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Homeless Families in the Netherlands: Intervention Policies and Practices

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Abstract

The demographics of the homeless population in many countries are currently shifting, and this cannot be explained by the different welfare systems to be found in these countries. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that the homelessness policies of some countries are converging, and we observe a combination of decentralisation, housing first, and a tailor-made, individualised approach. However, what is interesting is the question as to what extent these policies are based on a punitive dimension or on a justice dimension. This aspect is little discussed in the Netherlands where policies to combat homelessness are intended to put an end to public nuisance and to get the homeless off the street. Research into evicted families demonstrates that combining elements of (mild) coercion with efforts to solve homelessness leads to problems in at least three domains: the motivation of homeless families to accept help and support, the quality of life in the individualised approach, and the matter of registration. These problems need investigating, also from an international perspective.

Keywords: Homeless Families, Homeless Policy, Decentralisation, Public Nuisance, Punishment and Justice

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Introduction

Homeless policy has always been ambivalent. On the one hand, the aim is to support the homeless with their re-entry into society, and on the other hand, the aim is to combat their amoral lifestyle and curb the nuisance they cause, even if this only involves them being visible. The forms this ambivalence may take differ historically, and also vary with the characteristics of the homeless population. This article examines how this ambivalence has developed in the Netherlands, whilst bearing the international situation in mind. We present the outcomes of a study conducted in four cities in the Netherlands into their approach to curb the number of homeless families. We discuss these outcomes while considering the punitive or the just nature of these approaches, since there is very little evidence that this is currently a point of public debate in the Netherlands. It is interesting to reflect on this because we feel that our studies, without intending to do so, give rise to a more critical reflection on the effects of the Dutch policy on homelessness and on homeless families.

We take the following steps in our argumentation: first, we briefly outline the Dutch policy on homelessness, already characterised by a combination of a punitive and a social justice perspective. This is followed by a short summary of the study itself which provides the basis for the analysis. The outcomes of this study are then discussed against the background of the theoretical framework of punishment or justice.

Theoretical background: between justice and punishment

The demographics of the homeless population in many Western industrialized countries are shifting. Likewise, social policies on homelessness are also undergoing change, particularly since the financial and economic crises of the past few years. Both these trends are the subject of scholarly debate: is homelessness mainly caused by individual characteristics, or by structural factors, or both? Moreover, what are the implications for social policy if the causes of homelessness are mainly individual or mainly structural? The debate also pertains to the question of the particular societal conditions that influence the prevalence and magnitude of homelessness.

Several studies (Toro, 2007; Shinn, 2007, Minnery & Greenhalgh, 2007) have found increasing numbers of ethnic minorities, homeless families, women, youth and illegal immigrants among the homeless population in Europe and the US. There has therefore been a considerable shift away from the mostly single, alcohol-addicted males towards other groups with a variety of age, sex and ethnic descent, including families, which are, in fact, a special case. The root causes of this change are complex, and on the one hand have been sought in areas such as the declining demand for low-skilled jobs, the rise in the numbers of working poor, and increasing poverty levels. National housing policies and debt regulations for people who can no longer afford to pay their rent can make a difference. On the other hand, individual causes are also acknowledged, such as a propensity to take drugs, alcohol abuse, mental health problems or life-event histories. All these potential causes may or may not be related to structural conditions throughout Western countries.

It is therefore rather difficult to link the changing homeless populations to a welfare regime, conceived of as a typology of countries with more or less similar welfare arrangements (Esping Andersen, 1990): there is too much divergence among countries within the same welfare regime to uphold such an assertion (Benjaminsen et al., 2009). The same applies to the relationship between welfare regimes and housing policies. For instance, housing systems and policies appear to be rather different within the liberal welfare regime (see Stephens & Fitzpatrick, 2007) and produce different groups of homeless people: in the US the lower welfare provisions may hit more poor households, whereas in the UK, with its more elaborate welfare system, more socio-

psychologically vulnerable people may become homeless (Fitzpatrick & Christian, 2006). Because of this complex relationship between structural and individual determinants of homelessness, and how they are represented in social policy studies, varying emphases on one of these factors have been brought to the fore in order to analyse and understand the phenomenon. 'Orthodoxies' (Fitzpatrick & Christian, 2006) are however emerging, with the outcome that both individual and structural factors are now included in explanations of homelessness, though with different emphases in relation to policy considerations in different countries. What can be learned from this diverse picture is that country differences in this field are still significant, not only for the reasons mentioned above, but also because of the divergent definitions of homelessness, and because of the different ways countries organise their care institutions and provide assistance.

While these country differences do still exist, it is interesting to see that homeless policies have, to some extent, converged over the past decade. There is of course diversity, but a set of practices is emerging that focuses on the notion that homelessness is dynamic and involves much more than just 'houselessness'; it includes dealing with both socio-structural and individual processes. 'Housing first' seems to be a dominant strategy in both liberal and social democratic countries, with prevention and an individualised, tailor-made approach as objectives, and a greater responsibility for municipalities in the development of policy and the organisation of care facilities (Benjaminsen et al., 2009).

Housing first is the option to offer normal housing to homeless people as an initial step in helping them, irrespective of the nature of their problems, and not as the end of a care programme (Atherton & McNaughton Nicholls, 2008). Normal housing can be seen as either independent tenancy or a place in a supervised housing project. However, depending on the context in which this policy is implemented, this shift in policy can be interpreted either as a way of empowering homeless people or as a way of combating the nuisance they cause.

Illustrative is the debate as to whether the new policy is punitive, i.e. tighter control, or whether there is also room for a more social justice approach (Fitzpatrick & Jones, 2005, DeVerteuil et al., 2009). The punitive approach is seen as debasing the homeless person as an 'unproductive citizen', or as an 'anti-social' person, in need of correction and enforced support and who is denied rights to welfare provision. The general objective of the social justice approach is to put an end to the state of marginality and exclusion in which the homeless live. Therefore, this approach tends to defend the use of coercion only in the best interests of those concerned. For instance, there is a big difference between combating homelessness primarily as a means to control nuisance and anti-social behaviour, and as a means to help homeless people reintegrate in society. This debate can also be situated in the more extensive framework of urban space and policy (gentrification) (see e.g. Doherty et al., 2006, Murphy, 2009), or in the role of coercion in care (Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2008, Flint, 2009). Importantly, this debate actualises old themes on the role of the homeless either as the 'undeserving poor' who are morally to blame for their predicament, or as people who deserve care and support because they are marginalised as the consequence of an unhappy combination of social and personal events and characteristics (Rosenthal, 2000). Moreover, this debate also revives the ongoing discussion about individual or structural causes.

In this article we take this debate as our starting point to examine the extent to which these approaches may be combined, and to ascertain whether they are actually at variance with one another. Taking the Netherlands as a case, we analyse this question in order to unravel the intricacies of a mix of these approaches which will then enable us to advance an extension of the debate, from theoretical and practical points of view.

The above-mentioned developments have occurred in the past decade. In this context it is interesting to analyse homeless policies in the Netherlands, particularly in relation to homeless families, since they are part of the new demographics of the homeless population and are attracting more attention (see 3). This is appropriate since the Dutch policy has only been articulated at national and especially local levels (Christiaans et al., 2008) since about 2000. This transpired in a

context where a broader discussion on the importance of a more pro-active, outreach approach to marginalised groups, referred to as assertive outreach (*bemoeizorg*), has been an element in social work since the 1990s. Assertive outreach combines elements of 'soft coercion' or pressure with elements of care and support. It has become a forerunner of the homeless policy to both combat public nuisance and to provide support. We now examine the developments Dutch homeless policy has undergone.

Dutch policy on homelessness

Traditionally, the Dutch policy on homelessness is highly localised (in 1994 already 40 centre municipalities were responsible for providing shelter and care for homeless people), with the state funding the municipalities and the third sector. State funding has increased considerably from € 177 million in 2001 to over € 250 million in 2009. Of a total population of some 16.5 million, there are about 18,000 documented homeless people (last official estimate from 2009 (CBS, 2010), and roughly 77,000 people living in sheltered accommodation such as social lodgings, hostels, etc. (last estimate in 2002). About one third live in the four big cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht. The field is characterised by a division between care for the homeless, women's care, and the provision of public mental health care such as psychiatry and addiction treatment. The Social Support Act (WMO) has provided the legal framework for these activities since 2007. The Social Support Act is a broad law that covers the local administration of support for social cohesion, educational assistance for youngsters and their parents, disabled persons, voluntary care, etc. The municipalities' remit within this framework is to develop a concerted approach towards homelessness (Christiaans et al., 2008).

Over the past fifteen years the policy on homelessness has been increasingly dominated by the theme of public nuisance as a phenomenon, and the four big cities in particular have plans in place to get the homeless off the street, to render public space inaccessible to them, and to support the homeless through numerous different provisions. This culminated in an agreement between the government and the four big cities in the Netherlands in 2006 to tackle homelessness with a new Action Plan for Relief (Rijk, 2006). The aim of the plan was to improve the situation of the homeless population, and to reduce the public nuisance caused by homelessness. This plan was built on two pillars: an individualised tailored approach (by a central gateway) for clients and an inter-agency cooperation between all parties and institutions concerned. Homeless people (estimated in the four cities at 10,500 people, and another 11,000 vulnerable people at risk of homelessness) were to have an income, suitable accommodation, a care programme, and feasible forms of work. Concrete targets were set to reduce the number of evictions by 30% in 2008, and to put an end to homelessness following release from prison or leaving a care institution. Another target was to curtail public nuisance by 75% in 2013, measured by the number of convictions and reports of harassment. In 2010 the government and the four cities confirmed this plan by signing a covenant for the second phase, to end in early 2014. The aim of this second phase is to reduce the number of people at risk of homelessness, and to eradicate the small groups of people still sleeping rough. This plan is monitored annually (Maas & Planije, 2009, 2010), and the results are impressive, even though it may seem they have been revalued to some extent. After three years, a comprehensive approach and individualised programmes have been developed in each city, with a central gateway for participating in these programmes. Accommodation has been built, particularly in the form of 24-hour facilities and hostels, and housing corporations have made contingents of houses available. Agreements or covenants have been made between various partners such as housing corporations, care insurance companies, debt-assistance organisations, mental health and addiction agencies. Client registration is being developed, and central intake documents are universally used. In terms of the quantitative targets, almost 9750 clients have

been enrolled in an individual programme, evictions have been reduced by 19-49%, and public nuisance has diminished although the measurement of this was rather loosely organised. The Federation of Shelters (the Dutch national organisation that promotes the interests of the homeless) is similarly satisfied, and has given a critical but overall positive evaluation (Federatie Opvang, 2009). This implies that the association of combating nuisance and helping the homeless has become a legitimate and accepted policy, which is not further discussed.

The approach has been used as an example for the remaining 39 centre municipalities, and in 2008 they more or less copied this plan in the Urban Compasses (van Deth & van Bergen, 2009). According to the Compass, each centre municipality is to set up a central gateway and individual programmes, based on inter-agency cooperation between the partners concerned. While this is still being developed, an initial evaluation already pointed out weaknesses in putting the Compass into effect, such as the municipalities' administrative control, both internally and with partners (see Roche (2004) for comparable problems in the UK), support for professionals when developing new working methods, and actually achieving client participation (van Deth & van Bergen, 2009).

However, within a rather short period of time (5 years) the homeless care landscape has changed considerably, and has also seen significant changes in the homeless population: sleeping rough is almost a thing of the past, and former homeless people are now housed in supervised accommodation projects, live independently with supervision, or in dedicated hostels for drug addicts or alcoholics. They are off the streets, though their problems continue. We discuss the consequences of this situation below.

In addition to this picture, we cannot fail to mention the fact that a new group of homeless people has sprung up in the past few years: Eastern Europeans (initially from Poland, later from Romania, Bulgaria and the former Russian republics) who are entitled under EU legislation to stay in the Netherlands, but who, as non-citizens, officially fall outside the framework of care. Consequently, the problem that arises is whether these people should be summarily expelled from the country, or whether they should be treated with humane tolerance, bearing in mind the concomitant difficulties of language, long-term prospects and suchlike. However acute, these problems are beyond the scope of this paper, and we concentrate here on the developments in policy and care provision for Dutch homeless people. The Netherlands seems to fit in rather well with the international policy convergence described above: a decentralised approach with a significant role for municipalities, an emphasis on housing, the development of individualised programmes, and a higher level of prevention, are all hallmarks of the Dutch policy on homelessness. It remains to be seen whether the characteristics of a more punitive or a just approach can also be observed.

The studies on homeless families after eviction

Research questions

Within the framework of the newly-developed policies, as described in the previous section, more attention has now to be given to a new phenomenon, i.e. the supposed increase in the number of homeless families. In 2007 a care provider in the North of the country stated that the incidence of homeless families (i.e. parent(s) with children) applying for care provision following eviction was on the rise, and that the care facilities that were in place were insufficient in both number and quality. This report led to public outrage, the press had a field day, and questions were asked in Parliament. One of the factors that led to public concern was the fact that children are involved in the problem of family homelessness.

Because homeless people in the Netherlands are not registered centrally, there was no further information available on the matter of evictions and on the adequacy of care provision. The

Ministry of Health approached the Federation of Shelters to look into the matter. This Federation commissioned the authors of this article to conduct research into this matter. The first research question was to analyse the scope of the problem, that is how many families become homeless after eviction, and the second research question, meant to analyse in more detail the local policy on the matter, was what policy did the municipalities have for preventing and supporting homeless families? What kind of register did they have, and what figures did they have for evicted families? And how was the care for homeless families arranged in practice?

Method

The study comprises two parts. The first part (Kloppenburger et al, 2008) is an attempt to ascertain exactly how many families end up homeless after eviction. Figures on evictions were gathered from AEDES, the national federation of housing associations, the Federation of Shelters, the Association of Bailiffs, and a survey was held among the institutional members of the Federation of Shelters (about 90 organisations). The second part of the study (Kloppenburger et al, 2009) attempted to get more detailed information from four selected centre municipalities. We selected the municipalities on the following criteria: a high number of registered/estimated evicted families, a wide country spread, one of them being one of the country's big cities, and being in the initial stages of the problem. This led us to opt for Amsterdam, Leeuwarden, Oss and Utrecht. We concentrated on eviction by housing associations because figures from the private sector were not available. To find answers to our questions, we studied documents and websites from the four municipalities, and interviewed professionals from the municipality (including municipal healthcare), institutions for homeless care, housing corporations and health services. A total of twenty-eight people were interviewed as follows: Amsterdam 9, Utrecht 6, Leeuwarden 7, and Oss 6. Each interview was recorded and analysed in line with the research questions.

Results

The first study showed that national eviction numbers vary: in 2006 lower than in 2005, but in 2007 some 14% higher than in 2006. However, the information did not pertain to families, but to households whose composition may vary greatly. In fact, nothing about evicted families could be concluded on the basis of these figures. The survey provided very little information because most institutions did not have a register, and they could only give estimates (only 3 of the 24 responding institutions had a register of homeless families). Based on the estimates, a small rise in the number of evicted families could be discerned, but the relief facilities were generally satisfactory. Most care institutions appeared to cooperate with other agencies, such as housing corporations, in order to avert evictions. The general conclusion of this first study was that the existing quantitative material did not corroborate the alarming belief that the number of family evictions was on the rise.

The results of the second study show that none of the four municipalities has any form of central registration. Institutions for homeless care, healthcare services or housing associations do have registration systems, but they are not standardised so the data are not exchangeable. Moreover, there is very little information, if any, about families and family evictions. Only Utrecht had a central system recently been brought into use, but it has still to be filled with data. So it is difficult to get any answers to all the questions regarding family evictions. In Amsterdam and Utrecht the number of evictions would seem to have decreased, but what is not known is whether this also applies to families. Leeuwarden and Oss have seen the number of entries for homeless families grow, but this has more to do with complex problems of domestic violence or teenage parenthood than with evictions.

Each municipality has developed an explicit policy on homelessness, which includes covenants or other agreements with housing corporations to avert evictions. Housing corporations usually take action after two months of rent arrears in order to prevent huge debts accruing and to collect as much rent as possible. But they report this to a central point so that social workers can start outreach interventions to offer support and redress the situation.

Each city has these kinds of projects in place, and they have brought to light that rent arrears actually conceal numerous social and individual problems. However, the fact that these projects are in place does not mean that evictions are a thing of the past: housing corporations always evict in subletting cases (illegal housing), hemp growing, or serious public nuisance.

There is a general impression that the past few years have seen a shift from women's care to homeless care, which means that homeless care is put under serious pressure. It is not clear whether this shift is the result of capacity problems in women's care or whether the distinction between target groups is no longer adequate. There are waiting lists for homeless families in all municipalities, although emergency care is generally satisfactory. The waiting list pertains to routine intake in a facility. Families sometimes disappear from a waiting list and remain beyond the reach of care facilities, or families turn down an offer of support. It is also possible that there is a shortage of suitable housing for these families once their reintegration programme has been completed because housing corporations also have to provide housing for other groups of people.

In line with the Action Plan for Relief and the dissemination of this plan in Urban Compasses, each municipality has developed forms of inter-agency cooperation in which individual programmes, also for families, can be organised. The aim of these family programmes is to provide support with debt management, and to give coaching with social and psychological problems, thereby making it possible once again for those involved to keep their current accommodation or to be offered a new home. These programmes may last anything between six months and two years. This approach is coercive in the sense that families who do not accept this offer of help and support risk the execution of the eviction, with all the attendant consequences of further debt and maybe even of child protection measures.

Inter-agency cooperation can be more formalised as it is in Utrecht and Amsterdam, or more informal as it is in Leeuwarden and Oss. It is important to remark that cooperation works best when the partners involved know each other from the 'shop floor' and can work together to find practical solutions. Inter-agency cooperation differs between the four municipalities as a result of local specificities such as population size, social policy history, financing, and administrative frameworks. Inter-agency cooperation is sometimes supplemented by youth care services, or specific care for multi-problem families. Generally speaking there are problems with the administrative control of what is actually happening: it is not always clear who is in charge, and the objectives do not necessarily always coincide. This may lead to family interventions being counteractive.

Discussion

Our research does, of course, have its limitations: we did not speak with homeless families themselves, but concentrated on the policy and professional side of the problem. We did not succeed in gathering satisfactory data on the eviction of families because there is no general registration system, and our own survey was unable to compensate for this, even though the response rate was higher than in a previous study (about 37.5% compared to an earlier 33% in 2004). However, we were able to see how Dutch municipalities deal with the homeless population, which has grown in the past two decades, and whose demographics have changed e.g. there are currently more families involved. The local policies can be summarised as follows: outreach projects, which also involve an element of coercion, are in place to support at-risk families, but

there are still registration problems which make it difficult to know exactly how serious the problem of eviction of families actually is. Family programmes have been developed by way of inter-agency cooperation. This cooperation functions rather well, and informal contacts would seem to be particularly effective. However, administrative control of inter-agency cooperation constitutes a problem, and more coordination between initiatives is required. The capacity of care facilities for families is inadequate: there are waiting lists, and families sometimes simply disappear from sight. And there seems to be a shift away from women's care towards homeless care. The overall picture is of an outreach approach, with elements of pressure or coercion in the form of sanctions if an offer of help is not accepted.

Reflection on punishment or justice

One of the most fascinating elements in the Dutch debate on the homeless policy is the consensus on its points of departure: to combat homelessness by providing help and housing, and to combat public nuisance by either driving the homeless from the public space or by implementing stricter police regulation (Federatie Opvang, 2009). It could be said that the justice approach and the punitive approach coexist side by side, but there is hardly any debate at all in policy circles about the feasibility or advisability of this coexistence. There is sometimes mention of criminalisation effects because of the focus on public security, but then this is accepted as a corollary of the positive side: improved coordination and care cooperation and the efforts to improve the quality of life of the homeless (Zuidam & Pols, 2007). The Federation of Shelters' evaluation of the Action Plan for Relief makes some critical comments about the lack of a nuisance analysis and its link to homelessness, and about the threat of more repression should the objectives of the Plan not be met. Coercion and pressure are even seen to hamper professionals in their efforts to motivate clients to take part in individual programmes (Federatie Opvang, 2009, p. 54, p. 60). But in spite of these remarks there is generally a need for more critical reflection on what combining support and combat against nuisance actually entails.

This may have something to do with the fact that the forerunner to this policy can be found in debates in the welfare sector about the use of coercion and pressure to force or compel marginalised people into accepting help and support. In the Netherlands, this is referred to as 'assertive outreach' (Henselmans, 1993, Kuypers & van der Lans, 1994). It is beyond the scope of this article to present this debate in full, but this element of force has gradually become an integral part of the work of social and community professionals and of mental health and addiction care professionals. That is to say, while paternalism and interference were still seen in the 1980s as an attack on individual freedom, the idea of assertive outreach emerged in the 1990s as a way of not giving up on people in need, of trying to act on behalf of the marginalised. So the question was no longer about not interfering, but about how to set about it. However, public opinion and policies regarding marginalised people became harder and more exclusionary in the 1990s. In this context, assertive outreach gradually became a method not only used by social workers but also legally applied to sanction the undesirable behaviour of marginalised people. And it seems that this mix has been seriously missing from the professional debate on homelessness. The professionals feel that there is no strict and overall application of coercion, but it has been accepted as a pragmatic means to deal with those people who avoid care. Coercion is seen as a last resort to intervene in life situations where the client is not actually acting in his own best interests. How the effects of coercion in a more judicial and public order context are to be understood, e.g. in an individual approach, has however not been expanded upon, and the extent to which means and ends are at variance with each other remains obscure (Fitzpatrick & Jones, 2005).

The first point that our case studies revealed is that this principle of coercion or pressure is viewed as a normal element in the outreach approach: in the preventive activities of the four cities, the offer of support is presented against the sanction of losing your home. This is not

stated explicitly as such, but by being included as having rent arrears in a registration system that provides outreach support, it is clear that support is only given following an agreement to deal with the reasons behind being in arrears e.g. debt, family problems, etc. There are also local differences in how sanctions are applied: in Oss, for instance, the municipality particularly looked at the income position of families in order to uncover fraudulent practices. In our study we discovered that families escape from this system not only by shying away from help, but also by leaving the area. This fact may be indicative of a paradoxical effect of implicit enforcement: instead of seeing it as an opening, families feel threatened by the prospect of interference and move away from the scene. In this sense the combination of coercion and attempts to motivate clients does not appear to work, and is in need of further analysis by professionals in the field.

A second aspect of combining the two goals of providing help and combating nuisance is the individualised method of working and the essential inter-agency cooperation to achieve this. When concentrating on the homeless individual or family, it is their particular characteristics that need to be addressed and not poverty, unemployment, housing, etc. The Action Plan for Relief is a vast project with targets and procedures to ensure that the homeless subject is treated in line with eight defined life domains such as health, income, daily activities, etc., that are dealt with in an 8-step model running from intake to end of treatment (Movisie, 2008). However, what is far from clear is the extent to which the homeless actually want intervention in these domains. Similarly, the extent to which the concerted efforts of the cooperating agencies do indeed contribute to successful reintegration of the homeless, where possible, is also unclear.

The annual monitoring of the Plan generally focuses on whether targets have been achieved or not. In the individual programmes, each of the four municipalities sets targets for numbers and results in terms of a stable mix: suitable housing, income, and care over a three-month period. Of the potential 10,500 homeless people, the estimates are that, in 2009, 9,750 people were taking part in a programme, and about 5,900 people have achieved a stable mix (Maas & Planje, 2010). This indicates that targets have been achieved, but unfortunately nothing is known about the effects on the individual client or about the dynamics behind the figures (how many new homeless people have been reported, how many are returning clients, what are the long-term effects, etc.). The problem is that one of the cornerstones of the plan, i.e. the individualised programme, is eventually nothing more than a number without there being any understanding of how it works in practice. If, for instance, the stable mix indicates the number of people off the street and now living in hostels or protected housing, it is only saying that the goal of decreasing the number of homeless people on the streets has been achieved, but it says nothing about the quality of life of these people. Homelessness might have become less visible and less of a nuisance, but the problems of the homeless in terms of participating in society may still be the same.

Our case studies showed that evicted families are offered support and guidance in programmes that may last for two years. Sometimes they manage to keep their home, and in other cases there may be an offer of a new home under certain conditions of control and guidance. It was very difficult to obtain an estimate of the success rate of these kinds of programmes as far as their long-term effects are concerned. We did hear that in some cases these programmes may fail, or families withdraw from them. We do not know what then happens to these families. We also saw that the influx of families into homeless care was not really warranted because the problems in some families were of a different nature (domestic violence, teenage motherhood). This indicates the need to analyse exactly what goes on within the programmes, how the intake and treatment processes are organised, how cooperation between organisations is administered, and how society is involved as a responsible partner in finding a solution to homelessness.

The third point we would like to discuss is the matter of registration in the context of justice and punishment. This is generally rather extraordinary: although policymakers have been saying, for some twenty years, that having information about numbers and profiles of homeless people, as well as about care provision is essential, this information is still not available.

