic-assimilationist youth policy. The one-party system's symbol of controlled and controllable youth – the Communist youth organization – has fallen apart.

The bureaucratic system of supporting youth through the Communist youth organization no longer exists: today, there is no force in Hungary that could exercise political control over the majority of youth. Yet obviously, the disappearance of various organizations that had monopolies of political power or redistribution does not mean the disappearance of real problems.

On the contrary, those forced to live under constraint in their youth have not become independent adults, their chances of starting a career or an independent life of their own have not improved, and their confidence in politics has not grown either. Vestiges of the social and political socialization of the previous system will thus be felt for a long time to come. In order to turn monologues into a constructive dialogue when discussing the growing social problems faced by youth in Hungary today and to stop disposing of the

issue by making ringing declarations tailored to the daily needs of political parties, however, we must create a common basis for a new concept of youth.

The earlier comprehensive approach to political socialization can now be replaced by an analysis of socialization processes in education, changes in youth culture, and problems of participation. In Eastern Europe, the change of political system (which provides the opportunity for society to choose among several modernization strategies) took place at a time when many people felt that the challenge of youth would become the greatest problem for us to face at the end of the twentieth century. As to the form in which it may appear, it may even create a new dividing line in Europe. In my view, we might see two scenarios take shape: youth as an independent social-political factor (in Western Europe), and youth as a bearer of a social crisis (in Eastern Europe).

### *Attitudes among Youth*

The new generation's political socialization in the processes of our age is mostly well known from the side of results. We could read a rather large number of publications concerning youth's historical knowledge, political impudence, value problems, behavioural culture, free-time habits, age group effects, the frightening emptiness of their views on future, etc. It is undoubtable that the majority of these problems are in close relation with the whole of political socialization.

It is well known from our everyday life-experience and from professional literature that the age-period of youth cannot be described or circumscribed by the number of years. It is true that there are great differences between groups concerning the age limit of total adulthood. Generally, we may register the increase of this age limit. From the point of political socialization this phenomenon has a multiple importance. The most striking is that the age is extended, during which the role-relations of generations are not clarified. More precisely, they must play several roles and it is very difficult to live together with these permanently. They have to cope with adult norms and with the opposite of those at the same time. Young people have their identity card, after the age of 18 they may vote, formally they are full members of society, but at the same time, the delayed problems of career-starting make them realize the hard facts of their dependence day by day. The elongation and rationalization of this ambiguous situation will sooner or later promote the stabilization of generational subcultures, generational ghettos as the primary means of self defense.

In the cross-fire of socialization demands, the stretching of expectations for a decade paradoxical brings about an opposite result. As defense gestures become more reflex-like the hope for making addressees accept conscious socialization effects decreases.

Looking at it from the side of political socialization, this contradictory situation is even more illuminating. Society, within the framework of institutional education, provides young generations with the basic political knowledge and demands. They feel themselves able for participation, but society is unable to secure real participation for them. Thus, knowledge and the experience of practice is separated.

In recent years, more and more studies deal with problems concerning the generational structure of Hungarian society's present leadership.

Earlier researches have already called attention to the fact that in the course of youth's opinion and attitude forming the different dimensions often become congruent along with as the drawback of generational thinking. For example, parents' world becomes easily one with that of adults or the social system with adults' world or with the parents' and the other way around. The picture becomes extremely complex when the surface is backed by real processes. One of the results of postponed generational change is that the ratio of youth is very low in the areas of social leadership. It is especially low compared to their ratio in labour division.

By simplifying the complex processes (that we cannot discuss in detail here) we may register the following: the number of those career starting generations is increasing who live through the present social-political system, so that its personified appearance is away from them in the distance of several decades in thinking, problem-receptivity, life-style, behaviour and roleundertaking. Within the immobility of generations only the entrance of new ones cause movements. This carries the possibility that the problems of certain youth groups will meet little understanding as a result of the increasing experience of age differences.

