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**Urbanization and the changes of spatial social
structure in Hungary between 1990 and 2001**

Doctoral Dissertation Theses

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Hypothese, theoretical background

Urbanisation and the changes in the cycles of urbanisation always occur as a result of migration, that is to say, the two phenomena go hand in hand. One of the most important consequences of migration is that the social composition of both the sending as well as the receiving communities changes (TÓTH J, 2001-2002). Depending on the main directions of migration, the sending settlements lose some of their population, the target areas increase their population and the spatial social structure of society at large changes as a consequence. The two social phenomena we examine in this work, urbanization and the changes in spatial social structure, are thus connected via migration. Our focus is broader than the conventional approach of literature on urbanization and the changes in urban networks: we attempt to include into our analysis that segment of the country's settlement structure which is not directly affected by urbanization, as these settlements (as former homes or target settlements of migrants) undergo structural changes comparable to or even greater than those occurring in settlements directly affected by the process of urbanization, namely cities. In this vein, we extend our analysis of the consequences of urbanization to the whole spatial context of Hungary, and this is why we apply as a key concept not only urbanization but also spatial social structure, which allows us then to assess the implications of urbanization on Hungarian society at large.

As a result of political and economic changes modifications called system change, the 1990s theoretically offered new perspectives for urbanization to succeed the fragmented urbanization processes of state socialism which resulted in a relatively low level of population concentration. On the one hand, however, society's value system and its habitus changes much more slowly and indirectly than the institutions of the political and economic system, and as a consequence we have to take into account „path dependency” as a restraint that is difficult to overcome. On the other hand, a novel phenomenon of elementary force arose: globalisation. Globalisation fundamentally rearranged spatial social structure even in societies which underwent a classical process of urbanization. Our hypothesis was that due to the restraint of „path dependency” and the impacts of globalisation, it was not realistic to expect that the introduction of pluralist democracy and the institutions of market economy, the broadening of individual rights would put Hungarian urbanization on the same track that had formerly been taken by Western societies. It appeared to be more realistic to assume that the various groups of Hungarian society would react to the new challenges in different ways, and that their changes of residence make up a unique pattern when put into the conceptual context of urbanization.

The research methods were selected and formulated with respect to these assumptions and hypotheses. We attempted to identify the phases of urbanization on the basis of the migration behaviour of various social groups, and how, at the same time, the spatial social structure of the country was changing. The empirical analysis was made possible by the Census of 2001 which included data on the previous residence of respondents. Given that the census database covers all vital demographic and social characteristics of respondents, we were able to investigate not merely the spatial realignment of the population, but also the social structure of migrant groups which is something we would not know from yearly migration statistics. In order to be able track spatial movements, we needed a perspicuous and consistent typology that covers all Hungarian settlements. Along the urban-rural divide, we developed 12 categories of settlements and wanted to draw the implications for urbanization and the changes in spatial social structure on the basis of migration among these groups of settlements. So as to be able to measure the changes implied by migration in the social structure of these categories of settlements, we developed an indicator, which we call social structure index (SSI), which ended up playing a key role both in the analysis of the social content of migration as well as in describing the spatial aspects of social structure.

On the theory of urbanization and Hungarian urbanization before 1990

There is a fairly strong consensus among representatives of settlement sciences that the process of urbanization can be divided into four phases, namely urbanization (with robust population concentration), suburbanization, desurbanization and reurbanization. Beyond identifying these four phases, however, there are substantial differences as to just how universal this process is. According one major school, the process of urbanization follows more or less the same pattern: in spite of substantial delays, modern societies sooner or later experience the specific characteristics of all four phases. The other major school puts the emphasis on local circumstances and finds that differences in the historical past, socio-economic structures and cultural traditions are reflected in the nature of urbanization, which at the same time does have common features.