In the early 2000s, national policy required registration systems to be set up, but this requirement was abandoned in 2005 (Christiaans et al., 2008), and registration has been taken up as a means to account for budgetary flows. In the meantime, several registration systems have been developed, both nationally and locally, but these systems are not attuned to each other. In fact, national and local figures are simply not available, and the call for registration continues.

We also concluded from our case studies that a national registration system is desirable. However, we added that registration can be used for different goals: policymakers need registration on a higher level of aggregation to know the size of the target groups, the number of available facilities, etc. However, professionals may require different data on the programmes or on cooperation with partners. These goals may not be compatible, and may even have different effects in the field. It is possible, for instance, that a nationwide registration system may actually deter homeless people: once in the system, a person does not easily get out of it, and the data may stigmatise those in the system, or even worse, for the rest of their lives. This may also be the case with more locally developed systems whose intention is to monitor the homeless on their programmes. Neither is it out of the question that registration data could be used to promote a public safety campaign of more control and coercion because the targets and target groups would be clearly defined. So the matter of registration is far from being innocuous or purely technical in nature, and the conditions under which registration is used must be carefully determined.

This discussion on some of the results in the theoretical framework of punitive control or justice attempted to show the gaps in the Dutch debate on homelessness, in which the coexistence of both these principles is too readily espoused. In our own case studies we found worrying or even contradictory effects of coercion and control on three levels. The first is the adverse effect of coercion on the one hand, and the motivating effect for accepting help on the other. A consequence may be that families shy away from help, and that new forms of exclusion result. The second pertains to the workings of individualised programmes as opposed to the targets of getting people off the streets. One effect might be that homeless people are less visible because they have housing, but that the quality of their lives has barely improved at all: they have simply got housing and nothing else. The third has to do with the matter of registration, which can be set up and used in quite different ways depending on the goals of control or support. An undesirable consequence of registration may be that data are gathered for policy goals such as targeting.

It is therefore important that not only the goals and interventions of policies be analysed, but also the way the problem is 'framed' (Goffman, 1974). In our case, the framing of homelessness as something to be solved in terms of 'getting the homeless off the street' combined with combating nuisance may indicate a more control-oriented perspective rather than a justice approach. This may be more the case when housing is offered with socio-psychological care as the dominant support (as is the case in the Netherlands), ignoring other aspects of societal insertion such as work, income and social networks.

We do not want to imply that Dutch policies on homelessness are a fine example of coercion and control. What we do mean is that the mix of control and justice is a very precarious one, and that it is difficult to develop ways of working in which forms of control or pressure are really in the best interests of the homeless, as evidenced by the long-term effects of professional support and intervention. We have indicated some elements that point to the risks of an implicit consensus on the coexistence of both control and justice. We hope that our discussion of the case studies from this viewpoint will contribute to its theoretical and practical development. As such it may also inspire the necessary debate amongst professionals and policymakers about the sustainability of the mix of both approaches.

Conclusion

This article places the case of the Dutch policy on homelessness in an international context where changes in the demographics of the homeless population and in homelessness policy have taken place. It was not clear whether changes in the homeless population were related to the different types of welfare states, but remarkably some convergent trends in policy between countries could be detected: strategies such as housing first and an emphasis on a decentralised local approach are increasingly evident. But this convergence also seems to be linked to the question as to whether the policy on homelessness is based more on a public security perspective and therefore on a more coercive approach, or on a justice perspective where the interests of the homeless are taken care of in an all-encompassing way. As we have analysed in our case studies, the possible mix of both these perspectives can be contested. We have seen that the debate on these perspectives is practically non-existent in the Netherlands, and we have attempted to analyse our own studies on (the prevention of) homeless families within this framework.

In order to make this analysis more solid we offered an overview of the developments in the Dutch policy on homelessness, and we presented the results of our studies. We then placed these results in the punishment and/or justice context, and found indications on three levels that the mix of coercion and justice is not self-evident and may even lead to new forms of exclusion because of the imprudent use of coercion and control: homeless families disappear from sight because they withdraw from implicit coercion or from support and guidance programmes. Figures in terms of targets take no notice of the mechanisms of what works for whom and leave quality of life of the homeless out of the picture. The matter of registration, even when used as a tool for professionals, also seems to be caught between the contradictory effects of data gathering for policy purposes or professional support. Therefore, our analysis showed that it is necessary to take up the debate in order to clarify the possible contaminating consequences of a poorly considered acceptance of the mix.

In addition to this conclusion, we would also like to point out a corollary of this mix. At the start of this article we mentioned a new orthodoxy (Fitzpatrick & Christian, 2006) in the theory about homelessness: individual *and* structural factors should be considered, and this should imply that both factors are also dealt with in the field of policy and professional interventions. We have however seen in the Dutch case that there has been an implicit shift towards individual factors, also when dealing with homeless families. The emphasis on individual programmes and on inter-agency cooperation to make this effective has produced an approach that deals with certain characteristics of the homeless and is not directed at the potential factors such as unemployment, the housing market, education or at the societal discourse on the nature of homelessness. The stress on the public security aspect of the problems of homeless people may reinforce this more individualistic approach, in which 'blaming the victim' or putting the homeless away may become more dominant than the dimension of looking to remediate or even solve homelessness. It would be interesting to see if these developments are also to be found in other countries, if the mix between punishment and justice is evolving along different or convergent lines, depending on how the welfare states are set up, particularly in times of financial crisis. Further research into the complexities of this policy would be a welcome supplement to the theoretical approach of the new orthodoxy.

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The Secrets of Koberwitz: The Diffusion of Rudolf Steiner's Agriculture Course and the Founding of Biodynamic Agriculture

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Abstract

Rudolf Steiner presented his Agriculture Course to a group of 111, farmers and others, at Koberwitz (Kobierzyce, Poland) in 1924. Steiner spoke of an agriculture to 'heal the earth' and he laid the philosophical and practical underpinnings for such a differentiated agriculture. Biodynamic agriculture is now practiced internationally as a specialist form of organic agriculture. The path from proposal to experimentation, to formalization, to implementation and promulgation played out over a decade and a half following the Course and in the absence of its progenitor. Archival material pertaining to the dissemination of the early printed editions of 'The Agriculture Course' reveals that within six years of the Course there was a team of more than 400 individuals of the Agricultural Experimental Circle (AEC), each signed a confidentiality agreement, and located throughout continental Europe, and also in Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and USA. Membership expanded to over 1000 AEC members (with a lower bound estimate of 1144 members) who were committed to working collectively towards an evidence based, new and alternative agriculture, 'for all farmers', which was to be developed into a 'suitable for publication' form. That publication milestone was realized in 1938 with the release of Ehrenfried Pfeiffer's 'Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening' which was published simultaneously in at least five languages: Dutch, English, French, German and Italian.

Keywords: *Organic Farming, Anthroposophy, Goetheanum, Agricultural Experimental Circle (AEC), Count Carl Keyserlingk, Kobierzyce, Poland, Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening, Ehrenfried Pfeiffer.*

Introduction

By the time Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) was cajoled into presenting the Agriculture Course, the Austrian mystic and philosopher was well experienced in planting an 'impulse', the seeds of an idea, and witnessing the ensuing manifestation. Emil Molt, for example, had approached Steiner about the education of children. This approach led to the founding in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1919, of the first Waldorf School. Molt took responsibility for the management and financing of the project and he purchased a large restaurant on the city escarpment with views out over the city of Stuttgart to house this new visionary school (Murphy, 1991). Steiner laid the philosophical underpinnings and set the pedagogic guidelines, and he personally trained the teachers, and then, with this demonstration school established, he campaigned tirelessly to promulgate this project. Despite not speaking English, Steiner took the Waldorf 'mission' to Britain, introducing the concept initially and briefly to an Anglo audience at Stratford on Avon in 1922, and then more

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extensively, at a two weeks conference for educators, The Oxford Conference on Spiritual Values in Education and Social Life, in the summer of 1922 (Paull, 2011b). He then presented a Waldorf education summer school at Ilkley in Yorkshire (Steiner, 1928, 1954) and further training for teachers at Penmaenmawr, Wales, in 1923, and at Torquay, Devon, in 1924 (Villeneuve, 2004). These exertions culminated in the founding of the first Anglo Waldorf school in 1925.

Steiner's Agriculture Course comprised just eight lectures presented over a ten day period in the summer of 1924, 7 to 16 June, at the small village of Koberwitz, Silesia (now Kobierzyce, Poland) (Steiner, 1924e). In contrast to Steiner's education project, where there was a tangible proof-of-concept, together with some years of intense personal advocacy and evangelism by Steiner himself, the future of the fledgling agriculture project was entirely dependent on the vitality imparted at the Agriculture Course. This was because Steiner withdrew from public life entirely just months after the Koberwitz course; as of 28 September 1924 he was no longer seen in public, and, after a period of illness, he died on 30 March 1925 (Collison, 1925; Whitehead, 2010). So the future of the Agriculture Course, if it were to have a future, relied to the greatest extent on the fecundity of the ideas presented and the developmental infrastructure that had been put in place at the time of the Course.

Count Carl Keyserlingk was an estate manager of 7,500 hectares (18,500 acres) at Koberwitz, and he was an anthroposophist (Steiner, 1924b). He managed 18 farms, comprising 82 officials, and more than 1000 field workers (von Keyserlingk, 1999). Keyserlingk was keen for Steiner to present a course for farmers. There was some disquiet amongst farmers in the rapid change in agricultural practices in the wake of the supply of cheap synthetic nitrogenous fertilizer flowing from the adoption of the Haber-Bosch process for the 'fixing' of gaseous nitrogen which was first demonstrated in 1909 and which was then rapidly industrialized on a grand scale for explosives, and after WWI, for fertilizer (Smil, 2001). Frustrated at the delay in Steiner taking up his invitation to set a date to run a course, Keyserlingk sent his nephew to the Goetheanum, the headquarters of Steiner's Anthroposophy movement, in Dornach, Switzerland, with instructions not to come back until a date had been agreed.

Ehrenfried Pfeiffer's account relates that: "Count Keyserlingk set to work in dead earnest to persuade Dr. Steiner to give an agricultural course. As Dr. Steiner was already overwhelmed with work, tours and lectures, he put off his decision from week to week. The undaunted Count then despatched his nephew to Dornach, with orders to camp on Dr. Steiner's doorstep and refuse to leave without a definite commitment for the course. This was finally given." (1958, pp.119-120).

Keyserlingk was the driving force behind the agriculture course. He was described by Vreede as "one to whom farming itself was a priestly office" (Vreede, 1929, p.38). According to Meyer (1929, p.29), "Count Keyserlingk had realised the dire need for a complete revival of cultural methods".

Steiner described his Agriculture Course as: "A course of lectures containing what there is to be said about agriculture from an anthroposophical point of view" (Steiner, 1924e, p.9). The programme to take the ideas forward was set in place at Koberwitz with the appointment of 'brand champions' (Carl Keyserlingk & Ernst Stegemann), the recruitment of a distributed network of developers (the Agricultural Experimental Circle), the appointment of a central clearing house (the Natural Science Section, Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland), a confidentiality agreement set in place for participants in the development stage (Table 3), and a planned public release after testing and development. As it turned out, this was a recipe for success.

Steiner stated that "the contents of these lectures were to serve, in the first place, as working material for the Association of farmers which had just been founded in the Anthroposophical Society" (1924d, p.17). Steiner explained that what he spoke of were hints towards a new agriculture and that the Course contents should, for the time being, be kept confidential: "the lectures should be primarily considered as hints, which for the present should not be spoken of outside this circle, but looked upon as the foundation for experiments and thus gradually brought into a form suitable for publication" (1924e, p.10).

Steiner expressed some clear ideas as to how to progress the course content. He stressed the importance of practical demonstrations: “As to the farmers - well, if they hear of these things from a fellow-farmer, they will say, “What a pity he has suddenly gone crazy!” ... But eventually when he sees a really good result, he will not feel a very easy conscience in rejecting it outright” (Steiner, 1929, lecture VIII, p.19). He empowered the Agricultural Experimental Circle (AEC): “enhance it and develop it by actual experiments and tests. The farmers’ society - the “Experimental Circle” that has been formed - will fix the point of time when in its judgment the tests and experiments are far enough advanced to allow these things to be published” (Steiner, 1929, lecture VIII, p.19). He stressed the importance of confidentiality: “No kind of communication was to be made about the contents of the Course until such time as the members of the Association felt impelled to speak out of the results of their own experimental work” (Steiner, 1924d, p.17).

It was critical that a project development plan was set in place at Koberwitz for two reasons, firstly, because the Agriculture Course was never repeated (unlike Waldorf education sessions which were repeatedly championed through summer schools and lecture series at diverse locations, in contrast Steiner did not return to the topic of agriculture) and, secondly, although up to this point Steiner had engaged apparently indefatigably in a comprehensive schedule of travelling and lecturing, he was seriously unwell, and his public life and life itself were drawing to a close. The continuing vitality of Steiner’s agricultural ‘impulse’ was dependent on Steiner successfully passing the baton to others.

The AEC began with 60 members of the Koberwitz Course (out of the course’s total enrolment of 111), with Ernst Stegemann and Carl Keyserlingk appointed by Steiner as chairmen (Steiner, 1924a). Steiner’s injunction had been to develop the Course into a form suitable for publication, and finally, in 1938, Ehrenfried Pfeiffer of the Natural Science Section of the Goetheanum at Dornach, published *Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening* which appeared simultaneously in at least five languages: Dutch, English, French, German, and Italian (1938a, 1938b, 1938c, 1938d, 1938e).

Biodynamic agriculture is now practiced in 47 countries (Demeter, 2011) and, while it is nested within the broader organic agriculture movement, it has been at the forefront of organic farming developments, including, for example, the participation in founding the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) (Paull, 2010), and taking one of the earliest stances against synthetic nanomaterials by excluding them from Demeter’s biodynamic food and agriculture standards (Paull, 2011a).

By 1929, the Natural Science Section of the Goetheanum reported the positive news that the work of translating Steiner’s ‘hints’ was by then a global enterprise: “Dr. Steiner’s new methods for Agriculture have been investigated and applied on a practical and on an experimental basis. The Experimental Circle now has its stations in most countries of Europe, as well as in Asia, Australia, New Zealand, America and Africa. Agricultural Conferences have been arranged in Dornach and elsewhere” (Steffen, Steiner, Wegman, Vreede & Wachsmuth, 1929, p.19).

The present study examines the early diffusion of Steiner’s Agriculture Course. The claim by Steffen et al. those five years on from the Koberwitz course the AEC was a global phenomenon is rather surprising given that all of the attendees at the Koberwitz course were from continental Europe. The present study examines evidence from the AEC non-disclosure agreements, and examines this claim of the early diffusion and internationalization of the work of the anthroposophical agricultural enterprise.

Methods

The early copies of *The Agriculture Course* were issued by the Goetheanum, copies were inscribed with the name of the recipient and numbered, and each recipient signed a confidentiality agreement. The present author had access to the archival material held in the Goetheanum, *Dokumentation am Goetheanum Bibliothek Kunstsammlung Archiv*, at Dornach, Switzerland, and the present account relies on manuscript material held in that archive.

Results

The first published edition of the Agriculture Course was in German, bound in green boards, and is undated. It is generally attributed as a 1925 publication, as, for example, in the catalogue of the Goetheanum library and in recent German language editions. The present research establishes that the first copies were issued in 1924, beginning from 19 November (for copies numbered #9, 10, 11 and 12, which are the earliest AEC agreements that were located).

For the German first edition of *Landwirtschaftlicher Kursus*, the copy #432, issued on 24 Dec 1930 (Christmas eve), is recorded on the final AEC agreement sighted, and is plausibly the final issue of this edition given that the second edition bears the imprint date '1929'. Of the 432 copies presumed issued, most of the AEC agreements have survived, however 91 numbers in the sequence (#1 to #432) are unaccounted for, while approximately 50 are accounted for more than once and it is not always clear from the AEC agreements whether access was extended to a further individual or the book was relinquished and reissued. The AEC agreements present a 'Who's Who' of early influential anthroposophists and advocates of biodynamics including: #10 to Elizabeth Vreede; #12 to Ehrenfried Pfeiffer; #17 to Lilly Kolisko; #18 to Eugene Kolisko; #205 to Hans Heinz; and #293 to Otto Eckstein.

Of the 432 copies, the overwhelming majority were destined for continental Europe addresses, including Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and Switzerland. At least nine went to Anglo addresses, including Britain (N=6: #193 to Maurice Wood; #206 to Dr Loushka2; #232 to Eleanor Merry; #315 to Margaret Cross; #327 to Mr H Y & Mabel Heywood-Smith; #354 to George Kaufmann), USA (N=2: #196 to Ralph Courtney; #285 to Gladys Barnett) and Canada (N=1: #287 to Michael Schuster). None of the 432 German first editions were recorded to addresses in Australia, New Zealand, Africa, or Asia.

The first English translation of the Agriculture Course bears the date '1929'; however, the earliest issue date was 1928. Only 11 AEC agreements were sighted for the English edition, the first being #1E issued on 9 August 1928 and the final numbered #17E issued on 15 October 1930 (Table 1). Beyond copy #17E, no records were sighted. The 11 English AEC agreements reveal that copies went to New Zealand (N=4), Australia (N=2), England (N=2), South Africa (N=2), and USA (N=1) (Table 1). There is a single copy of the first English-language edition held in the Goetheanum library and it is numbered 'E26'; however, that inscription has been crossed out and replaced by 'E46' (the 'E' appears as a prefix). A further copy is held in the library of the Bio-Dynamic Agriculture Association (BDAA) at Stroud, UK, numbered '118' (and lacking 'E' as either a prefix or suffix).

² Legibility unclear.

Table 1: *Recipients of the first English edition of 'The Agriculture Course' (*legibility unclear).*

Issue #	Recipient	Destination	Date	Via Kaufmann
01E	Wood, E Maurice	UK	09/08/1928	Yes
02E				
03E	Sophia*, Vera V	South Africa	04/10/1928	Yes
04E				
05E				
06E				
07E	Scott, Mrs Lucy Johnstone Scott	South Africa	09/08/1929	No
08E				
09E	Stolting, Elise	USA	07/04/1929	No
10E	Jones, Clarence Harper	NZ	28/09/1930	Yes
11E	Pease, Marna	UK	26/04/1929	No
12E	Crompton-Smith, Bernard	NZ	15/02/1930	Yes
13E				
14E	McDowell, C	Australia	23/07/1929	No
15E	Wakefield, George Bolland	New Zealand	24/07/1930	Yes
16E	Coe, James	NZ	27/07/1930	No
17E	Genoni, Emilio	Australia	15/10/1930	Yes

The first English translation was issued to Maurice Wood. His Huby Farm in Yorkshire, according to Griffiths (2010, p.31), was “Britain’s first biodynamic farm in 1928” and Kaufmann translated the Agriculture Course at his farm. The translation is by George Kaufmann and, although he had not attended the Koberwitz course, he was a gifted linguist well experienced in rendering Steiner’s lectures into English, including the lectures by Steiner at the Oxford Conference of 1922 (Paull, 2011b). During WWII Kaufmann adopted his mother’s maiden name and was thereafter known as ‘George Adams’, so post WWII editions of his translation state the translator as ‘George Adams’. Although he was born in Mariampol (now in Lithuania), Adams’ parents had moved there from Australia and later moved to Britain (Whicher, 1977). Some of the recipients of *The Agriculture Course* acknowledged receiving their copy *via* Kaufmann (Table 1; Table 2). Griffiths appears to be mistaken in putting the date of the English version of the Agriculture Course as 1930 which is odd since the publication is itself dated ‘1929’, and the present research reveals that the earliest copies were, in fact, issued in 1928 (Table 1).

Table 2: *Acknowledgment for ‘The Agriculture Course’ #1E.*

AEC Acknowledgment to the Natural Science Section, Goetheanum
<p>1E</p> <p>To the Natural Science Section at the Goetheanum Dornach near Basle, Switzerland:</p> <p>I hereby acknowledge receipt, from Mr George Kaufmann (Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain, 46 Gloucester Place, London W.1.) of Copy No. 1E of the English Translation of Dr. Rudolf Steiner’s Agriculture Course (Koberwitz, June 1924)*.</p> <p>I accept it on loan for my own personal use, on the identical conditions which I have already undertaken to observe with regard to Copy No. 193 of the German edition of the Course, and which I hereby affirm.</p> <p>In the event of my death I hereby lay upon my relatives, executors and heirs the strict injunction to respect these undertakings and to return the aforesaid copy No. 1E of the English Translation of the Agriculture Course immediately and free of charge to the Natural Science Section at the Goetheanum, Dornach near Basle, Switzerland</p> <p>Signature E Maurice Wood Sleights Farm Huby Nr Leeds Aug 9 1928</p> <p>*Lectures 1-8 in typewritten form, bound in four quarto volumes</p> <p>Signature E Maurice Wood Sleights Farm Huby Nr Leeds June 6th 1928</p>

The statement made by Steffen et al. (1929) that the Agricultural Experimental Circle was active in Australia, New Zealand, America and Africa is confirmed by the present study (Table 1). For each of the 11 AEC agreements the typewritten *pro forma* paperwork bears the handwritten inserted data: (a) copy number; (b) name and address of the recipient; and (c) by whom and where the agricultural experiments were to be conducted (Table 3). No evidence was located to substantiate the further claim by Steffen et al. (1929) that the AEC was active in Asia.

The record of the issuance of the first English translation of *The Agriculture Course* is spotty, and even in the short run 1E to 17E there are six copies unaccounted for (Table 1). The present study accounted for a total of 13 copies (11 by the AEC agreements and two by the actual copies). The copy in the BDAA library suggests, if we take it that numbering was continuous and consecutive, that there were at least 118 copies issued of the first English language edition of *The Agriculture Course*. A conclusion that there were at least 118 English copies remains somewhat speculative.

The first English edition of *The Agriculture Course* was a translation of the second German edition of *Landwirtschaftlicher Kursus* (red cover). The issue of the second German edition continued the practice of numbering the copy and inscribing the recipient’s name on the title page. AEC agreements for the second German edition were not sighted for the present study and the number issued is not known. Copy #1026 of *Landwirtschaftlicher Kursus* issued to a Netherlands recipient (author’s collection) places an arguable lower bound on AEC members at 1026. If the English copy #118 of *The Agriculture Course* is taken as an arguable lower bound for Anglo AEC members, then taken together with the Germanic AEC members, then a plausible total lower bound on the combined AEC membership is 1144 (1026 +118). This total may be taken as provisional until further and later numbered issues of the *Landwirtschaftlicher Kursus* and *The Agriculture Course* and/or other records appear.

Table 3: *Agricultural Experimental Circle (AEC) pro forma non-disclosure agreement.*

Agricultural Experimental Circle (AEC) Non-disclosure Agreement
<p>To the Natural Science Section at the Goetheanum Dornach near Basle, Switzerland:</p> <p>I, ... <i>Edward Maurice Wood</i>...</p> <p>Hereby acknowledge the receipt of copy No. 193 of the Reprint of the Agricultural Course (sic), given by Dr. Rudolf Steiner 7th - 16th June, at Koberwitz near Breslau.</p> <p>I accept it on loan for my own personal use in carrying out experiments undertaken by ... <i>me</i>... within the Agricultural Experimental Circle of the Anthroposophical Society, at the experimental station at ... <i>Huby near Leeds</i>...</p> <p>Moreover I hereby undertake to preserve the strictest secrecy in all quarters as to the content of the aforesaid Lecture-course. I will conduct the experiments in such a way as to exclude all possibility of imitation; and I undertake to lay the same obligations of silence on any of my fellow workers. Moreover I undertake to burn after use any extracts or notes which I may make from the aforesaid Lecture-Course.</p> <p>I recognise that only the executive of the Goetheanum at Dornach near Bale (sic), or somebody especially empowered by them for the purpose, can relieve me of these undertakings.</p> <p>In the event of my leaving the Agricultural Experimental Circle or the Anthroposophical Society itself, I undertake to return the aforesaid reprint immediately and free of charge.</p> <p>In the event of my death I hereby lay upon my relatives, executors and heirs the strict injunction to respect the above undertakings and to return the aforesaid copy No. 193 of the Reprint of the Agricultural sic Course immediately and free of charge to the Natural Science Section at the Goetheanum, Dornach near Basle, Switzerland</p> <p>Signature <i>E Maurice Wood</i> <i>Sleights Farm</i> <i>Huby Nr Leeds June 6th 1928</i></p>

Caution needs to be exercised in summing these figures to arrive at tally of AEC participants because of: (a) omissions: it cannot be confirmed that all numbers in a sequence were in fact ever issued (although it is a plausible surmise) (b) duplications: some numbers were issued in several names, sometimes simultaneously (e.g. #327) and some numbers were reissued once or several times (e.g. #116 and #168), and (3) duplicated recipients: at least one person received copies in both German and English (Maurice Wood received #193 of the German edition and #1E of the English edition; Table 2).