The legitimation principles, power-practicing values, ideologies, which proved to be enduring in the period of consolidation with less success, can be accepted with the same contents and formal solutions by generations that grew up under different conditions. This contradiction is the source of several socializational strains. In order to understand it, we must count on the fact that the generations producing the main body of the system get in touch with youth through, the transmission of more generations at the same time. If we are searching for the structure of this experience received what they should have transmitted in different ways, efficiency and depth within the past twenty years. The main body-generation is carrying the political system's values and mind-world forward in time. After the ratio of those is increasing within each generation whose relation to this mind-world is primarily only adaptive. The basic issue will be the non-perception and the way of perception pushing the possibility of change into the background. The forms of delivery and perception become stabilized for the new generations. Thus, it is a necessity to be actively disposed towards the forms, only. They do not expect changes from themselves but rather from the shift in proportions rooted in the internal stratification of the main-body generation (4).

The newer and newer ways of getting into adulthood in the political sense are not spectacular only because they indulge in completely different values and ideologies but with the "simplification" of political attitudes. This does not mean that young people generally have no new values and ideas. They have new values and ideas but those are located outside the political life and tightly stick to the private sphere. We shall discuss this in detail later. Right now we wish to mention that the process of private-sphere upgrading goes together (in many cases) with the further strengthening (and thus with the distance's increase) of the formal relations to political-social perspectives.

By analyzing any of the intermediary institutions of political socialization we may see that there are traditional disproportions. One of the disproportions' essence is that institutional political education tries to socialize to the whole of abstract political system from the very beginning (from kindergarten). Much less energy is left for socialization in the spheres that are experienced every day. Principles, values, ideologies of generally meant systems have an overwhelming role in the process of political socialization, as if it would be exclusively necessary for man to find his way on the macro-social level. Behind this we find the unconscious (and thus unexpressed) fiction, according to which the political system exists only centrally by having local appearances. Thus the most important thing is to socialize for macro-politics. As an unintentional result, man learns to interpret micro-social conflicts and relations in a non-political way. To put it in another way, the primary aim of socialization is that man should have a precise picture of big politics, he should want to take part in it and to find his way. The trouble is that in most cases man meets big politics only on the level of news and happenings. From the perspective of everyday life the movement of the macro-level political system appears in a rather abstract way. For this reason, only a formal relation may develop, since the individual's influence on the political system (and the other way around: the political system's influence on the individual) is manifested through many transmissions. This ambiguous socialization has another result, too. It is impossible to process the political conflicts, of the world lived on a micro-level with the values of intentional socialization, with its patterns and panels of thought and behaviour.

Thus, in most cases the interpretation of microlevel events is eventual and does not contradict what has been learned in socialization since they do not conflict. Satisfaction with the system and dissatisfaction with the concrete life-situation can exist next to each other in a contradictory relationship.

On the other hand, we can see that the interpretation of youth's total social-political environment is done with the aid of direct socialization agents' ideological principles and values. Real acquisition of the latter ones never occurs, it remains on the level of verbal undertaking. This is probably the

reason why the two standards do not get into conflict with each other in everyday practice, even if (looking at it from the outside) the contradiction is significant. A relatively new element of recent years is that youth accepts formal relations openly as formal ones, and they invest less and less efforts into proving now false contents are to their environment.

It is a grounded opinion according to which the world of youth is just as much articulated as that of adults, and there is no background for a homogenous youth opinion. Thus, generational conflicts always show problems with a different character under the surface. The exploration of these is the real task.

By mentioning these intentions, too, we are stating that there are periods when generational conflicts are real. The chance for this is the greatest when there is a big difference in values concerning the evaluation of the given society. If the official ideology of society appears as if it is given or wanted by adults' and as a result, the developed situation awareness meets youth's evaluation only on a few points, then there is a real possibility for conflicts between older and younger generations to override their own limitation.

The structure of generational contradictions may be approached from the following basis: the same social event is experienced differently by people in different situations. New generations seeing the unsuccessful and successful efforts would like to avoid the repetition of useless ones. (It might be interesting that elementary and high school children - in the interviews - generally felt sorry for their parents when evaluating their work by saying that they work hard and a lot but they never receive any good in return. Probably, in many cases children repeat what they heard from their parents. Although the result is the same if they accept their parents' opinion or they come to this conclusion from their own experience).

The mentioned problems give the intersection of political socialization's present process on areas where the political structure-processes may be interpreted within the generational structure, too.

We can notice the strengthening of individual autonomy's upgrading in the case of several youth groups.

Today, we can talk about a generally spreading view behind which there is a dominating recognition (ideology) saying that individual prosperity has chances. In this context we may say that new generations look at their perspectives with more reality.