Leo van den Berg's *Urban Systems in a Dynamic Society* was published in 1987, a book that belongs to the first school of thought, discussing urbanization by dividing the process into four phases. The theory itself is almost trivial in its simplicity. It identifies three geographical units, the metropolis, its agglomeration, and the areas falling outside these two. The phases of urbanization, which have different patterns as a result of cyclical processes, are predicated upon how the size of population changes in the three areas as a result of migration. In the first phase, during the time of population explosion, the number of inhabitants in the

metropolis grows fast. The second phase is suburbanization in the course of which the number of inhabitants in the metropolis declines as there is a relatively high rate of population growth in the suburbia which are attached functionally to the metropolis and together make up an urban system. During the third phase which van den Berg calls dezurbanization, the total population of the metropolitan agglomeration declines, the number of jobs decreases and the focal points of population growth shift to the cities and villages of formerly peripheral areas. The last identifiable phase of urbanization cycles is reurbanisation in the course of which the number of inhabitants in the metropolis began to grow again (Berg, L. v d 1987: 2).

Researches differ greatly on the question whether urbanization and the changes in the network of settlements in Hungary can be understood without further ado under the universal model of urbanization cycles, or rather there is a peculiar path. Under the policy of forceful industrialization, the first phase of urbanization resulted in a much lower level of population concentration, a phenomena captured well by the expression, under-urbanization. One additional elements of this was that while urbanization remained incomplete – in comparison to Western patterns – even urban societies themselves continued to feature important rural qualities. Partly due to this incomplete urbanization, partly as a result of peculiar social and economic conditions, suburbanization could only be identified as a sporadic phenomena even at the end of the 1980s, and migration from cities to surrounding settlements did not occur in large numbers. It follows directly from the above that the phases of dezurbanization and reurbanization could not be identified until the change of regime in 1989. In summing up the phase of urbanization from World War II. to the 1980s, we can conclude that it was a peculiar path influenced fundamentally by the social, economic and political conditions of the age. This circumstance was underlined by research on migration and population change during the 1980s in the capital, the cities and the villages: already at this time substantial social inequalities manifested themselves.

The effect of migration in the 1990s on urbanization and spatial social structure

After having reviewed the theoretical background as well as the conditions that characterized the late 1980s as a result of processes of urbanization and the changes in spatial social structure, we moved on to the genuine subject of our work, the analysis of changes during the 1990s. First of all, we studied the migration statistics of this period, which do shed light on urbanization but the limitations of this data source became all too apparent. A statisztika csak a vándorlások számát rögzíti, akik egy időszak alatt többször váltanak állandó lakóhelyet, esetleg oda-vissza költöznek, minden alkalommal önálló adatként jelennek meg.

This statistic counts the number of migrations, i.e. those who change place of residence more than once or even move back and forth, appear every time as independent data. An even more serious limitation of this database is that nothing can be known about the social and demographic characteristics of those who move, thus in spite of long time series data sets, the database is not adequate for studying the simultaneous processes of urbanization and changes in spatial social structure. Once a few dominant trends are identified, we have to apply a new method in order to be able to discover deeper connections and thereby approach the chief subject of our investigations.

The methods of investigation

First of all, settlement types had to be identified on the basis of Beluszky's typology (BELUSZKY 1999) which had to be modified in several respects to fit our investigations. A fő törekvésünk az volt, hogy a településcsoportok az urbánus – rurális tengely mentén helyezkedjenek el. Our main concern was to be able to place settlements along a rural-urban axis. Another important criteria was to keep the number of categories small enough because too many categories would have made our analysis difficult to follow, but at the same time we also paid attention to keeping categories as homogeneous as possible. The categories of settlements read as follows:

1. *Budapest.*
2. *The suburbs of Budapest.*
3. *County seats.*
4. *Countryside suburbs.*
5. *Middle size cities.*
6. *Small cities.*
7. *Holiday resort cities.*
8. *Urbanizing settlements.*
9. *Agglomeration villages.*
10. *Holiday resort villages.*
11. *Villages.*
12. *Small villages.*

Table 1.