Conclusions and Discussion

How to measure success? Steiner is quoted as stating that: “The most important thing is to make the benefits of our agricultural preparations available to the largest possible areas over the entire earth, so that the earth may be healed and the nutritive quality of its produce improved in every respect. That should be our first objective.” (in Pfeiffer, 1958, p.120). Such a bold vision is yet to manifest, nevertheless, Steiner’s Agricultural Course can be deemed a success which, as the present study demonstrates, was transformed into an international enterprise within six years and it remains as such. Steiner’s revelations have survived, evolved, proliferated, and their influence persists.

Steiner was prescient in much of what he taught. He presented the farm as “a living organism” (1924c, p.158). He spoke against a purely chemical view and a chemical reductionist view, and he insisted on the criticality of provenance, long before the doctrine of ‘substantial equivalence’ was recruited in the defense of GM food (Paull, 2008). Long before the costs of nitrogen pollution were monetized (e.g. in Sutton et al., 2011), Steiner, with great prescience, put it in a nutshell: “There is a big difference between nitrogen and nitrogen” (1924c, p.10). He spoke of “the degradation of the products of agriculture” and observed that: “Nowadays people simply think that a certain amount of nitrogen is needed for plant growth, and they imagine it makes no difference how it’s prepared or where it comes from. Where it comes from, however, is not a matter of indifference” (Steiner, 1924c, pp.9-10).

Steiner urged the adoption of a holistic view, and he stated that “we’ve lost the knowledge of what it takes to continue to care for the natural world” (1924c, p.10). He urged his listeners to take “the macrocosmic approach” (1924c, p.141) and to “see individual plants as parts of a single whole” (1924c, p.58). He was critical of the approach where living things are “neatly pigeonholed into separate species and genera”, adding: “But that is not how things are in nature. In nature, and actually throughout the universe, everything is in mutual interaction with everything else” (1924c, p.138).

Many decades before the articulation of consumer demand for free range eggs, and the rise of NGOs such as the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Steiner stated unequivocally: “do not keep animals confined in dark stalls ... let them out to pasture and give them opportunities to interact with their surroundings ... If it never has the opportunity to be outdoors, this animal will be very different from an animal that can roam freely and use its senses” (Steiner, 1924c, p.156).

In a lifetime in which he presented more than 5000 lectures, Steiner delivered just a single course of eight lectures on Agriculture that were conveyed in German in 1924 to a group of farmers and others in an obscure village in present-day Poland. It is tempting to consider as so much puffery, the claim made in 1929 of Steffen et al. that farmers on many continents and as far away as Australia and New Zealand were by then joined in a common endeavour to test and progress the ideas presented in that course.

The present study confirms that within six years of the Course there were in excess of 400 participants in the AEC and they were located throughout continental Europe, as well as in Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and USA. No evidence was uncovered to support the claim of AEC activity in Asia. AEC participants pursued their common cause with no budget and little or no prospect of personal financial reward. From ‘hints’, to tests, to experiments conducted by a globally distributed development team, to analysis, to evidence based prescriptions, to open publication, Steiner’s Agriculture Course was evolved into a clearly defined, bounded and differentiated agriculture now known as biodynamic agriculture.

The record of that transition is incomplete and further data can be anticipated to come to light, in particular further AEC documentation including numbered copies of *The Agriculture Course* and *Landwirtschaftlicher Kursus*, additional AEC agreements, and perhaps the AEC data of

Ehrenfried Pfeiffer and the Natural Science Section, which were not located by the present author. Further research, including examining the biographies of recipients of copies of *The Agriculture Course* and *Landwirtschaftlicher Kursus*, can be anticipated to throw light on the composition and output of the AEC, and extend the estimates of the size and geographic distribution of the AEC, beyond the data and estimates presented in the present study.

Since Pfeiffer's *Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening* first appeared in 1938 there have been many further books published on the practicalities of biodynamic agriculture including, for example, those by Koepf (1989) and Sattler & Wistinghausen (1992). Although the original recipients of *The Agriculture Course* were bound to secrecy, any injunction for non-disclosure has long since lapsed and the 'secrets' of Koberwitz are now readily available, with at least two English translations currently in print; moreover, the full text is freely available on the internet (<http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/Agri1958>).

Acknowledgements

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Recruitment and Professional Image of Students at One of the Regional Universities in Hungary

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Abstract

In this article we study the social recruitment and professional image of students at the University of Debrecen. Social recruitment shows significant differences between the faculties and the branches. The students in the high prestige faculties come from high-middle class and middle class families. The students of the faculties that were judged having average prestige are from the middle class and the rate of low-middle class students is significantly greater in branches with lower prestige. Important differences were found in the professional image of the students with an education major and not education majors and also in case of the „ideal professional” and the „practical, necessary knowledge”. Both are partly formed by the professional socialization of the students and partly by the stereotypes. As a consequence there are also big differences between the professional image and the future expectations of the students with an education major and with other majors attending the same faculty.

Keywords: Students, Gift Attendance Program, Recruitment, Prestige, Professional Image

In this study, we analyze some of the characteristics of the Gift Attendance Program (Talent Development Program) of the University of Debrecen⁴ regarding the recruitment of the students and the differences among branches. First we introduce the purpose of the program and the mechanism of the „selection” procedures.

The Gift Attendance Program of the University of Debrecen (hereinafter referred to by the University abbreviation: DETEP) was launched in the 2000/2001 academic year. László Fésüs, the first rector of the integrated university⁵ had a decisive role in its initiation. He firmly believed

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⁴ The program does not have an official English name, that is why we give possible name of this program as Talent Development Program of the University of Debrecen. In this article, we use the Hungarian abbreviation: DETEP (Debreceni Egyetem Tehetség gondozó Program).

⁵ In Hungary universities were desintegrated from 1950. Integration of the desintegrated universities took place in 2000. University of Debrecen has been formed from three universities and two colleges.

that as part of the integration, harmonization of the students' gift attendance program (talent development program) should be very important among the faculties that formed the new institution (Balogh & Fónai, 2003, Márton et al., 2006). László Balogh, a recognized Hungarian expert became the professional leader of the program, having coordinated it until recently⁶.

How did the program operate? Admission into the program was an important element – our data reports on the result of this process. On the basis of the existing program until the fall of 2008, 20% of the best second year full time students based upon academic achievement were offered the possibility to participate in the selection process. This was the first screening phase of the program. During the second screening phase students had to complete psychological tests (Raven, Super work-value questionnaire), questionnaires about their opinions, information about their socio-demographic background and their professional motivation. Based on these results an index was calculated. This index formed the basis for the Faculties to be able to select those who they could „invite” to the next phase of the program. The third step was a professional interview led by the faculties. On the basis of these interviews the leaders of the faculties could decide who would get into the program. Using this process, 3650 students took part in the first step of the selection process through February 2009. Of the 3650 students, about 700 students were finally selected for the program, which means about 2% of all the second year full time students.

DETEP has dual goals. One is to help the most talented students become university professors and researchers and the other goal is to prepare excellent professionals for the sphere outside the university. The program's most important elements are the same in each faculty: the professional, scientific work of the students is assisted by tutors, who help them form their educational studies and work with them until the realization awarding the degree. In addition, a professional translating program, career counseling, cooperation with “colleges for advanced studies” are part of DETEP. Each faculty provides important professional assistance to their students. The faculties and the university organize conferences and publish various types of publications to show the results of this professional activity. Students can obtain a scholarship and DETEP membership has other advantages as well: they have an advantage if they want to get a university grant, and they can apply for being faculty demonstrators⁷ and can also enter PhD education. As a result of the professional and financial support remarkable work has been created. One of its signs is that the students of the program are successful TDK⁸ (Scientific Student Circle) contestants as well. The number of faculty demonstrators and scholarship winners is very high among them. We can say that students who were selected for the gift attendance program (Talent Development Program) became the most successful students of the university, which proves the *raison d'être* of the programme and shows its efficiency.

The program of course responds to the structural changes of higher education. As a result of the development of BSc programs and the emphasized tasks of the higher educational gift attendance programs (Talent Development Program) we have modified the program which takes the characteristics of the BA and BSc education⁹ into consideration. The program has also formed better contacts with other gift attendance programs (Talent Development Program) like “colleges for advanced studies” and TDK (Science Student Circle). Another further goal is to create a unified gift attendance program that was started in 2008. In our recent study we analyze some of the dimensions of the database of those 3183 students who took part in the selecting process in the „first phase”. Our analyses are mainly descriptive; one the comparisons was made among faculties and between students with an education and not an education major – we have other

⁶ Dr. Balogh László is the chair of the Hungarian Gift Attendance (Talent Development) Council and the expert of the „Gift Point” (Talent Point) of the University of Debrecen.

⁷ Such students who get scholarship for one semester and who take part in the educational organizational and research organizational and professional work of the faculties.

⁸ TDK is Science Student Circle: a professional-scientific competition organized in every second year, where students write studies and give conference lectures in several rounds.

⁹ BA and BSc students of the Bologna process.

comparative national data in case of student recruitment, and in other fields we have only few data (in this recent study we do not analyze the Super work-value test and the Raven test, but in these cases we might perform comparative analyses on a certain level (see eg Fónai, Zolnai & Kiss, 2005, Fónai et al., 2010). In our further analyses referring to this topic, professionalization and career choice literature will form the interpretative frames.

Characteristics of the recruitment of students to the program

With respect to student recruitment the distributions according to faculties, genders, counties and the qualification of the fathers were analyzed. Distribution among the faculties more or less matches the rates of how many students attend each faculty. However, since the participants were volunteers the results could be distorted by the bias of the participation rates, and the fact that during the course of the research new faculties appeared (See: Appendix. Table A1). The number of the students of each faculty is modified by the time in which the faculty was established or the period for which it has been an individual faculty.

The *distribution according to gender* among those who got into the program and the overall number of students in the faculties (total number) shows considerable bias during the time of the study (from the 2001/2002 to the 2007/2008 school year)¹⁰. On the basis of the available statistical data there were 27693 second year full time students during this period and of those there were 16371 women and 11322 men, that is 59.9% of the students were women and 40.1% were men. In case of the upper fifth there were 2140 women (67.4%) and 1033 men (32.6%) who were selected for the program of DETEP based upon their scholastic record.

This means that *more women got into the selection process of the program* than men. This phenomenon is explained by the scholastic record and the genders, and the well-known phenomenon according to which the school performance of women is better than that of men even in higher education, as well (Fényes 2010, Fényes & Ceglédi 2010). There are fewer differences in the distribution according to counties although slight differences can be seen according to the place of residence, as well (Table 1).

Table 1: *Distribution of students according to counties (First seven counties)**

Counties	Total number of students in a year		Those who entered the measurement process of DETEP	
	person	percentage	person	percentage
Hajdú- Bihar	11682	42,2	1082	39,7
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	5796	20,9	581	21,3
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	3421	12,3	371	13,6
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	1480	5,3	156	5,7
Budapest	522	1,9	123	4,5
Békés	817	2,9	118	4,3
Heves	916	3,3	107	3,9

*N = 2728 (Not everybody gave the data of their residence)

Source: October statistics, University of Debrecen, Neptun students' database

¹⁰ While writing this study we took the database of the Neptun system of the Debrecen University into consideration. The annual statistics are only partly appropriate to the determination of the basic numbers, as it provides only the data of the new entrants and the graduates. This is why we based on the Neptun system. We are very grateful to the staff of the University Student Information Centre for their help.

The University of Debrecen has strong regional ties. Six tenths of its students come from two counties and more than eight tenths are from the surrounding region. Territorial recruitment of students of course depends on the branches as well. In some cases certain branches regional ties are stronger and in other cases the schooling district is stronger. These tendencies are also prominent with the students who entered the measurement process. Only Budapest and the Békés County seem to differ slightly from this tendency. However, because of the lack of an adequate number of responses, conclusions must be carefully drawn and not infer that there was a large number of students from this area in proportion to the total students in a given year. The representation of the university in its own county given below is conspicuous. Anyway, the distribution of the sampled students according to their residence is close to that of the total number of second year students.

The difference is higher in case of the social recruitment of students. This type of secondary school seems to be definitely faculty and branch dependent. In case of branches (faculties) with higher prestige, the proportion of those who graduated from eight or six-grade secondary grammar schools is higher than in the case of the other branches, which mostly teach students from four-grade secondary grammar schools or secondary technical school. (See: Appendix A. Table 2).¹¹

The fathers' educational level shows the differences among faculties much more.

Table 2: Fathers' educational level (percentage)*

Faculty ¹²	Did not complete elementary school	Completed elementary school	Vocational school	High school graduation	College	University
FL	0,5	3,2	29,9	31,0	11,8	23,5
FM	0,0	2,3	26,0	30,2	14,0	27,5
FAERD	0,0	5,8	31,8	32,3	14,2	15,9
FAS	0,2	3,7	34,4	29,2	15,7	16,4
FH	0,2	2,5	40,4	27,9	11,3	17,1
FD	0,0	2,6	20,5	30,8	17,9	28,2
FCEAE	0,0	3,1	42,0	26,0	12,2	16,8
FP	0,0	6,5	30,4	23,9	21,7	17,4
FI	0,0	9,7	23,3	42,7	5,8	18,4
FE	0,6	3,0	31,1	26,8	16,5	22,0
FT	0,0	5,2	36,0	35,5	11,8	11,4
FSA	0,0	3,0	36,1	34,2	14,7	11,7
FPH	0,0	8,3	16,7	50,0	16,7	8,3
FNS	0,5	5,1	29,9	34,5	11,0	19,0
Total	0,3	4,1	33,5	31,8	13,2	18,1

* Up till now 13 students participated in the measurement processes from the Faculty of Public Health – their data cannot be analyzed but we report them in the whole study.

¹¹ In Hungary, eight-grade secondary grammar schools were established again in the 1990s. Before 1945 Hungary had such secondary grammar schools. Also, in the 1990s six-grade secondary grammar schools were established. They are called „structure changing” schools. In secondary technical schools besides passing the final exam, there is professional pre-training as well.

¹² Names of the Faculties: FL: Faculty of Law, FM: Faculty of Medicine, FAERD: Faculty of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, FAS: Faculty of Arts and Sciences, FH: Faculty of Health, FD: Faculty of Dentistry, FCEAE: Faculty of Children's Education and Adult Education (previously: Hajdúböszörmény Faculty of Pedagogy), FP: Faculty of Pharmacy, FI: Faculty of Informatics, FE: Faculty of Economics, FT: Faculty of Technology, FSA: Faculty of Sciences of Agriculture, FPH: Faculty of Public Health, FNS: Faculty of Natural Sciences. In 2009 the name of the Faculty of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development changed, its new name is Faculty of Applied Economics and Rural Development.

The rate of the fathers with vocational school is higher in the college and the agricultural faculties than in case of the other faculties. The rate of the fathers with high school graduation is the highest in the Faculty of Informatics, this is the typical educational level – in this faculty the educational level of two thirds of fathers is maximum high school graduation. The rate of fathers with college graduation is higher in the Faculties of Arts and Sciences, Economics, Dentistry and Pharmacy, while the rate of fathers with university degree is the highest in the faculties of Dentistry, Medicine, Law and Economics. It seems that there is a substantial connection between the type of the secondary school, the fathers' educational level and the faculties – children of fathers with higher educational level graduated from secondary schools with higher prestige and they attend branches with higher prestige as well.

The *educational level of mothers* differs from that of fathers in two ways. The rate of mothers with vocational school education is lower and the rate of mothers with high school graduation or mainly with college degree is higher, while the rate of mothers with university degree is lower than in case of fathers – these tendencies correspond to the marriage pattern of the last decades when a skilled worker father married a woman with high school graduation or when the mother with high school degree or college degree usually married a father with a university degree. The rate of fathers and mothers with high educational level is the highest in the faculties of law and medicine. These are the faculties where the difference is the smallest between the educational levels of the parents.

Table 3: Mothers' Educational Level (percentage)

Faculty	Did not complete Elementary School	Completed Elementary School	Vocational School	High School Graduation	College	University
FL	0,5	7,2	20,1	29,9	18,6	20,6
FM	0,0	5,5	14,2	31,4	23,4	23,0
FAERD	0,4	6,7	24,7	33,5	25,5	11,3
FAS	0,0	5,5	21,4	36,2	21,1	12,3
FH	0,0	7,1	21,7	36,8	17,8	11,5
FD	0,0	2,6	15,4	33,3	23,1	23,1
FCEAE	0,0	4,5	21,0	45,1	18,0	9,8
FP	0,0	10,4	14,6	20,8	29,2	22,9
FI	0,0	2,7	12,7	42,7	20,9	16,4
FE	0,6	3,5	16,9	36,6	21,5	18,0
FT	0,0	7,3	23,4	40,4	17,9	7,3
FSA	0,4	5,0	22,0	40,4	20,9	7,1
FPH	0,0	7,7	15,4	30,8	15,4	23,1
FNS	0,1	5,7	16,6	37,6	22,2	13,5
Total	0,2	5,7	19,0	36,5	21,2	13,7

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Recruitment of students with an education major

One of the difficulties in the interpretation of results was the identification of those students who want to become teachers. There were not any specific questions in the questionnaire that

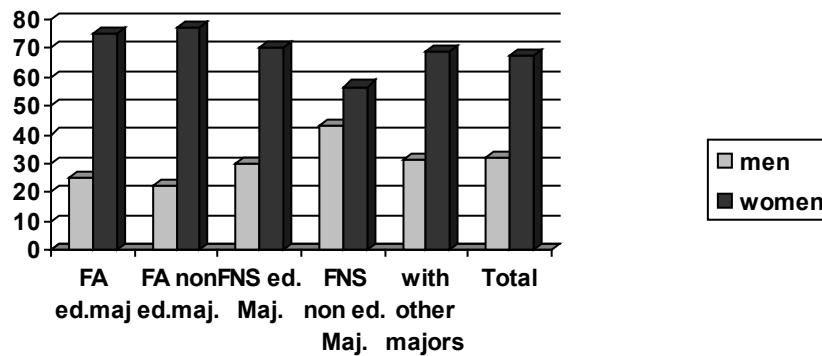
would identify if the students want to become teachers after graduation. The identification of this group could only be made on the basis of their selection of their main or sub-branch area of study. In case of certain branches it was clear, but in case of other branches identification was more difficult. At the beginning of the 2000's „having just one major” became very popular. Selection of just one major did not in itself provide any information because the students had not picked the necessary specialization courses that were needed to become teachers and would allow for identification. Thus, the identification of students with education major remained within narrow frames, that is information about the students was investigated individually to decide whether they were students with an education major or not.

Table 4: *Distribution of students according to branches*

	Person	Percentage in the whole sample
Faculty of Arts, education major	200	6,3
Faculty of Arts, non-education major	204	6,4
Faculty of Natural Sciences, education major	104	3,3
Faculty of Natural Sciences, non-education major	467	14,7
With other majors:	2218	69,3

Source: DETER, 2002-2008

With reference to gender it was predicted that more women will choose to become teachers than men (Figure 1). This prediction was supported. There was a significant difference ($p < 0.00$) in gender between students with education and non-education majors.



Source: DETER, 2002-2008

Figure 1: *Distribution of students according to gender (percentage)*

As regards the family and social background of the students with an education major it was predicted that they were from lower-middle class, or middle-class families and the marriage

patterns of their parents including school graduation fits the pattern of the 1960s-80s. These hypotheses were partially confirmed after comparing the family background of students with an education major to other majors. It was found that more students who were not education majors have fathers with a degree. Students with an education major are more likely from (lower) middle-class (with final exam or skilled worker) families. A comparison between the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Natural Sciences shows that in the Faculty of Natural Sciences only a small proportion of students have fathers with college or university degrees. This is also the case for students who are not education majors but it is more striking in the case of students with an education major (Table 4).

Table 4: *Fathers' Educational Level according to Faculties (percentage)*

	FofA education majors	FofA non-education majors	Fof Nand S education majors	Fof Nand S non-education majors	Other majors	Total
Maximum elementary school	8,3	13,2	10,1	8,4	8,2	8,7
Vocational school	29,3	27,5	19	28,5	28,3	28
Final exam	28,8	25,4	46,0	32,9	31,6	31,7
College	16,2	16,9	7	12,2	13,4	13,4
University	17,3	16,9	17	17,9	18,5	18,1

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Compared to the national average at the end of the 90's there are more applicants to the program today in higher education with low-educated parents (Róbert Péter mentions similar processes – compare: Róbert, 2000).

The annual October statistics report of higher educational institutes refers only to the counties of the students' residence, thus a comparative analysis can only be made on the basis of national representative examinations (Róbert, 2000). Based upon this data the rate of students with an education major whose parents completed only secondary school (with final exam) is less than the national average on Faculty of Arts and much higher on Faculty of Natural Sciences.

A significant characteristic of the students with an education major in the Faculty of Natural Science is that they belong to the non-degree holder families (middle and upper-middle class) and not to the lower social groups (who completed 8 classes of elementary school or skilled workers). *In this faculty a teacher's career will be chosen mainly by the children of those fathers who graduated from secondary school and passed final exam. This rate is higher than in the Faculty of Arts and reflects a middle-class position.* Those students who attend the Faculty of Natural Science and whose fathers are skilled workers prefer to be non-education majors. One must take into consideration that in this sample the number of students with a non-education major in the Faculty of Nature and Sciences is four times higher (467 persons) than the number of students with an education major (104 persons).

For students in the Faculty of Arts differences in family background between students with an education major and students with non-education major were not large. Although children of parents who completed secondary school and then passed the final exam select a teaching career here as well, the difference is not as big as in the Faculty of Nature and Science. Children of skilled workers still prefer selecting a BA teacher career.

The educational level of fathers differs more between the two groups examined in this study than the educational level of mothers. It is worth pointing out the effect of the mothers' educational level on the selection of a teaching career. Among BA students there are remarkably few students with an education major whose mothers graduated from universities (Table 5.).

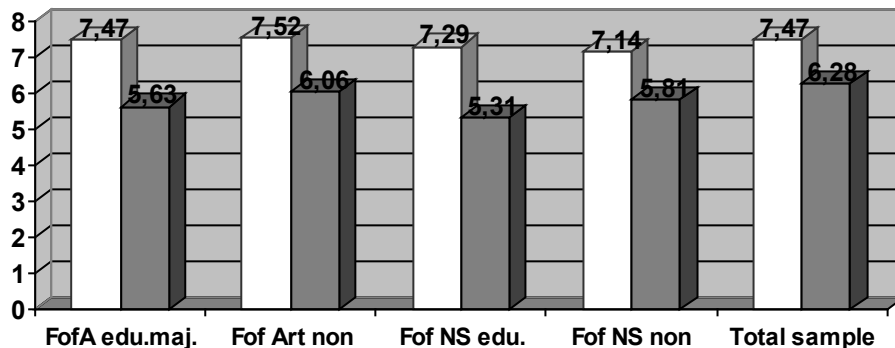
Table 5: Mothers' Educational Level according to Faculties (percentage)

	FofA education majors	FofA non-education majors	Fof Nand S education majors	Fof Nand S non-education majors	Other majors	Total
Maximum elementary school	9,0	10,3	6,7	6,2	7,3	7,5
Vocational school	18,0	16,2	18,3	16,7	17,2	17,1
Final exam	38,0	35,3	39,4	35,8	36,4	36,5
College	22,0	18,6	18,3	21,9	21,2	21,1
University	9,5	15,2	14,4	14,2	14,1	13,9

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Students' view of the prestige of an education major

In the assessment of their own faculty we expected that the ranks¹³ will be based upon the ranks within the university and the prestige of certain branches. This rating is closely related to the prestige of those professions and the selected branches with the ranking formed by mutual perception, stereotypes and prejudices (Figure 2).



Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Figure 2: The prestige ranking of branches - self-ranking and sensed outside ranking (on a ten-grade scale)

There is a general tendency for students to perceive that their branches are ranked lower by others

¹³ Ranking basically show the prestige of each branch and profession and their mutual knowledge and acceptance.

then they themselves rank the branch. It can be the perception that they as a group think that others do not know their branches and this is the reason why others do not rank them higher. In case of those branches where the professions built on the selected branch have low social prestige students believe that this is the reason of their low ranking by others. Meanwhile they themselves think that although the prestige of the selected branch is really low or moderate, the branch itself is difficult and the education is of high quality – there are few branches where students would rank themselves and their branches low as well. The summary of their opinion is that only those who can judge the situation of branches in a real way are those who are inside and part of it and that they perceive outside ratings as based upon stereotypes; it is a normal group sociological phenomenon. The justification for why others rank their branches at certain levels agrees with why and how they themselves evaluate their own branches. A common justification is that others do not know the branch, and the branch is difficult or fashionable. There are significant differences in other rankings like prestige, utilizable knowledge and how they can find good workplaces. Let's explore to see the factors associated with the branch rankings, first of all the self-ranking (Table 6, Table 7).