From the compositions of high school students concerning their future elements referring to socio-political participation were missing. Students could interpret their future exclusively from the point of individual prosperity.

Organizational failures strengthen autonomy demands. Increasing autonomy disintegrates collectivistic ideals which already had lost their contents. Institutions gradually lacking collectivity and collective moments

are really reduced to institution and organization like forms of existence. Organizations proclaim such collective values which they can undertake only verbally, and which they cannot realize in the course of their task dischargement. Thus, the ideology of these organizations is separated from their actual practice, and in a paradoxical way the functioning of the organization in itself produces the demand for autonomy. At the same time, it is also restraining the realization of these demands, thus continuously reproducing suspicion against institutional life.

The break of collectivistic ideals does not mean – and it cannot mean – the failure of the demand for sociality (although we can see signs of it). The situation is that new generations empty and disintegrate the readily received, externally organized organizational modes that can offer only membership relations. But almost parallel to this we can see the quick spread of group forms. The substance of these is that young people themselves can participate in the maintenance of these groups.

This phenomenon seemingly contradicts what we have said about individual autonomy. These communities can attract people because they are not endangering private autonomy that can only be given up by the individual's own will. But with this there is a trap for the new generations: the spreading social organization outside the institutional social frames can offer the missing experience of collectivity (or its surrogate), but it is not promoting the generations' assimilation in society, and gives even less opportunity for participation in decision making concerning their life situation and the integration of efforts enforcing their interests.

### *Youth Subcultures*

The first characteristic representatives of youth subculture of the 1980s were the so called "csöves"-vagrants appearing in the late 70s. Punks made their debut at the beginning of the decade followed soon after by the skinheads. Punk spread among students, outer city and housing estate youths. Another subcultural trend first called new wave, then underground, became popular mostly among educated youth. Though the founders have already left the "underground", a similar tendency has been emerging recently (the terminology is from József Rácz).

From the late 1980s hard rock music has returned, although only a few representatives of the hard rock cultures call themselves "csöves". They identify themselves as rockers or heavy metalists.

The death and other-world-oriented "occult" subcultures appeared about the turn of the decade including Satanists, gruffies (after Germ, Gruft = grave), and various illusionist groups.

In 1991 several skinhead groups and others identifying themselves as fascists are also present among the Hungarian youth subcultures. They take a militant stand against foreign students and Gypsies.

At the beginning of the 1980s the subcultures articulated the social crisis by exposing issues of poverty and deviancy (e.g. drug addiction). They were a reminder of the fact that these problems could not be discussed in public; indeed, not even the words themselves were allowed in the mass media).

Contemporary subcultures also have a "message": the occult subcultures and the subsequent moral indignation expose issues of religious influence/secularization: the violent, fascistoid groups stress the problems of an exclusive and intolerant nationalism/ethnocentrism.

Einige Aspekte des Übergangsprozesses in Ungarn vom Gesichtspunkt  
der Soziologie (ökonomischer Hintergrund, Attitüden der  
Jugendlichen, Jugendarbeitslosigkeit  
und die Subkulturen der Jugend)

LÁSZLÓ BOROS

Zusammenfassung

Die ostmitteleuropäischen Änderungen waren als Übergangsprozesse charakterisiert. Die Wandeln der verschiedenen Ländern hatten und haben viele Ähnlichkeiten, aber auch viele Unterschiede. Diese Studie analysiert beide. Doch das Zentralproblem des Werks ist die soziologische Bewertung der ungarischen Situation. Es gibt zwei wichtigsten Aspekte der letzten Jahrzehnten in Ungarn. Die erste ungarische Spezialität war die absolut spezielle ungarische "zweite Wirtschaft", die keine "Schattenwirtschaft" ist, weil sie nicht nur illegale, sondern auch legale und nicht regulierte Teile hatte. Das zweite wichtige Thema ist die Lage der Jugendlichen. Die politischen Einstellungen und einige Jugendsubkulturen wurden durch unseren Untersuchungen analysiert. Es gibt wesentliche Zusammenhänge zwischen den speziellen wirtschaftlichen Tendenzen und den charakteristischen ungarischen Jugendpositionen. Andererseits können wir auch die wirksamen Einflüsse der internationalen Prozesse sehr gut sehen.