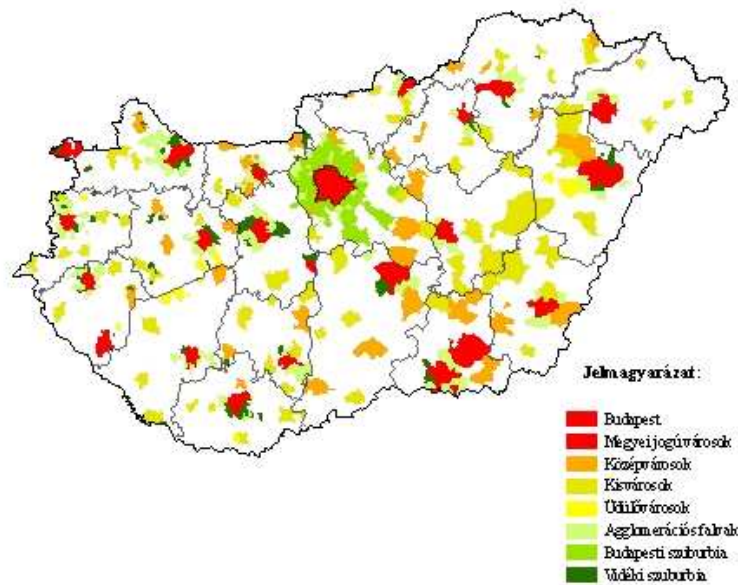
Basic data on categories of settlements

Categories of settlements	Population		Settlements		Average	Greatest	Smallest	Relative dispersion of population number
	number	proportion	number of	proportion of	population number			
Budapest	1777921	17,4%	1	0,0%	x	x	x	x
Suburbs of Budapest	631725	6,2%	69	2,2%	9155	56567	835	95,1
County seats	2033919	19,9%	22	0,7%	92451	211034	36229	53,9
Countryside suburbs	122695	1,2%	75	2,4%	1636	10677	99	107,5
Middle size cities	935748	9,2%	34	1,1%	27522	38405	16602	23,4
Small cities	891756	8,7%	71	2,3%	12515	22883	4576	35,3
Holiday resort cities	74492	0,7%	11	0,4%	6742	23425	1345	94,2
Urbanizing settlemts	663449	6,5%	111	3,5%	5977	13526	1305	42,8
Agglomeration villages	317644	3,1%	172	5,5%	1847	10256	100	87,2
Holiday resort villages	270152	2,6%	164	5,2%	1647	11034	75	85,3
Villages	2227261	21,8%	1465	46,7%	1520	8590	500	69,6
Small villages	251553	2,5%	940	30,0%	268	499	12	47,0
Hungary	10198315	100,0%	3135	100,0%	3253	1777921	12	x

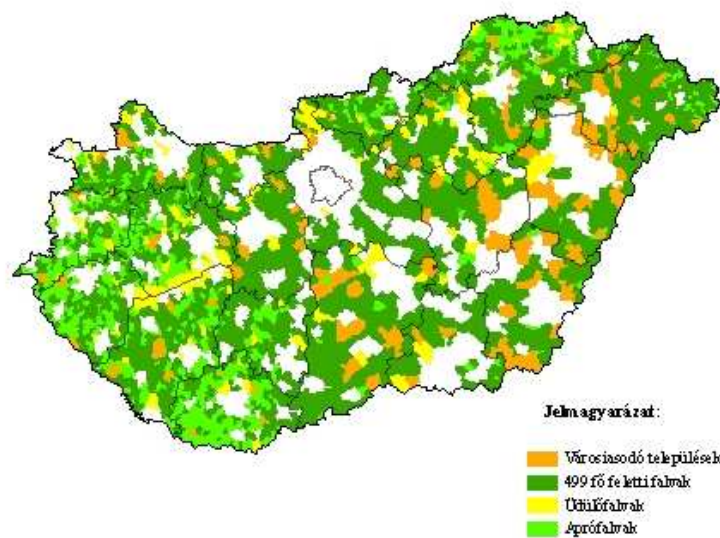
Source: Author's calculations from Hungarian Census 2001.

We considered as belonging to the urbanized space the capital, county seats, middle size cities, small cities, holiday resort cities, suburban areas as well as agglomeration villages, but not urbanizing settlements, because the findings of our prior and current research shows that this latter category's social structure resembles more that of villages than that of any urban category.