Table 6: *Why is your branch ranked here. Reasons of the external perceptions (answers given to open-ended question – the first 15 statements. Percentage: the rate of those who have agreed with the given statement in percentage)*

	F of A with education majors	F of A with non-education majors	F of NS with education majors	F of NS with non-education majors	Total Sample
Utilizable knowledge	8,5	12,3	14,4	15,6	14,6
The branch is not known	7,5	10,3	18,3	13,7	13,3
Difficult branch	10,0	8,3	15,4	16,1	13,0
Fashionable branch	13,0	7,8	20,2	15,2	10,9
High quality	12,5	12,7	7,7	9,0	10,2
Average branch	11,5	3,9	7,7	8,8	9,9
Needed/wanted branch	14,5	5,9	9,6	10,7	9,3
Good possibilities to find good workplaces	5,0	7,4	2,9	7,9	9,1
High requirements	8,5	11,3	4,8	8,4	9,0
Low level	9,5	10,3	20,0	9,6	7,7
Profession with high prestige	7,0	9,8	2,9	4,5	7,2
High quality education	9,0	4,9	11,5	7,9	7,0
High prestige	9,5	8,8	16,3	7,5	6,7
Recognized professors	18,5	7,8	7,7	6,4	5,7
Misjudged branch	4,0	8,8	4,8	3,6	5,2

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Table 7: *Why is your branch ranked here. Reasons of the external perceptions (answers given to open-ended question – the first 15 statements. Percentage: the rate of those who have agreed with the given statement*

	F of A with education majors	F of A with non-education majors	F of NS with education majors	F of NS with non- education majors	Total Sample
The branch is not known	11,5	23,0	21,2	27,8	21,3
Difficult branch	12,5	12,3	24,0	15,8	16,0
Misjudged branch	13,5	12,7	9,6	8,8	10,2
High prestige	13,5	5,4	18,3	10,7	8,7
Low prestige	14,5	7,4	19,2	13,9	8,5
Fashionable branch	7,5	1,5	16,3	7,1	7,6
Average situation	7,0	4,9	5,8	7,7	7,4
Utilizable knowledge	7,0	7,4	13,5	6,4	6,9
High quality	6,5	9,8	12,5	6,5	6,4
Needed/wanted branch	6,0	3,9	6,7	4,7	5,9
High requirements	4,0	10,3	1,0	2,6	5,7
Stereotypes	4,5	2,9	9,6	8,6	5,6
Low quality	7,5	4,9	11,5	5,8	5,0
Good possibility to find good workplaces	4,0	3,9	1,9	4,5	4,2
The prestige of the profession is high	2,5	5,9	1,0	3,9	4,1

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Essential differences between their own ranking and the ranking made by others (supposed) can partly be explained by the external perceptions of the profession – one of its manifestations can be seen in the mutual ranking. If the difference can be explained by the situation of the potential professions, that is by the stereotypes and perceptions about their situations, then we can say that the ranking of students with an education major indicates that loss of status has occurred in the case of teaching profession.

Characteristic incongruency can be seen in the justification of the individual ranking and between the two rankings. The self-image of the students with an education major in the Faculty of Arts reflects the level of their own branch and can be characterized by more coherent justifications, because they emphasize utilizable knowledge, the needs of their branch and high quality education. Conversely, we can see serious incongruencies in their case as well: they can perceive what the others think about their branch that is if it has high or low prestige and a high or low level – it is related to the important differences between the branches and the ambivalent interpretation of the branch and professions. The self-image of the students not majoring in education of the Faculty of Arts is incongruent too, as they justify the external ranking of their branches (fashionable, average, high requirement, misjudged). In their case, the sense of external evaluation seems to be more coherent where clearly high requirements come into view. The self-image of students with an education major in the Faculty of Nature and Science is a bipolar

self-image: besides having a high level and requirements (more characteristic), low levels appear as well. However, this bi-polar self-image is a warning sign. The question is what it is to do to about it and this study was not able to answer this question. One conclusion that may be drawn is that the more motivated students with better grades feel the problems of the scientific teacher's education of recent years, the smaller is the students' interest and the number of the students who can be admitted. It can probably indicate a split between the students with an education major and with other majors, and there will be a well performing and more talented group and a worse performing group. The students who are not education majors of the Faculty of Nature and Science have a more coherent self-image: they consider their branch more difficult, helping them to find better workplaces – but at the same time it is as if they felt that external ranking did not take it into consideration, and that there are many stereotypes in the judgements.

Characteristics of students with an education major and that of teachers as professionals

During our measurement procedure we examined how the students see their own profession. In the questionnaire they had to characterize the knowledge and characteristics of the „good professional” necessary to their own branch. Characterization of the “good professional” was mainly the characterization of the “ideal” professional. Moreover, students were asked to describe practical knowledge: “what characteristics and knowledge they consider to be important to their selected profession”. In both cases open-ended questions were used and were coded by about thirty key words: among them the ranking of the first fifteen will be introduced and analyzed (Appendix Tables A3 and A4).

Overall, the characteristics of the “ideal professional”, “*professionally prepared*” and “*informed*” were rated the highest by students. The practical expectation is similar with “*thorough professional knowledge*”, the dominant characteristic overall from all the professions and in addition general awareness and good communication had important roles. The characterization of the „ideal professional” was depicted in a more plastic way; the role of other components was more significant in this case.

Students with an education major of the Faculty of Arts characterized the “ideal professional” as being informed, flexible, with extensive knowledge, helpful, with good interpersonal skills and empathic. For this same group, in case of „*practicum*” they underline communication, knowledge of languages, empathy and openness. In this group the two „images” partially coincide. The „*good professional*” for the students with an education major in the Faculty of Nature and Sciences is flexible, helpful, likes his profession, while “*practical*” knowledge and ability require awareness, language knowledge, practical skills and synthesizing ability. There are requirements that are independent of the faculties and that are equally important for students with teacher major in both the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Natural Sciences, such as flexibility, awareness and language knowledge.

On the basis of the choice of the *students who are not education majors in the Faculty of Arts*, the “ideal professional” is empathic, is able to develop, has good interpersonal skills and is creative. In „*practicum*” we can see the same: good communication skills, empathy, openness to the new and open-mindedness. In case of *students who are non-education majors in the Faculty of Nature and Sciences*, the “ideal professional” should be open-minded, precise, able to develop, should like his job and should be purposeful, while in case of „*practicum*” they prefer practicality and synthesizing skills. *Students with education majors* emphasized preparedness, information, flexibility and helpfulness of the “good professional” and among practical knowledge and characteristics they found thorough professional preparedness (a general expectation), language knowledge and man-centeredness of importance.

In the “*Faculty of Arts*” speciality is independent of whether they are an education major or not: an „ideal professional” has good interpersonal skills, is empathic, open and man-centered. The particular view of the Faculty of Nature and Sciences is that the “ideal professional” is a good professional, well-prepared, likes their job, is practical and has the ability to synthesize. These characteristics seem to fit the *real* differences between the branches and the professions which are significantly modified by the stereotypes about professions.

Would students select their current branch again? Answers to this question are appropriate to the characterization of the satisfaction, the students’ expectations and their career aspirations as well. Slightly more than half (53%) of the students with an education major in the Faculty of Arts would select their branch again while the three fourths (76%) of students without an education major would select their branch again. Among students with an education major in the Faculty of Nature and Sciences, this percentage is much lower. Forty-four percent (44%) of students with an education major and 64% of students who have another major would select their branch again. Compared to 69% of the total sample this result is distressing. Students with an education major are more dissatisfied than students with other majors and students in the Faculty of Nature and Sciences are more dissatisfied than students in the Faculty of Arts. Students with an education major had been admitted before the „Bologna system”, so their dissatisfaction was developed during the previous teachers’ training system. In addition, the *loss of status* of a teacher’s career must have affected their opinions as well.

The students feel it – it is supported by the university rankings and the expectations to the future of their selected profession as well (Ceglédi & Fónai, in press) Furthermore, it is also supported by the causes of the students as well (Appendix, Tables A5 and A6). Those who would select their profession again would do it because of the possibility of their profession and because they have plans for it. Students with an education major stressed the diversity of the profession and considered it important that they got what they had expected and in their case a degree itself is important as well. Those who would not select their branch emphasized the quality of the education and the low salary prospects – thus, there is a rejection of the *education* and not only to the profession. It is worth taking these results and students’ expectations into consideration for example in connection with the „laic” judging of the professional competencies.

What is considered to be important during university years?

The question regarding what students who would like to be teachers consider to be important during the university years was important to investigate. There are many different values that can be found within the statements listed in this block of the questionnaire. The answers to those questions help to understand the teacher’s career point of view. Statements are about human values, professional plans and individual ambitions of the future teachers. The statements that first were thought to be irrelevant brought surprising results. The students had to evaluate the following statements relevant to the university years on a four point scale. The overall ratings from the most important to the least important follows: friendly relationships, good average grades, forming relationships that can be fruitful for the future, the degree itself, preparing for the profession, TDK (Science Student Circle) work, recognition from the professors, recognition from the students, the city’s opportunities, foreign scholarship, using the educational possibilities, quiet life, „just to hang on”, exciting parties (Appendix, Table A7).

Not every statement between the students with education major and students with other majors was significantly different. For example, forming relationships and instrumental efficiency (good marks and degree itself) were equally dominant in both groups examined. But in the case of the future teachers of natural sciences it is conspicuous that „degree itself” is the less important for them. It also can be said about them that they are characterized by an ambivalent career image.

From among the indicators of effectiveness rather the individual career building is stressed (TDK, Scientific Student Circle, and abroad) while the preparation to the profession relegated to a lower position. The importance of the recognition of professors and students is about average in their cases. Although the opportunities in the city were valued important by all students who were non-education majors in both faculties rated “exciting life and parties” higher than education majors. They use the educational possibilities less than their fellows in the faculty but the difference in comparison with the Faculty of Arts is larger: future teachers learning at the Faculty of Arts evaluated this statement about 0.4 higher. The preference for a classical art education can be well observed in the case of a student in the Faculty of Arts and mainly in the case of students with a non-education major. Friendly relations are more important for liberal arts students than natural science students.

As regards free time we can say that students with education major are more inclined to have a „quiet life, just hang out” attitude and against „exciting life and parties” than students with a non-education major. The importance of friendly relations is about average or lower among students with non-education majors (the judgment of professional relationship building is similar to friendly relations).

The situation of the profession

It appears that students with an education major expect relatively low prestige and income and little power from the profession. But at the same time the following question arises: „OK, it is bad but does it have any future?” Why do those who select the more and more depreciating teacher’s career evaluate higher than those who select other careers? This study has tried to bring some light to the issues of ambivalency and incongruency in the teacher career’s image.

The expectations of students with an education major show that they see the situation of the profession worse in all areas compared to other professions. These differences can be seen between students who are education majors and those who are not in both the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Natural Sciences. However, students with an education major in the Faculty of Natural Science see the situation of their selected profession a bit better than the students with an education major of the Faculty of Arts. The incongruency of the career image can be seen overall in the difference between the different dimensions and the „future of the profession” is characteristic to all branches. But in light of the results of the total sample it is primarily a characteristic of low status, deteriorating status and incongruent professions. The situation of future teachers corresponds to the incongruent and status loss of professions (Table 8).

Table 8: "What do you see the professions's ..." (on a ten point scale)

	Students with education majors in Faculty of Arts	Students not education majors in Faculty of Arts	Students with education majors in Faculty of Nature and Sciences	Students not education majors in Faculty of Nature and Sciences	Total sample
Future	6,57	7,37	6,53	7,32	7,29
Prestige	5,81	6,80	6,17	6,64	6,81
Prevailing options	5,90	6,77	6,28	6,66	6,55
Salary prospects	5,70	6,14	5,81	6,29	6,47
Human appreciation	5,96	6,70	5,78	6,27	6,44
Advocacy skills	5,23	6,14	5,67	5,98	6,25
Autonomy	5,26	6,23	5,17	5,45	5,94
Power	4,80	5,44	5,23	5,35	5,76
Civic engagement	4,82	5,82	5,02	4,84	5,49

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Summary

Social recruitment shows significant differences between the faculties and the branches. The students in the high prestige faculties come from high-middle class and middle class families. The students of the faculties that were analysed having average prestige are from the middle class and the rate of low-middle class students is significantly greater in branches with lower prestige. This has significant impact not only on the judgment of the faculties and branches, but on the career image as well – the career image of those students who come from higher status families is less ambivalent and incongruent. These processes can substantially be altered by the real situation and the contradictions of the profession itself. The best example of it is the situation of the medical students.

As regards the judgment of the professional image and the professions, the starting point was that the students of the different branches know the general situation of the professions related to their own branches and the profession and it affects the judgment of the branches and professions. It is reflected in the ranking of the students with an education major and with other majors and in their judgments as well. The ranking of the branches are formed by the positions within the university and they are partially formed by the social recruitment of the students. In addition, they are formed by social position and prestige of the professions and the stereotypes reflecting them. Important differences were found in the professional image of the students with an education major and not education majors and also in case of the „ideal professional” and the „practical, necessary knowledge”. Both are partly formed by the professional socialization of the students and partly by the stereotypes. As a consequence there are also large differences between the professional image and the future expectations of the students with an education major and with other majors attending the same faculty.

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Annexes

Table A1: *The distribution of students who were in the first phase of DETEP according to faculties**

Faculty	Person	Percentage
Faculty of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development,	239	7,5
Faculty of Law	195	6,1
Faculty of Medicine	274	8,6
Faculty of Arts and Sciences	511	16,1
Faculty of Health	253	7,9
Faculty of Dentistry	39	1,2
Faculty of Children's Education and Adult Education	133	4,2
Faculty of Pharmacy	48	1,5
Faculty of Informatics	110	3,5
Faculty of Economics	172	5,4
Faculty of Sciences of Agriculture	283	8,9
Faculty of Technology	220	6,9
Faculty of Public Health	13	0,4
Faculty of Natural Sciences	689	21,37
Total	3183	100,0

* The data of the individual faculties have been published since the establishment of the faculties
Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Table A2: *The distribution of the students according to the type of the secondary school (percentage)*

Faculty	Four grade secondary grammar school	Six-grade secondary grammar school	Eight-class secondary grammar school	Secondary technical school	Youth division
FAERD	38,8	31,8	9,3	18,7	0,5
FL	48,5	35,5	8,3	4,1	1,2
FM	46,4	36,5	12,9	0,4	0,0
FAS	44,4	36,5	8,8	6,8	0,9
FH	54,0	17,4	5,4	24,1	3,1
FD	51,4	29,7	8,1	0,0	0,0
FCEAE	41,9	24,8	2,9	23,8	1,9
FP	54,5	31,8	11,4	4,5	0,0
FI	45,5	17,3	2,7	31,8	0,0
FE	44,3	26,4	9,3	17,1	3,6
FSA	39,5	36,3	4,9	14,4	0,8
FT	33,1	8,4	2,8	52,2	2,2
FPH	76,9	0,0	0,0	15,4	7,7
FNS	41,7	36,7	9,2	8,0	0,9
Total	43,8	30,6	7,8	14,4	1,2

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Names of the Faculties: FAERD: Faculty of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, FL: Faculty of Law, FM: Faculty of Medicine, FAS: Faculty of Arts and Sciences, FH: Faculty of Health, FD: Faculty of Dentistry, FCEAE: Faculty of Children's Education and Adult Education (previously: Hajdúböszörmény Faculty of Pedagogy), FP: Faculty of Pharmacy, FI: Faculty of Informatics, FE: Faculty of Economics, FT: Faculty of Technology, FSA: Faculty of Sciences of Agriculture, FPH: Faculty of Public Health, FNS: Faculty of Natural Sciences.

Table A3: „What makes a good professional?” (answers to open-ended question – the first 15; percentage; those who agree with the given statement)

	Students with education major in Faculty of Arts	Students not education major in Faculty of Arts	Students with education major in Faculty of Nature of Sciences	Students not education major in Faculty of Nature and Sciences	Total sample
Professionally prepared	31,0	42,6	32,7	40,0	39,7
Informed	40,0	27,5	26,0	26,1	30,0
Flexible	26,5	19,6	26,9	16,3	17,9
Dedicated	12,5	14,7	13,5	14,6	11,9
Extensive knowledge	13,5	7,4	8,7	15,6	10,6
Preceise	4,0	1,5	2,9	15,2	9,3
Helpful	8,0	6,4	9,6	5,1	9,3
Empathic	8,0	17,6	8,7	3,0	8,6
Able to develop	7,0	11,8	2,9	11,8	8,2
Likes his job	9,0	7,4	16,3	11,6	8,0
Good interpersonal skills	11,5	11,8	8,7	3,9	7,9
Purposeful	8,0	5,9	6,7	7,5	7,4
Creative	6,5	11,8	8,7	6,4	6,5
Reliable	2,0	3,9	—	2,4	3,9
Determined	4,0	2,0	—	1,5	3,0

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Table A4: “Knowledge and abilities” (answers to open-ended question – the first 15; percentage; those who agree with the given statement)

	Students with education major in Faculty of Arts	Students not education major in Faculty of Arts	Students with education major in Faculty of Nature of Sciences	Students not education major in Faculty of Nature and Sciences	Total sample
Thoroughful professional	44,5	55,9	49,0	60,0	57,0
General awereness	9,0	10,8	14,4	11,1	10,9
Good communication	11,5	18,1	9,6	3,0	10,0
Language knowledge	12,0	7,8	10,6	9,2	8,5
Empathy	9,5	16,2	3,8	1,1	8,1
Practicality	2,0	4,4	8,7	9,2	7,0
Advanced logic	0,5	2,0	1,9	2,8	4,5
Opennes to the new	6,5	8,3	1,0	3,4	4,5
Self-developing	2,0	3,9	3,8	4,9	4,4
Synthesizing ability	1,0	2,9	6,7	9,0	4,3
Application of knowledge	5,0	5,9	1,9	4,5	4,3
Open-mindedness	4,0	7,8	2,9	4,7	4,2
Precision	1,0	2,9	1,0	3,6	3,9
Legal knowledge	1,0	1,5	—	1,1	3,6
Man centered	5,5	4,4	3,8	0,4	2,5

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Table A5: *Would you select your major again – the judgments of the yes answers (those who agree with the question in percentage)*

	Students with education major in Faculty of Arts	Students not education major in Faculty of Arts	Students with education major in Faculty of Nature of Sciences	Students not education major in Faculty of Nature and Sciences	Total sample
Because of the possibilities	23,5	36,8	36,5	43,3	35,2
He has plans with the branch	37,5	17,2	55,8	30,2	23,9
He got what he had wanted	13,5	18,6	11,5	15,2	14,9
Multicolored	20,0	4,4	21,2	10,9	10,6
Because of the degree	18,5	14,7	9,6	8,1	8,0
He has always wanted it	4,0	3,9	2,9	3,6	3,8
High quality education	3,0	3,4	1,9	1,1	1,8
It has future	—	1,0	—	0,4	1,0

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Table A6: *Would you select your major again – the judgments of the no answers (those who agree with the question in percentage)*

	Students with education major in Faculty of Arts	Students not education major in Faculty of Arts	Students with education major in Faculty of Nature of Sciences	Students not education major in Faculty of Nature and Sciences	Total sample
Because of the low level	25,5	12,3	12,5	12,6	14,0
Low income	8,5	7,8	10,6	8,4	7,8
He changed his mind	3,5	3,9	1,9	2,4	3,3
The investment is not commensure with the results	2,0	3,4	1,9	1,1	1,9
He had failures	2,5	0,5	3,8	0,6	1,0
It was not what he had expected	1,0	0,5	—	1,3	1,2

Source: DETEP, 2002-2008

Table A7: *What do they consider to be important during the university years (on a four point scale)*

	Students with education major in Faculty of Arts	Students not education major in Faculty of Arts	Students with education major in Faculty of Nature of Sciences	Students not education major in Faculty of Nature and Sciences	Total sample
Friendly relations	3,54	3,64	3,40	3,10	3,52
Good grades	3,58	3,53	3,59	3,44	3,49
Forming relationships for the future	3,31	3,37	3,49	3,44	3,41
Degree itself	3,31	3,27	2,91	3,28	3,28
To prepare for the profession	2,96	3,37	2,62	2,95	3,11
TDK (Science Student Circle) work	3,18	3,02	3,40	3,10	3,05
Recognition from the professors	3,04	3,09	3,03	3,14	3,04
Recognition from the students	3,15	2,94	3,08	3,03	3,02
Opportunities in the city	3,11	2,94	3,32	2,98	3,01
Scholarship abroad	2,93	2,87	3,06	2,81	2,86
To use the educational opportunities	3,02	3,09	2,68	2,77	2,84
Quiet life, „to just hang out“	2,34	2,11	2,58	2,27	2,28
Exciting life, parties	1,85	2,26	1,86	2,04	2,09



Development of a Screening Tool to Improve Management of the Welfare Caseload in Kentucky¹

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Abstract

As part of the evaluation of the welfare program in Kentucky, descriptive and multivariate techniques were used to develop and test a brief screening tool. The purpose of this tool is to identify clients at risk of using 80% or more of the lifetime limit for cash assistance provided through the Kentucky's Transitional Assistance Program (KTAP). The variables for the screening tool were identified through discriminant analysis and logistic regression using data from the KTAP administrative records and from two surveys: a panel study conducted with a representative group of KTAP recipients, and a point-in-time survey conducted with a representative sample of clients who reached their lifetime limit of cash assistance in 2001. Descriptive analyses using panel data show the stability of measures over time and their ability to set apart the segment of population at risk for high utilization of their available time on KTAP. The predictive value of the screening tool was tested with regression models using the KTAP utilization information available from the administrative records.

Keywords: Welfare, Temporary Assistance Program, Low-income, Poverty, Women and Children, Needy Families

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Welfare Reform in Kentucky

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), signed into law by President Clinton on August 22, 1996, replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Program with a federal block grant named Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). In Kentucky, the TANF program is referred to as the Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (KTAP). It was implemented in October 1996. The primary difference between the two programs is that TANF, unlike AFDC, requires states to place welfare recipients into work and training programs. Furthermore, a time limit for the transition from welfare to work is set at a total of five years or 60 months over an individual's lifetime.

In October 2001, at the 60-month anniversary of the KTAP program, Kentucky ceased cash assistance benefits to individuals who had continuously received benefits since October 1996. However, states are allowed to exempt certain cases and continue to provide benefits for up to 20% of active welfare recipients. This legislation presents Kentucky and other states with a challenging task because most of its welfare recipients have limited education, work skills, and work experience. Some also have poor physical and mental health status and experience substance abuse and domestic violence.

Administrative records show that a very small proportion of Kentucky welfare clients (less than 2%) reached the 60-month time limit in October 2001, and that only about 25% of the cases that reached the time limit were extended beyond 60 months. Furthermore, administrative records show that there were approximately 1.5% of active cases with 60 months or more on KTAP. While there is a large difference between the proportion of clients who reach the time limits in Kentucky and the allowed ceiling, the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CFHS) recognized that there is room for improvement of services, and implicitly of welfare outcomes.

At the time this study was conducted, practices varied from region to region within the state, but generally when a case reached 36 or more months on KTAP an alert notified case managers that they should consider the case for intensive case management. However, most commonly, only clients with less than 12 months of eligibility remaining in their lifetime limit of 60 months became the focus of increased attention and efforts to help them avoid reaching the time limit by advancing on a path toward self-sufficiency. Some of these cases were referred to the Targeted Assessors Program (TAP), Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, and/or local mental health agencies as appropriate within the limit of the availability of more intensive services.

Purpose of Study

The Kentucky Welfare Reform Evaluation team was charged with the task of using existing administrative data and survey information in order to find ways with which to identify high-risk cases at an earlier point in time. This article describes the steps, the logic behind them, and the statistical analyses used to create this tool. It should be noted that the tool was developed based on welfare population data collected in Kentucky, and it is not intended for screening of other welfare populations.

The purpose of this article is to describe the process we used to identify salient characteristics of cases that reached the lifetime limit for temporary cash assistance. The resulting variables were further tested for their predictive value in this study population. Case managers may use a questionnaire comprised of these indicators to screen all cases that reach 24 months on KTAP, with the goal of identifying clients at greatest risk of reaching the 60-month time limit. Using this tool earlier increases the lapse between screening and time limit, and as a result, the likelihood of moving clients onto a path toward self-sufficiency also increases. The paper concludes with recommendations on how to conduct the screening process and what variables to use at each screening phase.

Data Sources and Sampling

The analysis draws upon existing administrative records and data taken from two surveys. The first survey was conducted between 1998 and 2001 with a representative sample of KTAP recipients; a stratified random sample of KTAP recipients was selected from the active cases as of March 1998. Specifically, out of each of the eight strata of counties obtained using a cluster analysis of county demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, 80 cases were randomly chosen.

In 1998, the first year of the panel study, 503 telephone interviews were completed. About 200 new subjects were added every year until the end of the panel study; new cases were randomly drawn from active cases in the spring of each year. The response rate was over 70% in the initial year, and a minimum of 90% was obtained for at each follow-up (1999, 2000, 2001). Over the four years, 419 subjects completed four interviews, 234 completed three, 210 completed two, and 259 were interviewed only once.

A second survey was conducted during the spring and summer of 2002 with a stratified random sample of clients who reached the 60-month time limit. Some cases were discontinued from KTAP cash assistance once they reached the time limit, while other cases were approved for an extension to continue receiving cash assistance. The caseload that reached the 60-month time limit was split into two groups – extended and discontinued – and simple random samples of 295 and 336 cases, respectively, were selected from each group. The overall response rate for this survey was 62% (390 responses to 631 mailed invitations); the response rate for the extended group (66%) was significantly higher than the rate for discontinued cases (58%).

In addition to using the discontinued (N=195) and extended (N=195) groups for the study described here, we also selected a comparison group from the sample extracted in 1998 for the panel survey. This group included 292 inactive KTAP cases, including clients who left KTAP before reaching the time limit; we will refer to this comparison group as the “leavers.” Thus, the final sample for this study included a total of 682 extended, discontinued, and leaver cases.

Survey records – from panel and time limit cross-sectional studies – include family and child well-being measures, employment-related indicators, and information about financial hardships and use of benefits. For all survey cases, we extracted historical information from the administrative records using the social security number of the primary adult on the case. The administrative records include information about demographic characteristics, family composition, as well as the use of KTAP cash assistance and other services.

Descriptive and multivariate techniques were used to develop and test a screening tool to identify the clients likely to reach 48 or more months on KTAP. The variables that make up the screening tool were identified through traditional descriptive analyses, discriminant analysis, and logistic regression using cases from the time limit study. Descriptive analyses using panel data demonstrated the stability of the measures over time and their ability to set apart the segment of population at risk for high utilization of their available time on KTAP. Finally, the predictive capability of the variables was tested with logistic regression using KTAP utilization data from the administrative records. As of December 2001, the binary outcome was defined as “having reached the time limit” versus “not having reached the time limit”. Finally, in order to assist in the computation of sample weights, a 10% random sample of all cases in the administrative database was used to extrapolate the results obtained with the survey data to the general KTAP population.

Relevance of Screening

The reasons for extending KTAP benefits provide a first insight into the type of case management needed by clients who reach the KTAP time limit and obtain an extension. Descriptive analyses showed significant but small differences in the proportion of discontinued and extended clients who have poor physical health or insufficient employment. Further, multivariate analyses revealed that the characteristics and/or circumstances of discontinued and extended clients are very similar. It appears, therefore, that extended and discontinued clients are hard-to-serve cases and that they have similar barriers to self-sufficiency over time. It is important to identify the hard-to-serve cases as soon as possible and provide them with more specialized care via an intensive case management (ICM) program that aims to reduce their risk of reaching the time limit. Thus, the question is, at what point in time would it be most beneficial and cost-effective to screen for these characteristics?

Danziger et al. (2000) showed that there is a strong association between (1) employment status, (2) socio-demographic characteristics (family structure, number of young children, urban residence), and (3) human capital, job-related skills or physical/mental health. Some authors argue that the presence of a single barrier may not be as critical as the presence of multiple barriers and that some combinations of barriers are more unfavorable than others (Danziger et al., 2000; Olson & Pavetti, 1996).

The objectives of this study were to (1) identify the ways in which clients who reach the time limit are different from those who leave KTAP before they reach the time limit, (2) discover the combination of conditions/barriers that has the greatest likelihood of predicting who will exhaust their 60 months of eligibility, and (3) understand how leaver, extended, and discontinued clients differ by identifying patterns among variables as a whole.

Target Population

To gain a preliminary understanding of utilization patterns in the KTAP population as a whole, administrative data for clients, enrolled in KTAP for one or more months, between October 1996 and October 2002, were examined. First, the welfare population was divided into three groups by their length of time on KTAP: low utilization (used 40% or less of eligible months), medium utilization (used more than 40% but less than 80% of available time) and high utilization (used 80% or more of eligible months). About 65% of all clients who were on KTAP between October 1996 and October 2002 had entered KTAP between October 1996 and November 1997 (and thus had the *potential* for more than 60 months of KTAP utilization as of October 2002). However, about 60% were on KTAP for 25 to 48 months and only 8% were on KTAP for more than 48 months. This preliminary analysis supports the idea that screening clients for intensive case management has the potential to balance efficiency (that is, not screening the large proportion of clients who leave KTAP on their own, without intensive case management) and effectiveness (targeting a smaller proportion of clients who are likely to remain on the KTAP caseload once they exceed 24 months).

The lower end of the utilization range for the middle group (40% of total time in the system) was chosen because we know from the administrative records that a majority (70%) of clients in each cohort leave the system during the first 24 months; 24 of 60 months is 40%. An upper cutoff point of 99% of the total time in the system was chosen later based on the proportion of clients in the administrative system who reached the time limit, which, as we mentioned earlier, was only 1.5% of all welfare clients.

From the administrative records of 2004, we found that, on average, 68% of cases were “low” users, 19% fell into the “medium” utilization group (higher than 40% but less than 99%), and

12% were in the “high” utilization group (99% or higher). This was also true when looking at the data by annual cohorts. Weighting was used to ensure representativity of the time limit study sample to the KTAP population (i.e., because high users were overrepresented in the study sample, data were weighted in the multivariate analyses to correspond with their proportion in the entire caseload).

Given that providing intensive case management to the entire caseload of active clients with 25 or more months on KTAP would be costly, our challenge was to find indicators for screening the KTAP population that would significantly and strategically reduce the pool for intensive case management.

Who Are the Clients Likely to Reach the Time Limit?

The multivariate analyses included two statistical techniques: discriminant analysis and logistic regression. Discriminant analysis provides an understanding of the overall differences among groups, while logistic regression estimates the odds of a particular outcome when certain indicators are present. It is noteworthy that the main source of data for this study is the 2002 point-in-time survey of KTAP clients who reached the 60-month time limit as of December 2001; thus, our data made it inappropriate to use more sophisticated analyses such as event history.

Discriminant analysis was used to decide whether the outcome for the logistic regression should be “reaching the time limit” or “being extended over the time limit”, and to identify the set of indicators that best differentiated leavers from the clients who reached the time limit. Therefore, discriminant analysis helped us identify the ways in which the three groups differ from one another, provided support for the two sets of clients that reached the time limit (extended and discontinued) to be grouped together into the “time limit” group, and yielded the list of variables that differentiated between the leavers and the time limit groups. Once these variables were known, they were used to predict the cases that would most likely reach the time limit through the use of a binomial logistic regression.

Following indicators (in no particular order) were found to be significantly different across groups and were retained in the final set of indicators: unemployment rate in the county of residence, respondent and/or children’s perceived overall health, medical coverage, perceived financial situation as compared to the previous year, improvement in educational level within the last five years, presence of another working adult in the household, food security, and planned participation in Kentucky Works Program (KWP) activities. Each combination is referred to as a *discriminant function* where the first function identifies the most variation, the second function pinpoints the second most variation, and so on. For this analysis, two significant discriminant functions⁶ are computed, with a combined chi-square of 523.8, DF=22, (p<0.001).

⁶ Prior probabilities were computed from group sizes

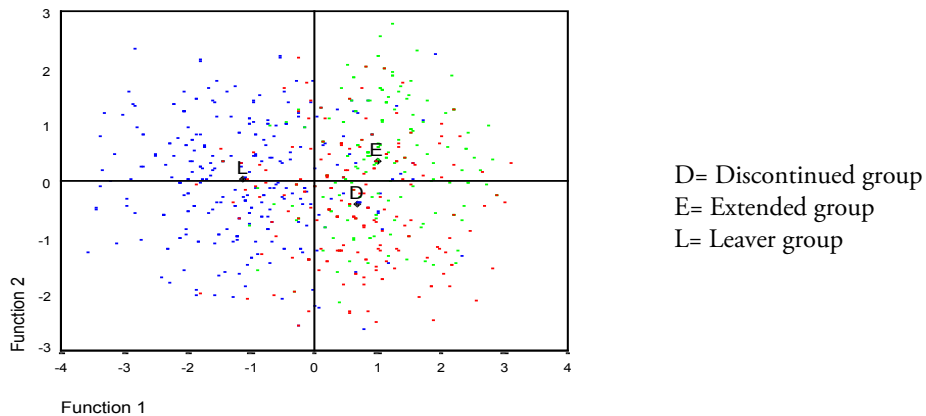


Figure 1: *Territorial Map*

The territorial map in Figure 1 shows the group centroids for the leaver, discontinued and extended groups. The first discriminant function (horizontal axis) maximally separates the leaver group from the two time limit groups. Function-2 (vertical axis) discriminates between discontinued and extended groups, with the leaver group falling between them.

The variables that loaded on Function-1, accounting for 90% of the variability among groups, were the appropriate predictors of reaching the time limit, and they were further included in the logistic regression. After removing the first function, the amount of variability explained by the second function alone remained significant, which means that the extended and discontinued groups are significantly different from each other in the characteristics that loaded on Function-2. The characteristics loading on Function-2 were not to be included in the logistic regression as the extended and discontinued cases were grouped together into the *time limit* group.

The predictor variables loading on Function-1 (Table 1), in descending order of their influence are food security, employment status, respondent's subjective assessment of his/her overall health, respondent's health insurance coverage, children's overall health, presence of another working adult in the household, and lack of work experience at intake (enrolment in the KTAP program). Thus, clients who reach the time limit (either discontinued or extended) are more likely than leavers to report food insecurity, to be unemployed, to perceive their own health or the health of their children as fair or poor, to *have* health insurance (i.e., Medicaid coverage), to have no other working adult in the household, and to lack work experience at KTAP enrollment.

The results suggest that the predictor that best distinguishes between *leavers* and the *time limit* groups is a family's food security (0.67), the only predictor with a Function-1 loading greater than 0.5. Note that participation in the KWP/work activities (Function-2 loading of 0.57) is the predictor that best distinguishes between the discontinued and extended groups; however, this comparison was not the focus of this study.

Table 1: Loadings on Discriminant Functions

Measure	Function	
	1	2
Insecure food (with hunger or severe hunger)	0.666*	-0.305
Unemployed	0.433*	0.269
Fair/Poor health (respondent)	0.420*	0.338
No health coverage (respondent)	-0.351* ⁷	0.029
Fair/poor health (children)	0.292*	0.179
No other working adult	0.273*	0.007
No work experience	0.188*	0.096
No planned KWP/work participation	0.093	0.566*
Worse financial situation compared to 12 months ago	0.371	-0.464*
Unemployment rate (standardized)	0.238	0.291*
Educational improvement	-0.110	0.157*

*Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function

The leavers were the least likely to reside in areas with high unemployment and the most likely to have had work experience at intake. Their experience during their first months off KTAP was expected to be comparable to that of the discontinued clients. However, they were significantly different in their access to health coverage after welfare. In 27.7% of the cases, leavers lacked medical coverage as compared to 6.7% of discontinued cases. Still, the leaver group had more cases with an improved financial situation (60.9%), the fewest cases of food insecurity with hunger or severe hunger (12.7%), and the fewest cases with health problems in the household. It is noteworthy that the leaver group had a significantly smaller proportion of children in fair or poor overall health (13%) than the discontinued (26.7%) group.

The set of differentiating indicators identified above was further used to predict group membership. Discriminant analyses correctly predicted the actual group membership for 67.3% of the original 682 cases. Furthermore, 65.7% of cross-validated grouped cases were correctly predicted, showing that the model is valid (albeit most successful in identifying leaver cases). For the three groups, 81.8% of leaver cases, 66.7% of extended cases, and 46.2% of discontinued cases were correctly predicted.

The model discriminated better when simply predicting whether or not a case will reach the time limit. It correctly predicted that 88.4% of the extended cases would reach the time limit (66.7% predicted to be extended plus an additional 21.7% predicted to be discontinued). For discontinued cases, 75.9% are correctly predicted to reach the time limit (46.2% predicted to be discontinued and 29.7% predicted to be extended). Of the original 682 cases, the prediction model identified 373 (or about 55% of all cases) as “likely to reach the time limit.” Results show that 320 (86%) of these 373 cases have in fact used all 60 months (and were either extended or discontinued). Thus, offering more intensive services and support to all 373 cases screened as “at risk” by the prediction model is cost-justifiable, particularly if such interventions succeed in decreasing the number of cases that use the lifetime limit.

As previously described, discriminant analysis revealed that the most important differences are between KTAP leavers and time-limit clients (whether discontinued or extended). *Logistic regression* further improved our ability to predict who are the clients that are most likely to reach the time limit, by identifying the best combination of predictors. Based on client-specific information on each of the measures identified with the discriminant analysis (i.e., the indicators loading on Function-1) and further included in the logistic model, the chances (odds) of reaching

⁷ Note: A negative coefficient indicates that the interpretation should be opposite to the actual label of the coefficient (i.e., with health insurance coverage rather than no health coverage, better rather than worse financial situation as compared to 12-months ago).

the time limit were estimated. Table 2 displays the logistic regression coefficients that predicted membership in the group that reached the time limit. Differences might be noticed between the indicators in the logistic model and the indicators loading on discriminant Function-1. This is because in the logistic model we controlled for the region of residence and for presence in the household of children that were five year old or younger, but we did not control for the respondent's employment status. These adjustments were made in light of the significant relationship between employment status and all other indicators in the model, including the area of residence and having a young child in the home. Clients residing in Appalachia, who had children below school age living in the household, with no work experience, with poor or fair health, and/or food insecurity were more likely to be unemployed.

Table 2: Logistic Regression Coefficients

Indicators	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Odds Ratio	95.0% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Reside in Appalachia	0.969	0.2	23.591	1	0.000	2.635	1.782	3.896
Lack of work experience	0.577	0.216	7.158	1	0.007	1.781	1.167	2.718
Food insecurity with hunger	1.537	0.23	44.532	1	0.000	4.651	2.961	7.304
Adult in fair/poor health	0.993	0.192	26.724	1	0.000	2.700	1.853	3.935
Child below age 5	0.768	0.31	6.156	1	0.013	2.156	1.175	3.957
Child in fair/poor health	0.576	0.234	6.057	1	0.014	1.779	1.125	2.816
No other working adult	1.485	0.329	20.393	1	0.000	4.413	2.317	8.406
Constant	-2.803	0.352	63.291	1	0.000	0.061		
Dependent Variable: "Reached time limit?" answers: yes=1 no=0; Nagelkerke's R ² = 37.4%								

The logistic model is accurate in predicting clients who leave KTAP before reaching the time limits 68.5% of the time. It is even more useful in predicting cases that use all their available time on KTAP; the model accurately classified 81.3% of cases that reached the time limit. In other words, eight out of every ten clients who use all 60 months of KTAP eligibility are identified in advance using this model. Regardless of the actual scores on these measures, using this model to predict whether or not cases will reach the time limit results in a correct prediction about 75.8% of the time.

All results reported in Table 2 are statistically significant; the chi-square test ($\chi^2=222.4$ with $df=7$, $p<.000$) indicates that the set of indicators significantly improves our ability to predict the outcome. Furthermore, the reliability of this specific combination of indicators has been confirmed by the Hosmer & Lemeshow test ($\chi^2=12.08$ with $df=8$, $p=0.148$).

The regression coefficients were further used to discover how much the odds of reaching the time limit would change for each particular combination of characteristics. The odds for a case with none of the risk factors (constant) were quite favorable with odds of .061 to 1; this type of case will most probably not reach the time limit. Because the odds ratios for all indicators in the model were greater than one, any of the other characteristics (e.g. lack of work experience, young child, and children with fair/poor health) would increase the risk of reaching the time limit. The change in odds when multiple risk factors are present can be calculated by multiplying their odd ratios, which can then be converted into probability of reaching the time limit.

The strongest predictor of group membership was food insecurity with hunger or severe hunger. Cases experiencing food insecurity with hunger or severe hunger were about 4.65 times more likely to reach the time limit than clients with food security or food insecurity/no hunger.

This characteristic alone would not lead to maximum utilization of KTAP time; if no other risk were present, the client would have a $p=0.221$ probability of reaching the time limit.

The second strongest indicator was the absence of another working adult in the household; 89.3% of the cases fall into this category. The cases without another working adult in the household were 4.41 times more likely to use all 60 months of eligibility than those with a second wage earner. If a case had both insecure food and no other working adult in the household, the probability of reaching the time limit increased to $p=0.556$. It should be noted that most cases did not have two employed adults.

The third most significant indicator was the respondent's perceived overall health. Almost half of the sample reported fair or poor overall health; they had a $p=0.141$ probability of reaching the time limit. Respondents with health problems are 2.7 times more likely to reach the time limit than those in good health. If children are in fair or poor health (24.3% of the caseload) the case is 1.78 times more likely to utilize all 60 months.

Area of residence ranked fourth in terms of importance for predicting group membership. While living in Appalachia alone brought a 13.8% chance of reaching the time limit, living in Appalachia *and* having no prior work experience raised the probability of reaching the time limit to 22.3%.

Finally, a measure of family structure that significantly predicts reaching the time limit is the presence in the household of a child who is five years old or younger. Cases with young children had about 1 in 9 chances of reaching the time limit.

The presence of more than one risk factor increases the likelihood of accurately predicting who will reach the time limit, and particular combinations of risks may have a stronger impact than others. These issues bring us back to the questions posed earlier: Which combinations of indicators are most likely to predict that a client is at risk of reaching the time limit? How prevalent are these combinations in the actual time limit population? How early could they be identified and at what cost?

Based on the model identified above, the group of cases with the highest probability (96%) of reaching the time limit includes clients who reside in Appalachia, lack work experience at intake, have no other working adult in the household, have at least one child aged five or below, perceive their own and their children's overall health as fair or poor, and experience food insecurity with hunger. Thus, for the screening tool we chose the first three strongest predictors: lack of a second working adult, food security, and respondent's health. In addition, children health variables were included because of their significant relationship with the respondent's perceived overall health.

Testing the Screening Tool

The results of the multivariate analyses showed that screening cases for the absence of another working adult in the family, food insecurity, and fair/poor health of the respondent and his/her children would identify cases with a very high probability of reaching the time limit. Therefore, these measures may be used to screen all active clients who used between 24 and 48 months in order to assess their risk to reach the time limits. The group with 48 months or more is automatically included in the intensive case management (ICM) program.

To test this screening model, cases with the characteristics mentioned above were identified for each year of the panel data, and their KTAP utilization pattern is examined. The questionnaire used in 1998 did not include the food security scale, thus the first survey was excluded from this analysis.

Table 3 displays the distribution of clients with at least one risk characteristic by year for the entire panel study sample and for a subsample of clients who had used at least 24 months of cash assistance (the medium and high utilization groups).

Table 3: Screening Measures by Panel Year (1999-2001)

Measure	1999 (N=682)		2000 (N=857)		2001 (N=1015)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Panel Sample						
No other working adult	568	83.3	689	80.4	783	77.1
Insecure food	92	13.5	116	13.5	148	14.7
Health (Fair/poor)						
Respondent	248	36.3	497	34.6	381	37.5
Children	102	14.9	123	14.4	157	15.4
Subsample ≥24-month on KTAP	1999 (N=411)		2000 (N=512)		2001 (N=639)	
No other working adult	351	85.4	443	86.5	523	81.8
Insecure food	58	14.1	67	13.1	95	14.8
Health (Fair/poor)						
Respondent	152	37.0	185	36.2	256	40.1
Children	72	17.5	91	17.8	116	18.2

About 60% of the panel sample used 24 or more months of KTAP cash assistance; a somewhat smaller screening group may be achieved by eliminating cases with a second working adult in the household. At least 82% of the medium and high KTAP user groups have no other working adult in the household, 36% or more respondents are in fair or poor health, about 18% have children in fair or poor health, and over 13% report food insecurity. The small differences across the years show that these measures are likely to remain the same unless some type of intervention occurs.

While 60% of the panel samples over the years were medium and high KTAP users, these groups represented only 23% of the general KTAP population (that is these users were overrepresented in the study sample); thus, data required weighting. The low utilization group includes 321 cases, and represents the 8,074 cases with low KTAP utilization from the 10% sample. The 321 cases should comprise 68.9% of the panel sample instead of 31.6%. Similarly, the weight or influence of the other two groups must be reduced to accurately reflect the proportions in the population, obtained from the analysis of a random ten-percent sample. For testing the tool we used the 2001 panel weighted sample, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Number and Percentage of Clients with Specific Screening Characteristics (2001 panel)

Measure	2001 (N=11,722) Weighted 4th panel survey		2001 (N=3,638) Weighted >24-month		2001 (N=2,948) Weighted, >24-month 1 adult earner only	
	N	%*	N	%	N	%
Screening Measures						
On KTAP ≥24 months	3638	31.0	3638	100.0	2948	100.0
No 2nd working adult	8472	72.3	2948	81.0	2948	100.0
Insecure food with hunger	1186	10.1	502	13.8	405	13.8
Respondent - fair/poor health	4251	36.2	1445	39.7	1214	41.2
Child - fair/poor health	1562	12.2	609	17.9	551	19.8
Screening Outcomes						
Projected users ≥48-months	5411	46.2	1865	51.3	1608	54.6
TLG Observed	1190	10.2	1190	32.7	1060	35.9
TLG Correctly Predicted	605	11.2	605	32.4	553	34.4
Rate of Success	50.8		50.8		52.2	
False Positive	4806	88.8	1260	67.6	1055	65.6
False Negative	585	49.2	585	49.2	507	47.8

* Valid percentage (does not include cases with missing values); TLG= time limit group

Table 4 displays the change in size of the group targeted for screening if a) the entire 4th year weighted sample is used; and b) if clients with 24 or more months on KTAP are filtered out; and c) if a second filter is applied to select only the clients who have no second working adult in the household. The proportion of clients with at least 24 months on KTAP is 31% (N=3,638) of the 4th year panel weighted sample, out of which 81% (N=2,948) had no other working adult in the household. Although the overall rate of success does not improve drastically, the cost associated with the screening of 3,638 cases is clearly lower than the cost for screening 11,722 cases.

The screening of 2,948 cases yields further cost savings and identifies 1,608 cases or 54.6% that are predicted to remain on KTAP for 48 months or more. Administrative records on these cases show that in fact only 1,060 or 35.9% of the 2,948 cases actually reached the 48-month limit as of December 2001. Moreover, of the 1,060 cases, 553 or 34.4% were correctly predicted to use 48 months or more on KTAP. Thus, using the screening tool, we were able to identify many (52.2%) of all clients who actually reached the 48-month mark on KTAP.

Conclusion

Due to an overrepresentation of the moderate and high users of cash assistance in the panel study, the evaluation team was able to use statistical analyses to identify data patterns that set these two groups apart from the rest of the KTAP population. Their characteristics were further used to create a brief practical screening tool that can help case managers to identify the moderate KTAP users at risk of becoming high KTAP users. The intent is to provide the additional support these cases need as soon as possible, in order to help KTAP recipients become self-sufficient before reaching the KTAP time limit. This tool has the potential to preserve months of KTAP eligibility for clients with multiple risk factors, time that they might need at a later point in life. Furthermore, the tool has the potential to save federal funds that states could use to empower hard-to-serve clients through the provision of specialized case management services.

The results of the multivariate analyses showed that screening of cases at the 24-month point-in-time for the absence of another working adult in the family, for food insecurity with hunger, and for fair/poor health of the respondent and his/her children, would identify cases with a very high probability of reaching the time limit. To summarize, the following five steps should be carried out in order to successfully identify the clients at risk to reach the time limit:

1. Select all cases with 24 months or more of KTAP cash assistance utilization. From this group, further select only the cases without a second adult earner in the household.
2. Apply the screening tool that includes the food security scale *and* the measures of health status for the respondent and his or her children.
3. Refer to intensive case management (ICM) all cases with insecure food with hunger *and* with fair or poor health status for the respondents or their children.
4. Monitor and screen again, within six months, all cases with insecure food with hunger *or* fair or poor health status for the respondents or their children.
5. At 48 months, if a case is still active on KTAP, automatically refer it for ICM.

It is recommended that all of the active clients who use between 24 to 48 months of their lifetime limit be screened using this process. The screening tool proposed in this paper has a great potential to assist decision makers in the management of KTAP caseload.

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APPENDIX: SCREENING TOOL ITEMS

Number of Working Adults:

Do you work at any full-time jobs, 35 hours or more per week? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Do you work at any part-time jobs, less than 35 hours per week? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Do you work at any temporary, seasonal, or occasional odd jobs, or other employment you have not mentioned yet? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Respondent's Health:

How would you describe your overall health?

1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 9. DK/NA

Do you have any chronic illnesses? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Do you have any physical disabilities? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Do you have any mental disabilities? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Children's Health:

The following questions were asked each child (ex, child1, child2, etc.) in the household.

How would you describe the overall health of [CHILD1]?