Settlement categories belonging to urbanized space¹



Settlement categories belonging to rural space²



¹ Colours: Deep red: Budapest; Light red: County seats; Deep orange: Middle size cities; Orange: Small cities; Light orange: Holiday resort cities; Light green: Agglomeration villages; Green: Budapest's suburbs; Deep green: Countryside suburs

² Colours: Deep organge: Urbanizing settlements; Deep green: Villages with more than 499 inhabitants; Light orange: Holiday resort villages; Light green: Small villages

It was because of the already mentioned limitations of yearly migration statistics that we turned to the data of Census in 2001. Beside the fact that theoretically, this is a full-scope database, it also contains all essential demographic variables, data on education, economic activity, as well as information which makes it possible to connect people with particular points of space, and these latter indeed were vital for us. Beside information on the place of birth and permanent residence, also the place of temporary and actual residence, as well as residence prior to the census were collected in the census. The latter is the piece of information with which we could dynamize census data, otherwise to be interpreted as valid as of February 1, 2001, the theoretical interview date of census in 2001. Naturally, this method too has sensitive limitations and deficiencies, notwithstanding the fact that there always are certain individuals who are ultimately not interviewed for the census.

- Only those appear in the data base who were alive on February 1, 2001.
- Only the most recent change of place of residence is recorded, including for those who moved among settlement categories several times after 1990 or moved within their own category of settlement.
- Our method is not sensible to intragenerational mobility.

These limitations however do not question the applicability of the method we propose, what is more, we believe that fundamentally new information can be revealed by its application.

In order to be able to gather such new information, we had to set apart from the information set of census data that group of variables which are capable of measuring changes in spatial social structure. We listed the country's population into seven categories:

1. Elite groups.
2. Upper middle strata.
3. Middle strata.
4. Lower middle strata.
5. Lower strata.
6. Deprived.
7. Inactive, who never worked.

For the sake of the comparability of groups with different migration behaviour, we developed an index on their stratification attributes. Our expectation was that the index for a certain social group should express the inner distribution of its social strata, their relative proportion vis-à-vis each other. Ultimately, the following index, named social stratification index (SSI) satisfied these requirements:

$$TRI = \sum_{i=1}^{K-1} \sum_{j=i+1}^K \left(\frac{x_i}{x_j} \right)$$

where K=7

The most important features of SSI:

- Its minimum value is 12 which it takes in case all members of the group belong to the lowest social strata and at least one person belongs to all other categories. In extreme cases, for instance if one person belongs to the higher social categories, its value can be smaller than 12 as the condition $K=7$ is not fulfilled;
- It does not have a maximum value as that depends on the number of individuals in the group, but it can take very high values in case everyone belongs to the highest social strata, to the elite;
- In case of equal distribution, i.e. when an equal number of people belong to all categories, its value is 15.

In the course of our analysis, we became convinced that SSI is a useful tool to measure and understand the social dimension of changes in the social structure of settlement categories as a result of migration.

Analysis of settlement categories

For all settlement categories we analyzed the main demographic, social and economic attributes, such as natural population change, employment, income situation based on income tax data, welfare recipients, availability of services, housing conditions, tourism data (which we interpreted as an indicator of connections to the outside world), and public safety. We measured the effect of migration on social structure by way of analyzing, with the help of the SSI, the ratio and composition of those in the various status groups who moved in from the other settlement categories during the 1990s. The main findings on the twelve settlement categories are the following:

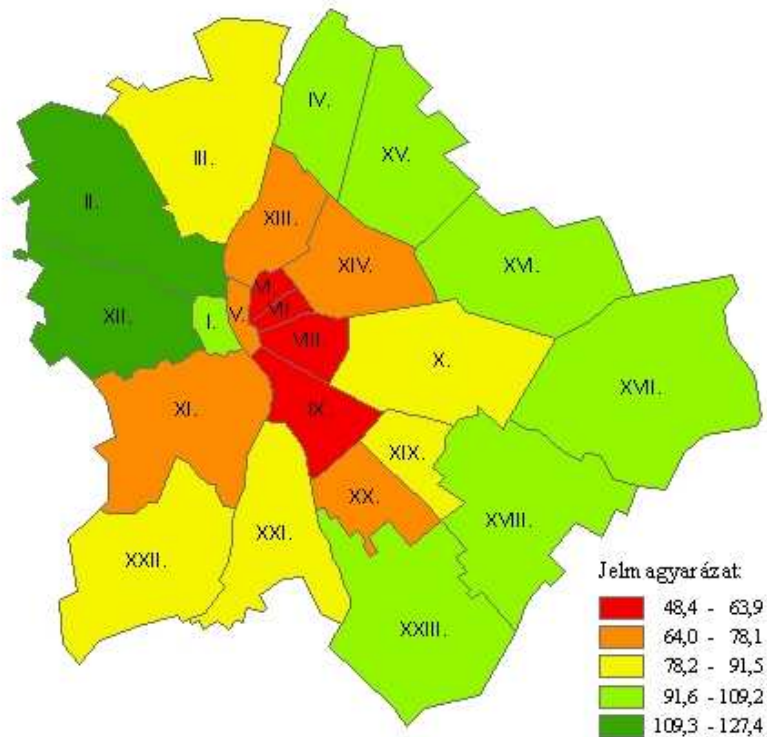
Budapest

A Budapestre költözők településcsoportonkénti és rétegződési jellemzőiről azt mondhatjuk, hogy az ország urbánus és magasabb státuszú térségeiből érkezetteket a fővárosi átlagnál magasabb, a rurális, alacsony státuszú térségekből érkezetteket alacsony társadalmi státusz jellemzi. A duality characterizes those moving into Budapest from the point of view of their original settlement category and social status: on one hand, those who move in from the urbanized and higher status regions of the country have a higher status than the Budapest average, while those who move in from lower status regions, have a lower social status than the Budapest average. Működni látszik tehát a városszociológiából ismert szukcesszió, illetve a lakásszociológiában használt filtráció jelensége, vagyis a Budapesten elhagyó nagyon magas státuszú csoportok helyébe annál alacsonyabb státuszúak telepedtek be, akik ugyanakkor a

kibocsátó településtípusok átlagánál magasabb státuszt képviselnek. We can recognize the phenomena known as succession in urban sociology and filtration in the sociology of housing, namely that the very high status groups that are leaving Budapest are replaced by groups with lower status which is at the same time higher than that of the average of sending settlement categories. Mindez összességében azt eredményezte, hogy nőtt a magas státuszú csoportok koncentrációja a Budapest és szuburbán övezete által alkotott összefüggő területen, miközben a többi településcsoport veszített a magas státuszú népességéből. The overall effect of this has been the concentration of high status groups in Budapest and its suburban zone, while at the same time all other settlement categories lost some of their high status population.

Map 3.

The districts of Budapest by the status of their population³



Our data nicely underlined the concentration of high status groups from the whole country into Budapest and its suburbs. A third of those who moved into Budapest as permanent residents during the 1990s belonged to the two highest social status groups. Two thirds of this group arrived from the most urbanized areas, namely three tenths of them left county seats, 16% of them the suburbia of Budapest, 12% of them middle sized cities and 8% of them left small cities. In spite of a significantly decreasing population and the process of

³ Breaking points were determined on the basis of Jenks algorithm for maps 1., 2., and 3.

suburbanization, the capital continues to exert a marked “elite drain” on the rest of the country.

Budapest suburbia

All things considered, in the Hungarian context the Budapest suburbia offered the best living conditions. Outstandingly high status groups moved from Budapest to the suburbs which also had a great appeal for those high status groups which moved from the county seats: as result, this area came to occupy during the 1990s the premier place in terms of its social status characteristics. The main distinguishing feature of the suburbanization of Budapest is that its chief driving forces have been the elite and the higher middle classes. Budapest and its suburbia make up a geographically more or less compound area with a largely socially homogenous population, which rises above all other settlement categories and is in a much greater distance from them than the distance that separates these other categories from one another.

County seats

During the 1990s county seats were not under a migration pressure as only a little more than 141.000 people moved in from other types of settlements, which made up a mere 7% of their population. The average status index of this category is 53.8, the highest is in Szombathely, Székesfehérvár, Sopron (which exceed that of Budapest), while the lowest is in Miskolc, Nyíregyháza és Debrecen. Based on the value of SSI, the first eight cities all lie in the Central and West Transdanubian regions. In sharp contrast to Budapest and its suburbia, county seats lost more than 10.000 people belonging to the elite and upper middle classes as a consequence of migration. This again underpins what was said above about the concentration of high status groups. Such losses are evidently unequally distributed among county seats.