1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 9. DK/NA

Does [CHILD1] have any chronic illnesses? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Does [CHILD1] have any physical disabilities? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Does [CHILD1] have any mental disabilities? 1. YES 2. NO 9. DK/NA

Food Security Scale: The Food Security Core-Module Questionnaire of the U.S. Household Standard Food-Security/Hunger Survey Module can be downloaded from: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsec/files/fsguide.pdf> (Appendix A, pages 52 -57)



Cross-Cultural Social Research with Indigenous Knowledge (IK): Some Dilemmas and Lessons

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Abstract:

This paper looks at many contemporary issues in cross-cultural social research with indigenous knowledge (IK). The paper draws some practical examples and experiences based on two PhD research works done in two countries in the South – Zambia (Banda, 2008) and Bangladesh (Islam, 2009). The paper argues that this is the Eurocentric assumption which holds that no body of knowledge can be owned by a tribe or group of people and that alternative knowledge to universal knowledge is ignorance. Finally, this paper highlights the need for more research in IK by researcher from both the North and the South, but taking into account the peculiarities and complexities conducting research in IK.

Keywords: *Qualitative Research, Cross-Cultural Social Research, Indigenous Knowledge, Ethics in Social Research, Bangladesh, Zambia.*

Introduction

This paper looks at many contemporary issues in cross-cultural social research with indigenous knowledge (IK). The paper draws some practical examples and experiences based on two PhD research works done in two countries in the South – Zambia (Banda, 2008) and Bangladesh (Islam, 2009). Banda (2008) conducted his research on two communities of practice - those perceived to be custodians of African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (AIKS), (paramount and subordinate chiefs and other traditional leaders, traditional birth attendants (*Anamwino*), counsellors (*Alangizi*), and parents) and policy-makers and implementers (Educationists, University lectures, NGOs involved with the provision of education in the area, teachers and pupils). This research made an attempt to analyse how the two communities of practice depart or meet and the attitudes each group has towards the other on the provision and quality of education. On the other hand, Islam (2009) conducted his research on two communities (one urban, the other rural) from two

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NGOs in Bangladesh: *Proshika* and Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB) and data were obtained from two indigenous occupations: blacksmiths and goldsmiths.

Challenges and dilemmas of cross-culture research are analysed in this paper. Underpinning the two researches are lessons, warnings, guidelines and pieces of advice to researchers whose cultural background is different from those under study. This contribution highlights the characteristics perceived to be sources of these dilemmas namely that IK is widely considered not universal, undocumented, context-based and consequently non-existent. It argues that this is the Eurocentric assumption which holds that no body of knowledge can be owned by a tribe or group of people and that alternative knowledge to universal knowledge is ignorance. Finally, this paper highlights the need for more research in IK by researchers from both the North and the South, but taking into account the peculiarities and complexities conducting research in IK. The paper also makes a passionate appeal to those supervising students studying in the North but doing their field work in their home countries in the South to make an allowance of variations to conventional and 'universal' research techniques and ethical issues.

Cross-cultural issues on the global research

It is important to observe that cultural diversity is a reality (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2004), and we would say that this phenomenon makes cross-cultural or intercultural research a challenge. It could also be argued that it is an important source of new learning, inspiration and possibly creativity for groups, individuals, organisations and societies in this global world (Sillitoe, Dixon & Barr, 2005). Globalization is interpreted in many ways by various scholars and researchers. Mazrui (2001) interprets globalization in three divergent ways:

1. an economic interdependency across vast distances
2. information availability and movement across vast distances
3. reduction of the world into a global village

Mazrui (2001) further identifies two forms of globalization namely economic and cultural. Moahi (2007) views globalization as the opening up and interconnectedness of the world. He argues that this opening up is all about empire building, search for raw materials, and new markets (Boulding, 1988; Mazrui, 2001), and that the process of this globalization could have its roots in colonialism. Colonialism had same driving forces as those started above. The fears expressed in some quarters (Grenier, 1998; Mazrui, 2001; Odora, 2002; Hoahi, 2007) are that just as colonialism displaced many people from their cultural lands, plundered cultural objects and many artefacts and adversely diluted the rich cultures of the colonized people, globalization may, in subtle ways, do the same. It may undermine, among many, the Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) of those perceived to be in the peripheral of the so-called 'universal knowledge'. In the area of research we would say there are relations and contradictions between research in the North and South based on various perspectives such as methodological, epistemological and ethical perspectives.

This paper draws examples from two indigenous knowledge system (IKS) -related research works conducted in Zambia (Banda, 2008) and Bangladesh (Islam, 2009). We would say the two researchers used western paradigms from the North (The University of Nottingham, England) to conduct their research in the South (Zambia and Bangladesh). This paper tries to identify and acknowledge similarities and differences that cross-cultural researchers meet in the field. Arguments based on field experience in research in IKS, in Zambia or Bangladesh is that the building of this global village is on an uneven ground. There is a mismatch in political and economic powers of those striving to enter the global village and these power relations affect

any research especially those of cross-culture in nature. It is the more powerful countries in the North that seem to be gaining from the globalization of knowledge. Countries like Zambia and Bangladesh, in the South, may have very little to offer as their rich economy and culture are embedded in their IKS, which are paradoxically perceived to be under threat from globalization as currently alternative knowledge to Western knowledge is ignorance. Odora (2002) has concluded that Globalization “has put ‘fishes and sharks’ in the same pond”.

However, there seem to be some contradictions in the threats perceived to be facing IKS. While Odora’s (2000) argument is that globalization aims to dilute or even kill IKS, Nyamnjoh et al. (2007) say that the real threat is the commercialization of the IKS. They say that:

“Globalization has commoditized and privatised knowledge, resulting in the knowledge economy. Knowledge that was in the public domain, owned by communities and passed down from generation to generation, has been privatized by applying intellectual property rights that confer rights on individual, effectively robbing whole communities.”

My argument is that IKS faces both threats i.e. the killing of some aspects considered (by the global corporations acting as the knowledge gatekeepers) harmful and commercializing those that are of an economic value to them. The latter threat is subtle as real owners of the knowledge may think they are benefiting when they do not to the extent that global capital does. This unfairness is seen in the example cited by Nyamnjoh et al. (2007):

“As the knowledge economy spreads its tentacles, it begins to displace IK from the hands of its owners, the communities. The knowledge is then ‘reconfigured’ in response to the asking and dictates of global capital.”

All in all, we would say despite differences in cross-cultural research, common values and principles can be established through dialogue and free sharing of knowledge. Cross-cultural research could be an effective tool to dismantle the barriers created by both the perceived Eurocentric approach to research³ and the rigid traditions, cultural beliefs, norms and values entrenched in IK. This is a view shared by many authors (Antweiler, 1996).

Methodological and Ethical Challenges: Two field experiences

Ethical concerns are a very important component to any social research (Sillitoe, Dixon & Barr, 2005). Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000, p. 347) hold that:

“Ethical concerns encountered in Educational research, in particular, can be extremely complex and subtle and can frequently place researchers in moral predicament, which may appear quite irresolvable.”

When conducting research in IK, there are ethical issues to consider. It is vital to protect those involved in the research as some of them may not be able to represent themselves in the event that they are misrepresented (Banda, 2008). Often research in IKS may have to deal with vulnerable women, men and children in a rural setting on the one hand and traditional community leaders

³ Where universal knowledge is from the North and alternative knowledge to that which is universal is ignorance and synonymous with the South.

and NGO workers who are very concerned with their privacy and importance on the other. There could be threats, as well, depending on the political environment in the area (Islam, 2009).

There are a number of contradictions and challenges that must be observed. These must be judged on their merits and demerits based on various bodies of knowledge valued in a given cultural and geographical setting. However, there are general guidelines that must be observed at all times and this is both in the North and South. For example, researchers should ensure that controlled access for sensitive information that cannot be explicitly authorized for general distribution, as determined by the perceived owners of that information, is observed. In the case of research in IK, researchers should ensure that controlled access for cultural information as determined by members of the local community or the elders in the community should be distributed to the general public only with their explicit authority. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000, p. 347) caution that this may be easier said than done as ethical issues could be complex:

“Ethical concerns encountered in educational research in particular can be extremely complex and subtle and can frequently place researchers in moral predicament, which may appear quite irresolvable.”

Keeping the discussion going on and not astray is a big challenge on the part of an interviewee as a moderator in IK research. There is always a high possibility of some participants not participating and allowing themselves to be inhibited by the others. What McNamara (1999, p. 9) sums up as challenges faced by interviewees as moderators in focus groups could be more pronounced with research in IKS involving respondents influenced by cultural norms and values:

- Sorting out what is important
- Understanding implications
- Decoding symbolism
- Unraveling complex situations
- Interpreting ambiguous behaviour
- Designing persuasion and predicting behaviour
- Developing strategies and new ideas.

The contents, participants, and social issues, which such research investigates, raise a number of ethical issues that we were aware of before beginning our field work. In accordance with the ethical guideline, we gave a clear understanding to our stakeholders about issues, such as the focus of research, the research objectives and purposes, their participation, the time schedule of research, data collection methods and techniques, privacy and confidentiality of data, and the benefits of the research. We were also aware of the ethical guidelines of the ESRC, BERA, Miles & Huberman (1994) and Tacchi, Slater & Hearn (2003).

Miles & Huberman (1994) elaborately explain and discuss the ethical guidelines for qualitative research. They identify the worthiness of the project (i.e., is my contemplated study worth doing?); competence boundaries; informed consent; benefits, costs and reciprocity; harm and risk; honesty and trust; privacy, confidentiality and anonymity; interventions and advocacy; research integrity and quality; ownership of data and conclusions; use and misuse of results; and conflicts, dilemmas and trade-offs. In their summary, they state that dealing with ethical issues “effectively involves heightened awareness, negotiation, and making trade-offs among ethical dilemmas, rather than the application of rules” (for details please see Miles & Huberman, 1994). Their advice is to anticipate: advance thinking during the early stages of research design. Anticipating challenges ahead can help avoid problems later. On the other hand, Tacchi, Slater & Hearn (2003) suggest the following:

- Explain myself (researcher)
- Respect confidences
- Treat people sensitively
- Explore sensitive issues
- Never put people at risk or endanger their well-being.

The two research experiences have shown challenges and dilemmas that researchers meet in the field which require prudence and shrewdness (Sillitoe, Dixon & Barr, 2005; Moahi, 2007). From the two research experiences shared in this paper, we will show how the ethical issues create dilemmas on different cross-cultural issues.

Zambian Experience

There were a number of challenges that I faced during my field work. Most of them border on methods and techniques on collecting data and ethical issues to be observed. The first lesson I learnt was that methodology and methods should take into account local scenarios and respondents' perceptions on given research works or on research in general. Various methods and techniques used in a given methodology should not be detached from the contents and meanings that are ever being constructed (Ntuli, 2002). Each method and technique used in research in areas such as IKS should take into account the cultural and practices of other countries and their peoples. While a number of these methods may show considerable success, there could also be challenges and dilemmas posed by them as observed in the listed items below:

1. Power relations

While interviews may appear to be very effective tool in IKS research, generally, they pose a number of challenging situations. One notable weakness of interviews I observed during my field work was that they can be subjective and the participants may be unwilling to report on their true feelings as a result of being too conscious of the power structures and gender relations embedded in IKS. While settling down the participants by making introductions and starting by asking questions are considered to be ways of encouraging the respondents for fruitful participation (Patton, 1990), as is the case with research in the North, the situation is not the same with research in the South, especially with research in IKS involving traditional leaders and elders as interviewees.

Focus group discussion as a tool for data collection is not spared from this dilemma. The conventional rule about focus group discussions is that the moderator (who is usually the researcher) must ensure that all group members contribute to the discussion and must avoid letting one participant's opinions dominate (McNamara, 1999). However, the issue of power relations is so strong (with research in IKS) that there is always a possibility of some participants not participating and allowing themselves to be inhibited by those perceived to be higher in status or age. For example, it is considered wrong among many African people to disagree among themselves in the presence of an outsider (who could be a researcher moderating a focus group discussion) or to openly disagree with an outsider (researcher). Culturally, many Africans would not like to disappoint a visitor or stranger even when they do not agree with his/her views. This may imply the researcher not getting the true reflections of his/her respondents on the issue. Such knowledge of people's culture would prepare a researcher to be shrewd when collecting data. Above all, this may explain why when I asked a question, respondents firstly asked what my views were before they could give theirs on the issue. For example, in the interviews conducted with

all traditional respondents (Banda, 2008), before respondents would answer any question, they would always want to get my views (researcher's) on the same issue and the common question was, "What do you think about it yourself? Tell us your answer before we tell you ours."

This phenomenon may be against general ethical principles in research in the North. The assumption is that such questions would weaken the validity and reliability of the answers to be given. The response a researcher may give could influence the answers the respondents are likely to give. This observation shows that students from the South doing research in home countries while being supervised by researchers in the North risk being questioned or even failed by their supervisors once they follow the dictate they meet in the field. Supervisors need to take into account such variations that researchers meet in a real world rather than what is stipulated in research guidelines on ethical issues.

Furthermore, knowledge of power relations among respondents dictated by cultural beliefs is vital in conducting research in the South. Such knowledge of people's culture would prepare a researcher to be shrewd when collecting data. For example, culturally, many Africans would not like to disappoint a visitor or stranger (researcher) by giving opposing views. This, therefore, implies that even when they do not agree with his/her views, they may choose to agree so that they are not misunderstood. This may imply the researcher not getting the true reflections of his/her respondents on the issue.

In the same vein, disagreeing with an elderly person is also considered abnormal and unethical among many traditional Africans. This is mainly because wisdom is believed to be drawn from age and experience (Banda, 2008). The older one is the more experienced and the wiser one on any issue that may arise. That may explain why, usually, an elderly person is expected to speak first and the rest are expected to agree verbally or simply by nodding their heads. In this case, a researcher must realize that keeping quiet and nodding heads are signs of active participation in a focus group discussion, for example. This may not be the case with research in the North, where being silent in a discussion is a sure sign of being inactive and passive.

2. The all-answers-are-correct technique

Interviews are a very useful way of collecting data. As noted by Bassey (1995), people are more willing to talk in an interview than the case would be if they were asked to write. This is true with research in IK where the possibility of involving respondents who do not know how to write is very high. When respondents are told to be free and contribute in any way, they often open up and share their views on the matter. However, my experience during field work is that when I told respondents that there were neither right nor wrong answers, I could see that it weakened the whole essence of the discussions. Some respondents (traditional leaders) found it offending as they assumed that I (researcher) was insinuating that they would be telling me wrong things. One of the respondents asked me why I had come to them if I thought they could be telling me wrong things. I also observed that it was difficult for local and traditional leaders and elders to fully and freely participate in any discussion without feeling judged by the researcher who is asking questions. This may suggest that care is needed when devising a focus group discussion guide.

3. Limitations imposed on researcher

Although I am *Chewa* by tribe, researching among my own *Chewa* people still posed challenges. I still faced dilemmas that a researcher from the North could possibly have faced though from a different perspective. I noticed that a researcher with formal education and credentials doing research in his area may not be treated hundred percent like the local respondents. I was not

treated as a fellow *Chewa* person despite using the local *Chewa* language with them. I had to wear three 'jackets' during research i.e. a researcher, a *Chewa* and a person with formal education, perceived to be living a better working class life in town. These aspects always imposed some limitations on the participation in these groups. Sentiments like, "you are educated and what can you learn from us" were uttered by some respondents. This may imply that a researcher from the North (especially white) may be perceived to be one who already knows everything thereby affecting their participations and answers they may give.

4. Seeking permission to take part in the research, record the proceedings, take picture or use pseudo names

While permission to record the proceedings has to be sought in research in the North, this is not always the case with research in the South, especially with research in IK. To have one's voice recorded and played on radio is an achievement and therefore does not require permission. However, this could compromise the validity and reliability of the data collected from some interviewees. They may say a lot of things that may not necessarily be true but just to impress the researcher. The use of pseudo names to protect the respondents is another issue which could be debatable. In the case where the researcher could be dealing with people who are not highly literate, there may be need to protect them through the use of pseudo names. However, during my field work, I noticed that telling interviewees that confidentiality would be maintained by not mentioning their names but using fictitious ones in the report was construed as crookedness on my part as a researcher. I noticed that this could breed suspicion and withholding of information if not handled well. But looking at the type of information they were giving, I took it upon myself to use the pseudo names against their wishes but just to protect them.

One notable ethical issue observed in research in the North is centred on researchers informing participants (clients) that they would not be coerced into taking part but that they would be given an opportunity to make an informed and free choice to participate in the study. Additionally, respondents are told that they could freely withdraw from the focus group or interviews at any time without risk or prejudice (Fairbrother, 2001). Such may not apply with research in the South, especially with research in IK. Based on my field work experience, such an observation by the researcher could be taken as a sign of lack of seriousness on the part of the researcher. Clients may even ask why you came to them in the first place. Worse still, they may even think that you (researcher) did not take them seriously and, therefore, are wasting their time.

5. The culture of rewarding respondents

Like in the experiences observed in Bangladeshi, it was also thorny to give a well-justified purpose and objective of my academic research, as the traditional chiefs, elders and other local leaders and people used to think that such kind of research meant that I (Researcher) would provide them with some immediate rewards like food or money. At one focus group discussion with the chief's counsellors, one of them wondered if the things they were proposing would be implemented by the government as quickly as possible. They also wondered if I had anything for them like what others do after discussing such issues with them. This is the common practice by research organisations from the North, and some NGOs. Some traditional leaders were visibly frustrated when they saw that there was no material gain from me (the research). With the chiefs, this is common knowledge that you do not see a chef (for any issue) empty-handed. It is a known and chargeable offence to do that. So for all the four traditional chiefs interviewed, these traditional norms were observed and these issues were discussed with my supervisor before commencing

my research because I had fore knowledge of them. (My supervisor gave me some gifts for the traditional chiefs).

This means that knowledge that some conventional ethical guidelines cannot satisfy some local issues, such as cultural and traditional habits, norms and values, is vital especially to researcher from the North and those supervisors from the North working with students from the South. Some students may not reflect such practices in their research plans presented to supervisors for fear such acts would be misconstrued to be bribes and weaken the validity and reliability of data collected.

6. Mode of forming Focus groups

Organising focus group discussions following ethical issues considered important in research in the North may pose a challenge in research in IKS in the South. In determining the number of people in a given focus group in IK research, Krueger & Casey (2000, p. 71) suggest that:

“The focus group is characterized by homogeneity but with sufficient variation among participants to allow for constructing opinion.”

While such procedural steps would be considered to be universal and could produce good results in research in the North, they tend to be a stumbling block with research in IKS in the South where power structures are imbedded in IKS influencing any discussion that may follow. During my field work, expert sampling proved to be useful to select some individuals to include in one or two follow-up focus groups. This may suggest that expert sampling (assembling of a sample of persons with known or demonstrable experience and expertise in some areas) is an effective way of forming a focus group in research in the North. My observation was that it may prove to be unrealistic in research in IKS to think of convening an expert panel consisting of persons with acknowledged experience and insight on the topic (Warren, Sikkerveer & Brokensha, 1995). Individual interviews of such experts gave better results than focus group discussions. Reasons could be many and varying yet vital for researchers from the North who plan to conduct research in the South, especially research in IKS. Still, on the formation of focus groups, I observed that there may be no need to follow rigid rules imposed by general ethical consideration. Some of these rules and guidelines are that the group must be dynamic to enable it to focus on the most important topics and issues; that groups must be relatively consistent in order for participants to have shared views; that focus groups should aim at providing opportunities to bring together people either of the same social group or different to discuss one topic; that participants are to be free to agree or disagree and that respondents could decide to gather at a place of their choice so that the discussion take a normal setting, and conducive to a free and open discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Fairbrother, 2001).

However, these issues may not be viewed the same in research in the South and especially with research in IKS. For example, during my field work, I discovered that it was very easy to come up with a focus group using existing normal settings rather than trying to form new ones from prescribed social groups. My personal experience in this area was that through opportunistic interviews on buses (especially those on long trips) or indeed in a social setting, like at a funeral, it was very easy to come up with ‘focus group discussion’. You would start a discussion with a person sitting next to you and within a short time those sitting next would join in the discussion. You would easily have the whole bus, including the driver, becoming one large focus group. At two occasions for example, I had half the bus contributing to the discussion on the relevance of the current school curriculum. This is one thing you cannot dare to try in the West as you may cover the whole distance of your journey without exchanging a single word with the person

sitting next to you. Funerals in the West are private issues while in the South they are social gatherings where one can even find his or her future spouse (some men have chosen their spouses after being impressed with the way one cries⁴). This means that rather than making formal focus group discussion, taking advantage of the already existing group settings or gatherings would be beneficial and easy. In my research I managed to collect vital information from people in such natural settings like on a bus, on funeral gatherings and other social settings. Usually people sit in their age or social groups already in these settings. Information is sometimes given even without soliciting it. A mere complement on a tie one is wearing would prompt that person to disclose information relating to when he bought the tie, how the money was obtained and, if borrowed, how the borrower earned that money, etc.

These, I feel, are experiences that must be shared by other researchers and supervisors of would-be supervisors so that challenges and dilemmas faced by various researchers are appreciated and judged with a human and cultural face.

Bangladesh Experience

Before describing my Bangladesh experience, I would like to mention some statements which were considered in the research as relevant to the ethical guidelines for conducting my field work. The research forwards four quotations, one from Greiner (1998) and three from the ESRC Commissioned Inquiry, which partly cover the challenges, risks and limitations of the ethical guidelines that I faced throughout my fieldwork period.

- “...while there is now a widely accepted understanding that participation as a respondent in research carries with it an emotional component and a consequent need for the researcher to be sensitive and aware of ethical implications, there is little corresponding awareness of the emotional impact on the researcher” (Greiner, 1998).
- “Qualitative researchers may experience a range of risks. Some of these risks relate to the physical well-being of researchers and correspondent to conventional health and safety considerations in employment of all kinds. It is not difficult to think of situations in which researchers may be at risk of violence or other physical danger” (ESRC Commissioned Inquiry, quoted from Nicholson, undated).
- “Researchers may become emotionally threatened, where, for example, the data being collected are distressing or the settings emotionally taxing. These different types of risk reflect the objectives of the research, the settings in which it is conducted and the characteristics of participants in the research, both ‘subjects’ and ‘researchers’ ” (ESRC Commissioned Inquiry, quoted from Nicholson, undated).
- “Researcher risks are a matter of urgent interest to a range of parties, not just researchers, but also research supervisors, research funders, insurers, ethicists, occupational health and safety personnel and other: Good practice for researchers and supervisors and extended to university ethics committees and research grants boards” (ESRC Commissioned Inquiry, quoted from Nicholson, undated).

⁴ In many African countries, women are the ones who cry at funerals. Men do not cry as that is a sign of weakness. Women do their crying assignment so well that some start crying even before they find out who has died

The ESRC Commissioned Inquiry states mainly three kind of risks: physical, emotional, and risks as a matter of urgent interest to a range of parties. On the other hand, Greiner (1998) mentions both emotional and ethical sensitiveness. I think that most researchers in qualitative studies had to face more or less of these risks during their field work. One of the most challenging aspects was to follow and implement the ethical guidelines I followed, provided by, for example, Miles & Huberman (1994) or Tacchi, Slater & Hearn (2003). I found these Western ethical guidelines were difficult to implement in the Bangladesh context, where I found some cross-cultural limitations. These limitations became unbreakable difficulties, when those attached with the local people's poor socio-economic, cultural and political conditions. The following discussion outlines some of these dilemmas that I faced in my field work.

1. Poor socio-economic and cultural conditions

One key example of this was that it was difficult to give a well-justified understanding of the purpose and objective of my academic research, as the local people used to think that such research (which they call *jarip* (survey), usually done by NGOs) meant that the NGOs would provide them some immediate services. But they were frustrated when they learnt that the research was not involved with such kind of initiative. This limitation had an effect on other ethical issues, such as benefits, costs and reciprocity; honesty and trust; privacy, confidentiality and anonymity; and research integrity and quality. Moreover, these ethical guidelines could not satisfy some local issues, such as religion, local leadership, cultural habits, norms and values. For example, at times the relations with NGO staff members and community leaders were so difficult that the community leaders openly commented against the NGO staff members, which raised questions of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity; and the honesty and trust of the research. These challenges were particularly difficult to overcome.

2. Physical harm and safety issues

There are some risks, for example physical risk, to my personal safety. During my first visit at *Mostofapur Bazar* for Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB), I was noticed by some local leaders (so-called political leaders). Some local individuals feared that I had some inquiry on political issues. In this instance, my assistant and I were subject to physical harassment despite our attempts to explain the purposes of our research. Unfortunately, many of the NGO staff members are politically involved in Bangladesh and such levels of risk arise when introducing oneself as a researcher doing research on NGOs' activities. Emotional threats from different interest groups were very common throughout my field work. For example, NGO staff members were not as hospitable as I had anticipated and this was in itself an unforeseen challenge in the research process. This situation was at its worst in an area office; they did not appreciate the relevance of any kind of research that might contribute toward their policy procedures. I guessed their interest and motives might be different, relating to commercial motives or that they simply did not want to be challenged at all. My interest and the staff members' interests therefore did not always go hand in hand.

3. Gaps between the interests of the researcher and the ones of the respondents

Another reality was the gap between the expectations of researchers and NGOs. For example, I could not see policy documents for four months during my fieldwork; I could not even view

the whole documents at my house. I was told that they were very secret and only for office usage, or 'not permitted to take it out'. After much correspondence, they agreed to allow me to photocopy some documents after five months of my field work. Many of the field staff members especially in PAB were not cooperative in arranging the FGD sessions to share their experience about blacksmithing. They changed my FGD and in-depth case study schedules several times to say that their staff members were absent from the office.

During FGD sessions, some of the main staff members were absent, and they were not happy to discuss with me in those sessions. I found some of them were less focused through their reluctance and in some cases continued their work duties, which made matters very difficult. In addition, I got the return of my questionnaires from some of the main staff members four months later, while many had been returned just three days before I left my field. A number of respondents left many questions blank, which implied perhaps a lack of seriousness. This was the picture of the NGOs which were not interested to coordinate and collaborate with me as researcher. I have contemplated upon two assumptions from the above. The first is that staff members were not interested in such kind of research, because they wanted to remain as they were without being challenged to change. Secondly, they were doing something which they felt was professionally unsavoury and therefore did not want to disclose this.

4. Difficult to build up rapport

As indicated, one of the limitations of the research was in building an effective rapport with the NGO staff members and community people. This position offered a sense of both distance and closeness by affording me a certain depth of understanding and empathy with participants. Azaola (2006) found three principal challenges in his PhD field work, which included gaining participants' permission and trust, engaging them with his project, and building rapport with participants. I encountered similar experiences in my research as the area of study was comparatively new in Bangladesh. The contents and concepts used in my research were also new and the stakeholders had a hard time understanding the link between the concepts, theories and practices. Most of them, even the staff members, could not always comprehend what I wanted to convey when discussing concepts, such as indigenous knowledge, global knowledge, social capital, community empowerment, indigenisation/localisation, and knowledge transfer. There was difficulty in connecting these concepts with the NGOs' interventions and capacities. Initially, participants were at times somewhat unclear about my research purpose, and it took a considerable amount of time to gain their emotional support, to build up proper rapport and trust.

To sum up the above discussion of my field experience in Bangladesh, I could say that I was thoroughly challenged by discovering and interpreting the importance of what had been observed, and by establishing a reasonable correlation between what had not been observed and the conclusions drawn in my research. In the case of IK, investigating this issue was more complicated and sensitive. There were some aspects about the community peoples' expectations regarding their development by NGOs, which gave them an opportunity to discuss and compare with the issues what NGOs were doing. These included: how the NGOs were working, what was their contribution for community development, what the community peoples' expectations were and what NGOs' interventions were, and what were the outputs to fulfil their expectations and so on. I had a number of impressions throughout my investigation. For example, my feeling was that I saw far more variation across rural to urban and urban to rural in conceptualisation of the principal concepts used in my research, such as indigenous knowledge and global knowledge and community development within the concepts of social capital and community empowerment.

Findings on the significance of educational research in IKS

Educational research in IK has the ability to:

- Inform, enlighten and guide the policy-makers, donor nations, non governmental organisations (NGOs) the community as practitioners thereby improving the relationship among them and enhance development (Kelly, 1994).
- Influence other researchers in the same field (IKS) thereby increasing the need to investigate a particular issue even to greater depths. The experience from both countries is that the perceived custodians of IK hold that what works is what they have experienced rather than on trying new knowledge through research. More research is needed to find ways of deconstructing such notions in people's minds.
- Provides a window to show what works and what does not and this data is drawn from the community as practitioners perceived to be custodians of IK in line with current developments. In the absence of research to validate IK, other forms of knowledge from IKS will continue to be ignored by the policy-makers who follow the top-down approach in policy-making.
- Provide alternative forms of knowledge that may be integrated with the formal knowledge to enhance the achievement of the millennial goals.
- Promote and enhance initiatives to document IK, identify the perceived custodians of IK and come up with ways of rewarding them.
- Open possibilities of sharing IK with other international research bodies and institutions. This could be one way of universalizing IK.
- Educational research in IK could offer an opportunity to traditional and local leaders to see their own findings influencing, directly or indirectly, policy-makers. This could provide a great deal of satisfaction. The climax of that satisfaction is when the community, elders and local and traditional leaders are able to discern their influence on educational practice and to feel that they actually made a difference to the learning and teaching of their children.
- There is an opportunity offered to traditional and local leaders and the community in general to get involved in the field of research in schools in their areas (action research for example). This could be beneficial as the community could have a strong influence on the interpretation of policy and have a sense of ownership of projects and developmental agendas brought about by findings from such bottom-up research efforts.
- Research in IK could awaken the interest of funding bodies and obtain grants for further research and even for integration of IK and the formal school curricula.

The paper does not in any way try to romanticise research in IKS neither does it try to portray it as the only panacea to all the problems facing research. There are a number of threats that the two research findings have identified such as the following:

- When research in IK is devised and initiated by the funding organisations often from the developed nations, there is a danger of the community (practitioners) not fully taking the programme as theirs but belonging to the funding organisations or government.
- The above threat is compounded by the situation where most of the researchers in IK in developing nations are from the West with little or no knowledge of the needs and desires of the people they research on let alone their culture. This scenario has

seen a number of well-intended research oriented programmes dying a natural death even before they take-off prompting writers like Watson (1993, p. 100) to paint such a picture about research in Third world countries “The landscape of the Third world today is littered with the carcasses of the pilot projects that failed to pilot anybody anywhere.”

- Researchers in IK from the West often target areas of research that may attract funding, leaving out really problematic areas that require agent research and policy intervention.
- Often international funding organisations shun funding research in IK but only do so when the research is to their benefit.
- When findings from research in IK do not match with the existing desires and expectations of the policy-makers or funding organizations, they do not influence any policy change and IKS is labelled as being rigid and resisting change (CERI, 1995).
- There is a possibility of researchers to tilt findings to suit expectations of the funding or donor organisations for future prospects. Fairbrother (2000, p. 27) supports the point given above:

“One contributor speaking about her own personal research and supported by others said she would not risk her university’s standing by carrying out research which was not perceived to be needed by policy- makers or commissioning agencies. She said it would be professional suicide to do so.”

- Research in IK is often considered not to be technically competent and ethically sound even when it could be vital, interesting, original and significant to the needs of the local community and developing nations.
- Some conventional ethical guidelines cannot satisfy some local issues, such as cultural and traditional habits, norms and values.

Recommendations, lessons and conclusions

In IKS research, all stakeholders must be involved. Nobody should be at the receiving end. No matter how clear the findings of any piece of research and the policy born out of it may be, as long as the practitioners (agency i.e. teachers, pupils, parents, and the community) are at the receiving end of that policy developed by the structure (Government; research bodies and organisations) there are bound to be implications affecting the practice.

Often research in IKS includes vulnerable people such as women and the so-called ‘uneducated’ ones and these are often not consulted. When funding organisations are loud in the piloting of the research programme rather than all the stakeholders, ownership of the research programme is reserved for the funding organisations or governments, thereby compromising the continuity of the programme. In the event when that research is donor funded, the programme dies when donor money is finished.

The implications raised above mean that while educational research in IKS may influence policy change or formulation, policy-makers and researchers must put in place mechanisms that will ensure that rights of ownership of that knowledge and skills by those perceived to be the custodians are protected and not surrendered to international bodies and institutions.

We could also argue that there may be no global ethics in research but that researchers should aim at negotiating and establishing ethical principles based on people’s culture of a given place and time. Rather than aiming at fulfilling the so-called general ethical principles, consideration should be given to specific cultural values with a hope to combine them so as to satisfy this global village. Cross-Culture Research into IK, recognition and appreciation of IKS, in general, could be a great

source of healing of therapeutic import in the context of detrimental, disproportion, falsification, trivialization and neglect as inflicted by the Eurocentric education and governance (Kawagley, 1995). Tapping into the intellectual resources associated with IK through cross-culture research may not only result as cost-effective but also relevant and indispensable for environmentally and ecologically sensitive activity as observed by Kawagley (1995).

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Tensions in Recognition Politics in Europe: A Reading of Italian Interculturalism(s) as Ideology

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Abstract

This article provides a brief investigation of Italian interculturalism(s) in relation to a highly relevant European policy document, the White Paper on Intercultural dialogue (Council of Europe). I will specifically focus on conceptually relevant tensions which cut across recognition politics more generally and may empirically translate into different versions of intercultural politics. An analysis of various Italian interculturalisms confirms the prominence of the cultural dimension, while the issue of equity is clearly neglected. I will assess the profile of the interculturalism as revealed by the European and Italian education discourses and highlight tensions and dilemmas. I will propose a reading of interculturalism as ideology and assess the possibilities and direction of the current versions to altering the practice and support inclusive politics.

Keywords: Italian and European Interculturalism, Ideology, Politics of Recognition

Introduction

Scholars in the intercultural education field have largely dealt with a foundational tension: how to respect culture and differences while promoting equality? How to avoid both particularistic-relativistic perspectives and also universalistic-egalitarian solutions? An equity pedagogy and colour-sensitive is needed in order to acknowledge socio-economic inequalities while also recognising that culturally diverse individuals are particularly at risk. Looking at the profile of European interculturalism(s), the choice to privileging differences over equity consent us to speak about an excess of culturalism. In response to the above mentioned tension and to relevant shortcomings as induced by the risks of an idea of culture as innocent of class, different approaches and antidotes to such a multicultural education have emerged over time. In point of fact, anti-racist education, critical multiculturalism, and equity pedagogy are conceived of as potential antidotes to a differentialist paradigm or to the perverse effects of cultural difference (May, 2009). A multicultural education idea as developed by Banks (2009, p. 15) is very much in line with an equity pedagogy, while clearly addressing the risks of a colour-blind school politics.

The choice to briefly analyse in the first place the White Paper [WP] is motivated by its representativeness for the conceptual/ideological orientation of a European idea of interculturalism. Actually, this policy document is the result of a joint effort of national experts to defining a common framework of understanding intercultural politics. This perspective serves as a European background against which I will more specifically focus on the Italian case. I consider it as both very much in line with the European policy as revealed in the WP, and also highly representative for new countries of immigration' politics of recognition.

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Ideas about what an intercultural education must be are not to be considered just theories: they imply political and ethical choices, are globally highly diffused and thus become products of processes of specific political and cultural appropriation. Therefore, ideologies are more fruitful lenses to read these theories and their meanings and uses in contexts.

In the subsequent sections, I will briefly sketch a theoretical framework of interculturalism as ideology and then question the profile of Italian interculturalism as related to the European vision of the White Paper. Then, I will show how conceptual tensions and dilemmas inform and filter into the White Paper and in the Italian politics of interculturalism. I am concerned by the prominence of culture as the principal dimension of interculturalism. I will indicate some conceptual dilemmas in interculturalism more generally, and some of its meanings in relation to some important uses in practice. I distinguish between two major versions of Italian interculturalism: (1) a dominant “culturalist”- driven interculturalism and (2) a less diffused and more “progressive” interculturalism. Both, however, fail to acknowledge the issue of equity and equality from a social class and redistributive viewpoint.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FOUNDATIONAL TENSIONS AND IDEOLOGIES

In this section I will show tensions in the European identity conceptualisation and in the politics of recognition, while taking a specific look at interculturalism as ideology.

Starting from the process of building a European identity, the very “conceptual basis for [European] identity remains contested” (Camia, 2010, p. 110). In addition to territorially-based identities, an emerging European identity may be said to be in competition with non territorially-based identities, such as class or gender (Fossum, 2001). The normative perspective proposes nested identities, plural and multiple affiliations, competitive and/or non-competitive identities. For some scholars, a European identity principally would involve a different and emerging post-national type of identity (Delanty, 2002; Fossum, 2001).

At the national level, the identity issue is principally related to the wave of migration within Europe and immigration from outside, which relates to a recognition policy matter, although one which is sometimes under-conceptualised or ineffective in its practical application (see the Italian case). Grassroots demands for a recognition policy, in terms of recognition of uniqueness *and* equality, in public areas such as education, is a constant and common issue of concern and political negotiation in European countries. In this conceptual dichotomy, which translates into different practices, we can find a major tension between differences and equity which may inform different intercultural ideologies. This dilemma has been conceptualised by scholars in terms of redistribution versus recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003) and class versus race² (Appiah & Gutmann, 1998). Fraser (2003, p. 11) considered it a “false antithesis” and conceptualised it from the perspective of justice as “two dimensional”. However, while assessing the profile of current European and Italian interculturalism, these are rather unidimensional perspectives, in line with a one-sided morphology which is typical of ideologies.

In focusing on a European identity, a relevant issue is the way we conceptualise the national and the transnational, whether or not a transnational stage is emerging. Soysal convincingly argues that “transnational and national should be seen as constitutive and signifiers of each other. They are not separate levels of analysis or separate trajectories” (2002, p. 273). He goes on to argue that “we should locate the transnational and its factors in the territorially defined spaces and institutions of identity. This also means paying attention to how local and national are re-articulated within the transnational” (Soysal, 2002, p. 273). This logic can be fruitfully applied to the dynamic of the different levels at which a policy of recognition is negotiated and

² In the original text, Appiah & Gutmann refer to a concept of “race”. I prefer to adapt it to a more European way of referring to this issue as “culture”, although I am fully aware that they imply significant differences.

mediated, that is at regional, national and European levels. One way to deal with this is to focus on the discourses and the core message of policy documents at all these levels. How does Italian interculturalism relate to a current European vision on interculturalism?

Taking a step further, one cannot but question if there is anything similar to a European policy of recognition. The impressive number of standards and legislative tools developed over the last fifty years by the Council of Europe, drawing upon the European Convention on Human Rights in particular, are all deemed to strengthen human rights and the policy of interculturalism, recently labelled as “intercultural dialogue” (Council of Europe, 2008), which strongly resonates with national versions of intercultural education throughout Europe.

The intensity and direction of the politics of recognition are without doubt a crucial factor that affects a possible European identity (Soysal, 2002; Munch, 2001). From a sociological viewpoint, however, we can only assess different directions of the integration process and therefore several possible scenarios. It is significant to notice, for the present discussion, the plainly visible dichotomy between an *equal dignity*- versus *difference*-driven policy of recognition, a crucial factor in future scenarios of European integration.

Table 1: *Politics of Recognition*

<i>Direction of the integration process</i>	<i>Equal dignity</i>	<i>Difference</i>
Intergovernmental	EU as a collection of democratic (rights-oriented) Member States (1)	EU as a collection of national cultural communities (2)
Supra-national	EU as a rights-based federal-type entity (civil, political, economic and social rights) (4)	EU as marked by “deep diversity” – a wide range of identity-based claims – nationalist and social-movement based (3)

Source: Soysal, 2001, in Fossum, 2001, p. 383

Turning our attention to the education field and intercultural politics, analogous theoretical tensions and dichotomies are evident in the overarching paradigm of social justice. For most scholars, a dichotomous social justice concept involves a distributional idea of Rawlsian origins versus a difference driven concept, with the recognition of cultural and relational aspects (Vincent, 2003). As Cribb & Gewirtz (2003) warn us, a plural social justice conception often involves tensions between its many facets, and particularly between a redistribution policy, tackling socio-economic inequities and thus levelling group differentiation, and recognition remedies, which through affirmative actions tend to promote group differentiation. This is what Fraser calls a redistribution-recognition dilemma.

In this article I will focus on the ideological dimension of the politics of recognition. When multicultural politics are read as ideologies, implicitly these are mostly read as inferior and negative theoretical forms, incapable of producing (positive) changes. In contrast, ideologies are to be seen as texts, discourses, or cognitive maps, shaped by specific historical conditions and by the vested interests of certain social actors. Furthermore, when institutionalised they “may play a decisive role in acting back on [their] environment” (Wuthnow, 1989, p. 548). Therefore, they are not only the products of cultural settings and specific conditions, but also agents of social transformation. Political and educational ideologies may impact and transform social and educational realities, although in rather unpredictable ways. In addition, as Melotti argues, both universalist and particularist ideologies and politics of integration, as is the case with the paradigmatically different French and British models, may equally involve strong ethnocentrism (1997, p. 79) and thus produce “unintended thought-practice” in Freeden’s words (2000).

These ideas must be seen as distinctive type of political thought-practice, action-oriented, particular to time and space and not universal. Another relevant difference from the point of view of

classical political theories is that ideologies involve a two-way flow between theory and practice, in the form of an „open-grid”. In this sense, they mask real thoughts and relationships and therefore a special attention must be paid to the „unintentional thought-practices”. Ideologies are very much the same as practices, in that they are the product of groups and not speculative outcomes of individuals. Most significant is that even „when ideology involve distortion, misrecognition or rhetoric there are contextual reasons for those features and they too evince ideotional patterns that may be decoded” (Freeden, 2000, p. 321).

Although politics of recognition perform a principally political function (ideological, rhetorical, “decorative”), not all recognition politics are to be discarded as ineffective (Fraser, 2000). In order to prove efficient, any version of interculturalism as ideology would require, among other elements, coherence between its core political message and proposed strategies of implementation (Freeden, 2000). In addition, such strategies should actually speak in some way to “reality” from a plurality of dimensions, if they are to be efficient.

ANALYSIS

The White Paper as European policy of recognition

I will now turn to the White Paper’s message which is said to be synthesis of the voices of national scholars throughout European countries. The Council of Europe’s member countries have deemed an intercultural dialogue policy approach as the most appropriate to promote inclusiveness. The “intercultural dialogue” policy is intended to combine assimilation, “focusing on the individual”, with a multiculturalist idea of “recognition of cultural diversity” (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 19). It also includes a “new element”, the concept of “dialogue on the basis of equal dignity and shared values” (p. 19). This multi-composite version of interculturalism is not completely new and actually appears to be an assemblage of old (nationally defined) approaches and difference-oriented.

The novelty of the “dialogue” element, which draws on shared values, seems to hint at a supranational perspective as in the model of Soysal. The meaning here at work is that dialogue is needed for exchanging different world-views and possibly reaching some form of consensus, if not substantial, at least of a Habermasian procedural type. The document highlights some self-evident limits of the dialogue: “it is not a cure for all evils or an answer to all questions”, “dialogue with those who refuse dialogue is impossible” (p. 17).

The concept of “equal dignity” is invoked, with a rather tautological meaning or “decorative” function, at best lacking incisiveness. Dignity appears rather to be a matter of negotiation or a process of “external prescription”, and not an intrinsic human quality. Dignity is a superior principle – and an ontological property, i.e. human dignity, as stated in the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Therefore, one expect that the White Paper as a more practically oriented policy document, would focus on strategies to implementing and protecting it through positive discrimination actions, not just reminding it at a rhetorical level.

The spaces where the dialogue may be practised are ineffectively conflated (Council of Europe, 2008, pp. 10, 34), including “the neighbourhood, the working place, the education system and associated institutions, civil society [etc]”. (p. 10). I consider that it is not a matter of multiplying spaces, which is simply another way of minimising the responsibility of specific institutional and legal mechanisms of protection, in this case of the education system, but rather a matter of actions to be undertaken in specific forms and places. An evident “open-grid” patter of linking possibilities between interculturalism and its practices reveal the ideological nature of then WP.

Most emblematically, a robust “governance” and “competences” language is the thread of

this document which clearly presents an image of “cultural diversity” as manageable, in need of control since it is constantly read as potentially dangerous, or as a source of economic prosperity (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 45): immigrants should “abide by the laws and respect the basic values of European societies and their cultural heritage” (p. 11). The image here is of dangerous non-European immigrants, minimising internal European immigration processes or even worse, it may hint at a hierarchy of different European citizens. Here we can find the core message of this ideology, that is the prevalence of culture and difference, dealt with from a negative perspective of perceived problematic and highly unspecific practical configurations that need to be addressed.

Although the White Paper considers universal issues such as human rights and democracy more than is the case with Italian interculturalism(s) as we will see below, its core message is still very much culturalist. Its conceptual apparatus is rather vague: “intercultural intellectuals” (Council of Europe, 2008, p. 32), an unspecified “inclusive society” as a social configuration, the management of cultural diversity and the need to create “a new identity balance” (p. 18). In addition, the perspective of equality of opportunity and equity as a social dimension in support of a comprehensive policy of recognition is quite underdeveloped.

An emblematic trait of this ideological interculturalism is the lack of reference to practical configurations and problematic issues that need to be addressed specifically in the education systems at large. The ideological message is clearly shaped, at a rhetorical level, in separation from relevant practical configurations in the school systems, for instance dropping out, segregation, school choice policy. One can consider that here is at work a mask reality function of the ideology of European interculturalism.

Some conceptual dilemmas of Italian interculturalism(s) in use

Over the past twenty years, a European-continental version of multiculturalism, “intercultural education”, has emerged throughout Europe, most prominently in new areas of immigration such as the Southern European countries (e.g. Italy). Initially, academics in these European contexts oscillated between attitudes of uncritical adoption and outright rejection. Most Italian scholars considered, naively and in a *sui generis* legitimacy vein, that since Italy’s experience of immigration had been so recent, it could benefit from that of other countries and thus avoid potential pitfalls: at the end of ‘90s, the legislation was already considered to be ahead of other immigration countries:

“Southern Europe took advantage of the prior experience of countries like the UK, France and Germany and thus the intercultural perspective is the starting point and not the terminus of a long journey of trial and error.” (Fischer & Fischer, 2002, p. 173).

Interculturalism expanded rapidly and became a “new mantra” in Italian pedagogy. In public policy, its recognition was rather contradictory: while acknowledging international legislation, the “application of civil protection anti-discriminatory norms is almost entirely lacking” (Roagna, 2009, p. 53). In fact, the Council of Europe recently strongly recommended substantial initiatives, such as creating institutional premises for the protection of human rights, including, in the field of education, equality of opportunities and equity (Hammemberg, 2009, p. 2)⁴. Intercultural pedagogy courses have proliferated, while major sociological assessments of social and educational issues relating to immigration and new stratification processes have been fairly limited. Quite symptomatic is a general (and academic) reluctance to use racism as a conceptual sociological

³ All translations from Italian to English have been made by the author.

⁴ In line with European legislation, in 2003 Italy created the UNAR (Ufficio Nazionale Antidiscriminazioni Razziali, National Ethnic Antidiscrimination Office). However, Thomas Hammemberg, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, recommends that “the authorities promote further systematic human rights education” and “promptly establish a national human rights institution.” (2009, p. 2).

descriptor⁵. A political appeal to interculturalism reached virtually every Italian school, and yet it remained confused and highly problematic even for those teachers who honestly engaged with it for decades (Omodeo, 2002).

A FIRST DILEMMA

A major dilemma emerges when interculturalism is conceptualised in terms of a normative perspective which, in the long run, is to lead through social engineering processes to genuine new social configurations. Therefore, interculturalism refers to a normative concept, since the experience of “cultural difference” in inter-cultural situations is said to be personally *enriching*. Here we see an underlying concept of culture as a resource, which Appiah considers problematic (2005, p. 123). However, interculturalism(s) in use also refers to a social reality yet to be created, if a mere multi-ethnic (or “multi-cultural” as most European pedagogists read it) society is to be overcome.

From an Italian perspective, most European societies followed a path from assimilation to multiculturalism and then to interculturalism. Emblematically, this is also considered to be the Italian case (Santerini, 2010, p. 188):

“The phases of integration of these varied groups have been similar to many other European countries. Initially, there was a phase of assimilation, or insertion of the minority culture with little or no attention paid to the culture of origin, followed by a phase of multiculturalism, understood as the “discovery” of pluralism but also the romanticising of other cultures. Today, there is the feeling that it is necessary to reach an intercultural model to accomplish integration without giving up social cohesion.”

However, this idea clearly contradicts the popular premise of a “privileged position”, which would have allowed Italian decision makers to avoid the pitfalls of other countries and jump to the final phase of interculturalism. Moreover, in this quotation the “intercultural model” plainly hints at a concrete social configuration, although yet to be attained. The circulation of intercultural education in university course books and scholarship more widely definitively connote it as both a normative concept and a societal configuration.

While the normative layer is more naturally inscribed in interculturalism as a political (and ideological) conceptual umbrella, an intercultural idea as a sociological configuration is definitively more obscure on sociological and anthropological grounds. If we consult classical mainstream sociological studies, we learn that initial group contact and subsequent dynamics of competition and stratification may lead to assimilation (amalgamation), egalitarian pluralism (political autonomy) or to non-egalitarian pluralism (exclusion and annihilation) (Marger, 1991, pp. 128-148). Following this model and keeping in mind that societies may exhibit all three patterns, we cannot but question the nature of an intercultural societal configuration. Is it to be associated with egalitarian pluralism (recognition of cultural communities?) or to a form of assimilation/integration of single individuals? In order to highlight a lack of sociological analysis inherent in Italian interculturalism, it suffices here to raise the question. In addition, some assimilationist patterns and intentions are too easily discarded as risky only on the basis of “experience elsewhere”, in the absence of a thorough analysis of historical and theoretical potentialities of the assimilation/incorporation paradigm (for a theory of assimilation revisited, see Kivisto, 2005).

While denying both assimilation and multiculturalism as disrespectful and inadequate, very few sociological and educational studies seriously engaged with what it is actually the major risk to Italian society and its school system: a non-egalitarian pluralism as a creeping ethnic separation (Facchini et al., 2005).

⁵ For more on racism in Italy see Bencini, Cerretelli & Di Pasquale (2008).

A SECOND DILEMMA

A second difficulty emerges when investigating the meanings in use of culture and cultural difference as core concepts and the main “pillar” of interculturalism. It is ironic, at least from the point of view of Italian historical developments, that a policy of recognition labelled interculturalism has been considered the best way to promote equity, justice and human rights. All the more so since this is not a side effect, but a specific preference. As Fischer & Fischer (2002, p. 32) observe:

“An important Council of Europe recommendation issued in 1985 concerning the teaching of human rights in schools has been accepted. The Italian legislation, which was relatively progressive, has chosen to undertake the most difficult approach: that of intercultural education, which was deemed the most satisfactory framework in which to rethink overall educational practices.”

Note that the intercultural choice was assessed from the outset as “the most difficult approach”. A necessary synthesis between universalism and relativism was declared necessary, along with “the recognition of differences and of their value [which] must be conceived in the framework of a search for commonalities” (C. M. [Ministerial Circular] n. 73, 2nd March 1994 in Fischer & Fischer, 2002, p. 32). In other words, differences are self-evident, while commonalities need to be sought out!

A largely neglected class dimension and a wider equality perspective on intercultural education is barely mentioned in intercultural teaching and scholarship, and seldom addressed as a key focus. It is emblematically a missing topic and quickly discarded by a “social cohesion” appeal (e.g. MIUR, 2007), which is a very different concept from the equity issue. In this case, equity and equality, which should reasonably be recognised as major objectives, are downgraded to mere means and “strategies” in implementing intercultural education. While culture comes to the forefront of the debate, the issue of teaching for equity as an overarching and more comprehensive paradigm is strikingly absent.

Appiah (2005, pp. 114, 119, 254) considers that abuses of “culture” and differences are an effect of an anthropological perspective on reality and therefore nothing less than a “disciplinary” prejudice. In the same vein, Bernstein’s warning against the “evacuation of social class” from sociological analysis proves particularly useful in understanding other possible rationales of contemporary interculturalism(s), here investigated as Italian-style:

“Apple, amongst others, has remarked that class analysis has been disappearing in research in education, as the focus has shifted to race, gender, region, and indigenous groups. The effervescence of so-called post modernist analysis celebrates, on one hand, the local, the blurring of categories, the contextual dependencies on subjectivity, and on the other, announces the end of grand narratives. [...] The privileging of discourse in these analyses tends to abstract the analysis of discourse from the detailed empirical analysis of its basis in social structure. The relationship between symbolic structures and social structures are in danger of being severed.” (2000, p. xxvi)

So, it is not merely a problem of one-sided ideologies, but also of the theoretical perspective from which they are derived, as well as of national filtering and reception and subsequent levels, as we have seen in the case of the 1985 Council of Europe recommendation (Fischer & Fischer, 2002). Scholarship on the Italian case is particularly relevant for an analysis of how the intercultural agenda is regionally and locally received and interpreted (Grillo & Pratt, 2003). The “obsession with cultural difference” can be assessed not only in terms of widespread representations (Maritano, 2002), but also as public and highly visible initiatives unpacked as “identity and difference” or “ethnic” politics.

Policy documents and scholarship, even of a sociological type, cannot escape to a culturalist language. We can thus read that “[r]egarding relationships between cultures, the school as an institution represents a protected enclave, (...) a happy island, where it becomes possible to live together and exchange culture, so difficult to experience outside it” (Fischer & Fischer, 2002, p. 33). We can also learn that “*métissage* and cultural syncretism, which are constitutive traits of all

societies, cannot by themselves lead to idyllic communication and lack of conflict” (Fischer & Fischer, 2002, p. 5). And finally, that “interculturalism is a sort of a third way to accept diversity and *métissage*” (Fischer & Fischer, 2002, p. 13).

A few Italian scholars (e.g. Susi, 1999, Gobbo, 2008) signal a more complex distributive notion of culture, while warning against a metaphorical biological drift and culturalism more widely. While fully acknowledging the risks, such a “progressive interculturalism” based on critical anthropology may at best serve as further reading and in-depth understanding for those few teachers who might take it seriously and thus volunteer in this area. However, the core message converges with renewed official policy (MIUR, 2007), since its focus is still on culture and identity⁶. Once again, equity and equality remain background concepts. A different and more inclusive approach based on classroom heterogeneity and drawing on a more universalistic equity perspective is by and large missing from school practice. On practical grounds, the message of “progressive interculturalism” still remains imbued with culturalism and may encourage different forms of segregation in schools. Quite emblematic are unanswered questions such as:

“In the context of a multi-ethnic classroom, do teachers need primarily pedagogical or ethnological competences?” (Fischer & Fischer, 2002, p. 13).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this article I have focused on a crucial theoretical tension which lies at the very heart of the European vision of integration, the dichotomy between an *equal dignity* versus *difference* driven policy of recognition. I have explored the way this tension translates in the Italian politics of interculturalism, characterised by a one-dimensional difference-based message. The two dilemmas clearly show the distance between scholarly theories and ideological uses and filtering meanings in the Italian case.

Moreover, the analysis of the White Paper as European policy document prepared by national experts from several European countries indicates that European- transnational, and Italian-national versions of interculturalism are both essentially difference-based, although with some differences. At a rhetorical level, the WP’s message is a more balanced one, including a more universalist perspective. The lack of substantial links to problematic issues of inclusiveness in the European societies and concrete suggestions for affirmative actions make it ineffective to producing the expected changes. The vision on “human diversity” as in need to be managed and controlled unmask real thoughts and relationships, in Freedén’s words. The scenario of a European integration that informs the WP and the Italian interculturalism oscillates between the second and the third type, as in the Soysal conceptualisation: a collection of national cultural communities and a supranational dynamic marked by “deep diversity” – a wide range of identity-based claims – nationalist and social-movement based.

Italian interculturalism(s) as difference-oriented in its two slightly different versions do inform school practices and substantially contribute to support processes of pupil’s labelling, segregation or just reinforce teacher’s reluctance and lack of competence to fully engage with affirmative actions in support of the immigrant students. A more balanced message from an equity pedagogy, drawing on a “class and culture” theoretical perspective and a two-dimensional social justice notion, will clearly proved to be a more efficient ideology. As Freedén argues (2000), ideologies should actually speak in some way to “reality” from a plurality of dimensions if they are to be successful on practical grounds.

Concrete, alarming and largely understudied issues like unequal access to schools, the “white

⁶ We must admit that the message is more balanced at a linguistic level and, most relevantly, it denounces forms of segregation. The necessity of an approach based on an overarching notion of diversity (including the class dimension) is recognised. However, in spite of more universalistic turn, a social cohesion concept is preferred to equity and equality.

flight” phenomenon (with few exceptions, see Ciafaloni et al., 2007; Facchini, 2005) and the lack of adequate positive discrimination strategies in schools are all crucial and urgent matters to be addressed by policy makers. The current ideological messages of Italian and European levels do not represent a good basis to contrast shortcomings and actively promote a new policy. In fact, starting from the common sense premise of the lack of support, many teachers rightly state their lack of time and competence to undertake intercultural education from an anthropological perspective. They feel entitled to understand interculturalism as an issue of volunteering, gratuity and good will.

Uses of interculturalism can be noted in teachers’ guides and textbooks. For instance, a textbook on didactics introduces prospective teachers to a “metaphorical background, that is different contexts for educational activities and classes, specifically designed to present a symbolic restructuring of the meaning of a situation (for instance, an all-yellow world to allow the harmonious integration of a Chinese child” (Cristanini, 2001, pp. 240-245.) An invitation to discover an “ethnic district” implies a search for all sorts of visible signs, such as phone centres, restaurants, shops, satellite dishes, nameplates, geographically conceptualised as “different ways of living” in a specific area, and to change this profile (Giorda, 2006, pp. 155-158). Ethnographical based books when become course textbooks for prospected teachers reinforce the message of “how are the Sick or the Roma pupils”, how different are their “cultures at home” as compared to the school culture. This kind of teaching material is further legitimated through a culturalist argument: “it may help to comprehend our culture, too” (Gobbo, 2008). Therefore, scholarly works too, while undertaking a unique theoretical perspective, such as the anthropological one, cannot speak to reality in the proper way and thus promote a balanced and comprehensive conception of intercultural education and practically oriented to affirmative actions. These are, in my view, some of the main reasons why I argue that Italian school actors and particularly teachers are clearly socialised, when specific training is provided, within a culturalist paradigm.

From this exploratory study focused on the ideological dimension of intercultural politics of recognition I cannot fully assess the links between practices and interculturalism as distinctive type of politically oriented thought-practice. A more thorough analysis of these links and of the ideational patterns is therefore required, as well as a deeper understanding of how this discourse is shaped at the national and the transnational level in relevant policy documents.

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Gabriella Pusztai (Ed.) Religion and Higher Education in Central and Eastern Europe, Center for Higher Education Research and Development, University of Debrecen, Hungary, 2010, 310 p.

Book review

In the present context of turbulent transformations of higher education landscape in all the Eastern and Central European region, a study of the dynamics of religiously maintained universities and colleges in the region is a *rara avis*. Denominational higher education institutions have become however important actors in the field during the last two decades signaling the strong demand emerging from half century of official atheism and ban on faith-based education, on the one hand and cultural diversity in the area, in which religious identities overlap often with ethnic ones. Although this case of institutional substitution in the area of higher education provision, as Margaret Archer would call it (Archer, 1984), is of unquestionable significance, both culturally and quantitatively, little systematic research effort has been devoted so far, in any case much less than in the case of emergence of private higher education with which it is often simply equated.

The first two articles in the volume set a framework for the entire consequent materials and also for the international research project within which the volume has been delivered (REVACERN – Religion and Values – a Central and Eastern European Research Network). In an approach with strong functionalist tones, Santiago Sia (Contemporary Society and Faith Based Higher Education: Challenges and Issues) suggests that religiously maintained higher education is solicited by recent cultural developments like secularism, mechanization of society which makes the world to be “...viewed not as a unified metaphysical system but as a series of problems and projects” (p. 11), globalization, all having as ultimate consequence of making us forget the ultimate goal of education, „that of the development of the human person” (p. 14). Such a knot of worries is addressed by faith-based education which has as peculiarity its’ ethos, (i.e. values, traditions, beliefs) which really contribute to the above mentioned development of individuals as human persons.

In her own programmatic article, Gabriella Pusztai develops on previous experience in investigating the social and cultural embeddedness of religious higher education and describes the conceptual foundations of the research made within the REVACERN international research project. Her article emphasizes the multidimensional, multifaceted and dynamic nature of the problem. Thus, one layer of analysis could be established distinguishing individual forms of religiosity within higher education from actions and institutions identified at the community level. There are, obviously, individual correlations of religious representations and practices within tertiary educational institution, factors that could explain part of the faith-based variations of the institutionalizations in the field but the dynamics of religious and ethnic communities are probably more important in explaining specific configurations of supply of religion-based higher education. These dynamics are further made evident with a focus on internal and external conflicts

of religious communities. Religious or ethnic competition, which are pervasive in the Central and Eastern European region, may have positive effects through the mechanisms of bounded solidarity (Portes, 1998), of increasing social cohesion in the face of threat and stimulating ethnic (or religious) entrepreneurship even in the educational field. On the contrary, other oppositions can erode the abilities of religious colleges and universities to fulfill their primary goals: the tension between academic freedom and the denominational mission, that between the state expectations and those of the community and the contradictions between the ethos of the religious institutions and the market values that drive the recent wave of academic capitalism.

As the main objective of the initial activities of REVACERN was to identify the specificities of religion-based higher education in Central and Eastern Europe, the rest of the volume contains studies at national levels based on the thorough investigation of organizational sagas in the quest of deciphering the paradigms laid at the foundations of the denominational universities and colleges in post-communist Europe (p. 30). In a first applied section we read four case studies dealing with the evolution and contexts of religious higher education in Romania, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia. A second section contains case-studies and comparative analyses of specific institutions from Slovenia, Estonia, Ukraine, Hungary, Bulgaria, Croatia and Czech Republic. The final section is made up of empirical articles, mainly survey based quantitative, concerned primarily with the attitudes and life-styles of students enrolled in religious universities in comparative perspective.

The research had been reaching at the moment of the book's publication merely provisional conclusions. National case-studies and comparative approaches suggest that typically religious higher education institutions were established at the pressure of religious communities as part of their effort to recover from decades of political repression (Pusztai, p. 31). These institutions contribute also to the mitigation of social inequalities and of the risks of social exclusion in the case of populations for which religious identity often overlaps with factors conducive to isolation and discrimination. Moreover, it is suggested that the competition with secular universities forces the denominational schools into more international openness. The research also highlights the institutional diversity of forms of provision of religion-based university education, a fragmentation which is often explained by country-specific legislation and situations.

References

1. Archer, M. S. (1984). *Social origins of educational systems. The University edition*, London; Beverly Hills: Sage.
2. Portes, A. (1998). *Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology*, Annual Review of Sociology, 24(1), pp. 1-24.

Adrian Hatos

Ioan Bolovan, Diana Covaci, Daniela Deteșan, Marius Eppel & Elena Crinela Holom (Eds.) În căutarea fericirii. Viața familială în spațiul românesc în sec. XVIII-XX (À la recherche du bonheur. La vie de famille dans l'espace roumain du XVIIIème au XXème siècle), Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2010, 361 p.

Book review

Un nouveau volume consacré aux problèmes démographiques, intitulé «À la quête du bonheur» est apparu récemment sous la direction du professeur Ioan Bolovan et de son équipe de collaborateurs.

Le volume réunit vingt-deux études portant sur divers aspects de la vie familiale, dès le XVIIIème jusqu'au XXème siècles, en donnant une approche plus complexe sur cette question.

La structure de l'ouvrage est réalisée dans une manière interdisciplinaire et constructiviste. La perspective d'ensemble sur le problème de la vie familiale est traitée sous des angles différents, mais complémentaires: théologie, histoire, anthropologie, économie, philosophie, droit. Le volume harmonise «les études théoriques avec la statistique appliquée», classant et interprétant «des modèles et les comportements familiaux à travers différentes études de cas».

Les premières études de l'ouvrage sont basées sur des sources historiques et d'archives, en fournissant des informations précieuses sur les aspects juridiques des relations conjugales, sur l'éducation des femmes et leur autonomisation dans des aréales spécifiques (Arad, Transylvanie).

Les changements produits dans la famille roumaine du XVIIIème siècle, du point de vue de la question juridique, dans le contexte de la détérioration des pratiques et des croyances religieuses et la sécularisation, sont analysés en détail dans ce volume. Les changements qui ont eu lieu dans la famille roumaine du XVIIIe siècle sont soulignés dans la question juridique, dans le contexte de la détérioration des pratiques et des croyances religieuses causés par la Réforme et la Contre et de la sécularisation appuyées par la culture et par les connaissances de la lumière. Diminution de l'influence de l'église et le déplacement de problèmes familiaux sous l'autorité des tribunaux laïques stimulent la réglementation juridique des relations matrimoniales sous forme des contrats de mariage qui énoncent les obligations, les devoirs, les engagements et les problèmes de l'héritage de la future famille. Dans la seconde moitié du XIXème siècle, nous assistons au phénomène de l'émancipation des femmes conduisant à l'augmentation de l'importance de leur éducation, et aussi au refus de celles-ci de se soumettre aux mariages caractérisés par des mauvais traitements, en divorçant.

La deuxième partie du livre contient des études qui abordent la relation entre l'Église et la famille, les sources et l'évolution du droit matrimonial orthodoxe, l'identité religieuse gréco-catholique, la position de l'Église sur le concubinage.

Les auteurs des études mettent l'accent sur l'unité de conception entre l'Église et l'État concernant le mariage, dans la seconde moitié du XIX^{ème} siècle, et sur la nette séparation entre les aspects religieux et séculiers du droit matrimonial. Du point de vue chrétien, que ce soit l'Église gréco-catholique ou l'Église orthodoxe, «le mariage légal et valide est considéré la condition sine qua non de la vie familiale». Dans ces circonstances, l'église n'a pas été d'accord à accepter la multiplication des concubinages, phénomène qui accompagnait l'augmentation de la mobilité géographique et sociale et le relâchement des mœurs. Les principaux acteurs des concubinages sont les soldats et les personnes marginalisées; la raison consiste dans l'exception des militaires à l'application de la loi, et d'autre part, dans l'augmentation des coûts de mariage, pour les pauvres. Les autorités de l'État et de l'Église, touchées également par ce type de déviance, établissent des mesures spécifiques pour prévenir et combattre les concubinages. Les études qui suivent présentent la question délicate des mariages mixtes (interconfessionnels et interethniques) dans la région de la Transylvanie caractérisée par « la présence des populations multi ethniques et pluriconfessionnelle ». Les analyses des données démographiques et statistiques proposent une série de modèles explicatifs des comportements sociaux. On souligne l'idée que dans la seconde moitié du XIX^{ème} siècle «ethnicité est plus importante que l'appartenance religieuse», dans le cas des mariages mixtes. Les études conduisent à la conclusion que les mariages mixtes font partie de la dimension plus large de l'inter-culturalisme et répondent au besoin de «vivre ensemble» pour les membres des communautés pluriconfessionnelles et multiethniques. Une section du volume est réservée à l'analyse des pratiques d'élever les enfants : l'éducation, la nourriture, les vêtements, le système de dénomination, la transmission du nom d'une génération à l'autre à l'intérieur d'une famille, déterminée par de nombreux facteurs. Depuis la fin du XIX^{ème} siècle, on peut voir un changement graduel dans les pratiques de la croissance des enfants, la plupart des tâches spécifiques seront attribuées à d'autres personnes que leurs parents, ou aux institutions spécialisées. On présente des statistiques concernant les noms donnés aux enfants, en montrant que «l'influence religieuse au nom de baptême baisse, pour d'autres raisons, liées à la mentalité du monde moderne».

Les articles qui traitent des questions concernant les modèles familiaux, à partir de la reconstruction de la structure de la famille par l'étude des archives, des registres d'état civil, sont aussi intéressants. Ils révèlent une réalité sociale et familiale complexe, la cohabitation sous le même toit de plusieurs générations de la même famille ou des familles différentes, pour perpétuer une situation désirable de la propriété foncière.

Certains articles comportent une analyse qualitative de l'évolution de la famille pendant la première transition démographique, à partir de la période de la Première Guerre Mondiale jusqu'à la période communiste. Ils décrivent le processus de sécularisation de la famille, l'évolution des indicateurs démographiques sous l'influence de facteurs socio-économiques et politiques, et concluent que la modernisation entraîne des changements dans les relations conjugales, et d'autre part, que la famille est considérée par l'Église et par l'État «le meilleur vecteur capable de maintenir et / ou d'introduire les valeurs morales, les objectifs sociaux proposés».

Deux études sont consacrées à la question de la famille et de la naissance pendant le communisme, en insistant sur l'échec des politiques pro-natalistes, ayant pour effet, l'augmentation du nombre des avortements, l'augmentation de la mortalité féminine, mais également la baisse des taux de natalité après 1968. Le volume finit par deux articles particuliers: le premier soumet à l'attention des lecteurs l'analyse de la société roumaine de la seconde moitié du XIX^{ème} siècle, y compris les aspects démographiques, relevés par le grand historien A. D. Xenopol; le deuxième est dédié aux secrets de la cuisine dans les familles d'élite de la ville de Cluj, pendant la même période.

Les études complémentaires, concernant la problématique de la vie familiale, réalisées par des diverses spécialistes, en utilisant de différentes méthodes d'analyse démographique, constituent une qualité remarquable du livre. On peut affirmer que le volume donne une image complète de la vie familiale de la société roumaine à partir du XVIII^{ème} jusqu'au XX^{ème} siècle «à la recherche du bonheur».

Lazăr Vlăsceanu (Ed.) *Sociology, Polirom, Iași, 2011, 936 p.*

Book review

The volume *Sociology*, published in 2011 in Iași, Polirom Publishing House, under the guidance of Professor Lazăr Vlăsceanu, is designed as a treaty of sociology, including the fundamental themes found in works of theoretical and applied sociology. The reading of the volume clearly induces that his project is initiated and built largely by its coordinator, who selected the topics and authors (17 young professionals, performing in sociological research, addressing as many issues to which four more chapters are added, representing almost a quarter of the pages, belonging to the coordinator).

The volume aims to address the community of sociologists from academic and vocational programs to students of bachelor, master and PhD levels in Sociology and other social sciences and, equally, those working in public and private enterprises engaged in social research or analysis and implementation of social programs. The content of the volume refers to social structures: society and change, communities, organizations; to some crystallizations: gender and society, sociology of values and values, social structure and social mobility, normal, social conformity and deviance, the body and social landscape; to configurations, such as: media, public and society, cities, migration, through modernization to modernity, demographic analysis: life expectancy of retired persons and institutions: the economy and society, politics, religion, education, knowledge and scientific knowledge, family and kinship, all with references to contemporary society in general and the Romanian society in particular.

The book is an important source both for those interested in sociological theory and for those concerned with the empirical results of the discipline. The volume presents the most influential classical and contemporary theories in their evolution, closely related to the evolution of society as a whole and some areas of the social world. On the other hand, the chapters of the volume provide researchers with tools to identify and analyze the mechanisms involved in the construction of a reflexive sociological knowledge and in a changing social world.

In essence, throughout its content, Lazăr Vlăsceanu designs sociology as a global science of society, established along with modernity, meeting the need of explanation and interpretation of the profound changes brought by the transition from traditional, patriarchal societies, where life was structured by the institutions of family, kinship, neighborhood, community and village to modern society. In the last 150 years, these structures are replaced by a “constructed social organization” based on “goal-oriented corporate actors”: families are being replaced by institutions of welfare and childcare; groups of friends or interests are no longer limited by geographic area; the emergence of electronic communication brings together people from the most various social and cultural contexts, facilitating even the emergence of new rules in choosing friends, partners, or employment. If classical sociology had focused on the analysis of modern, industrial society, at the end of the twentieth century, the idea of evolution and progress within the frame of modernity would have been increasingly questioned (finds Lazăr Vlăsceanu), launching the idea of configuring a new sort of social organization called “postmodern “(Toynbee),” mass-society “(D. Reisman),” „mass-society” (D. Reisman), „post-industrial” (D. Bell). Modernity, appreciated as unique, is substituted at this stage by multiple modernities: magic, faith and science, rationality and irrationality, linear, non-linear or circular nature and industry are all not incompatible, all options can coexist depending on individual or group options, in a world of affirmed and sustained

equivalences and un-ranking, contradicting the classical modernity in which, as A. Comte had maintained, industry will replace agriculture and science will take the place of religion. Under these conditions the new age requires a new type of sociology, freed by the classical concepts of the first modernity, a reflexive sociology, one that will contain critical analysis not only on its own object of investigation but also on how the knowledge it produces contributes to the construction of the object of sociological investigation. If classical sociology is merely explanatory, the postmodern must be reflexive (produces knowledge about society while considering itself in the production and application of this knowledge).

On the other hand, the multi-paradigmatic character of sociology stands out when one tests the current understanding of sociology and the current state of today's society. For example, Giddens and Beck found that today we are in full modernity. It is the phase in which all the major options of modernity have been fulfilled and we are in a position to manage their consequences and risks arising from the assertion of progress, from the explosion of individualism that has become a fundamental value in place of community and collectivism and globalism, opposite to localism.

Based on the sociological distinction between instrumental knowledge and axiological knowledge, on the one hand, and that between the reception of knowledge by the academic and non-academic audience, on the other, the literature identifies four "types of sociologies, within the division of sociological labor": professional sociology, critical sociology, public-oriented sociology and applied sociology. It is estimated that sociology's destiny is currently that of opening in dialogue with the most diverse audiences, from consumers of media programs to the consumers from the general market and the organizing structures of the economic, social and political world, including opening toward itself, by developing professional sociology.

The four chapters completed by the editor provide a great overview of the most significant sociological paradigms, in relation to social frames and social change. They contain an introduction to the fundamental methodological choices of sociology and a synthesis of the sociological perspective on family and knowledge.

As noted in the foreword, the project is not completed, the plan being to return periodically to capture the further transformation of contemporary societies and social sciences. The reader is invited to become the "author" of a sociology, a prerequisite for this science to become truly "reflexive". Together with his previous volume, *Sociology and Modernity. Transitions to Reflective Modernity*, published by the editor in 2007¹, the current volume offers a new perspective in Romanian sociology, directing it towards the understanding of globalism, the reception of any changes and innovations, reported permanently, however, to local configurations.

Floare Chișea

¹ Lazăr Vlăsceanu, 2007, *Sociologie și modernitate. Tranziții spre modernitatea reflexivă, Polirom, Iași.*