Countryside suburbia

Suburbanization in the countryside took a markedly different social content in comparison to suburbanization around Budapest. First of all, the social status of the groups that take part in it is significantly lower, which is a consequence of the fact the big cities of the countryside, which are typically the sources of migration for these groups, have a markedly lower status than that of the capital and thus have characteristically middle class suburbia. On the other hand, countryside suburbia in Hungary remain typically mono-functional, serving as a place of residence but not showing the signs of any further urbanization either in terms of the level of services, or in terms of employment or their economic structure. The first impetus to countryside suburbanization was the fast and mass privatization of big city council flats well below market prices (DÖVÉNYI – KOVÁCS, 1999:

40): as families sold these flats at market prices, they acquired the resources necessary to build houses.

Middle sized cities

Middle sized cities during the 1990s continued remain belated in terms of urbanization, occupying a somewhat peripheral position. Among members of the upper two social strata, there was notable outward migration, whereas new residents arrived mainly from villages: as their numbers were not great however, their integration into the local society was not a problem. Apart from a few peculiar cases, their social structure is well balanced on the whole. The quiet 1990s offered the possibility for middle sized cities to somewhat deepen their level of urbanism. By themselves, they will not be able to alter the existing circumstances, they could only be drawn onwards by a wholesale dynamization of Hungarian society.

Small cities

It is noteworthy that in case of settlement category, we see a relative homogeneity among migrants in terms of their social status: their SSI is dispersed around the average of this category of settlements. We can therefore state that small cities are homes to new residents who fit their social characteristics well. This has a lot to do with the size and transparency of the local society, where people largely know each other personally. Those who move here, have find not only their place of residence, but also their place in the web of local society via connections to relatives, neighbours and colleagues. The receiving party is not merely a settlement in this case but a local society with lots of social bonds: anonymity and outsider positions are not welcome in this context which in contrast prefers similarity in the course of integration. This is reflected in the similarity of the social status of small cities and their migrants.

The role small cities play in urbanization is not to be downplayed as they are actually the manufactories of urbanization. They transform the population gained from the surrounding villages by way of integrating them into local society's strong, personal social networks, making them urban people in terms of their life style, habits and values. This is a process that works in spite of the fact that for some small cities – especially in some of those east of the Danube – time has stopped for the past 20 years, a dubious novelty being one of the multinationals' stores, installed "in exchange for" a collapsed local economy, employment difficulties and other life uncertainties.

Holiday resort cities

The reason for introducing a separate category for this group – which would belong to small cities just on the basis of the number of their residents – was that their members show special social structure and migration characteristics related to tourism, that would have been a mistake to leave unnoticed behind the averages for small cities. They are typically mono-functional, their lives and local economies are organized around tourism. Their income conditions and the related social status of their residents are much favourable than in the case of small cities, and inward migration adds to this to a great extent. In terms of the magnitude of inward migration, they show a similarity to suburban settlements. They have a special position in terms of urbanization as well: presumably many move into their already owned holiday houses once their economically active life period ends.

Urbanizing settlements

This category is made up by settlements that acquired the status of a city during the 1980s. Life conditions and available services in urbanizing settlements show that they are far away from small cities. There is no substantial difference in the low status of the population of urbanizing settlements in terms of when they acquired their city status, before or after 1990. Half of their new residents came from villages and county seats, with status indexes that are well behind the averages for settlements with a city status.

Their social stratification characteristics not only put them apart from the rest of the urban settlement categories, but also their features practically merge them with villages. That is to say, their urban character cannot be argued on sociological bases either. The process of urbanization did not reach them, they remained outside the mainstream changes associated with urbanization and stabilized their positions on the periphery. The only exceptions to this are urbanizing settlements in the Budapest agglomeration, or in the counties Vas or Győr-Moson-Sopron, or in case they are the seat of a prospering company. The rest not only remained outside urbanization but became the terrains of a reverse process, that of reruralization.

Agglomeration villages

The first feature to be noted in the case of this category of settlements is that the status index of its residents (60.8) is the third highest after Budapest and its suburbs, exceeding the index of county seats and the suburbs of the countryside.

Migration into agglomeration villages by no doubt bears the mark of suburbanization, but beyond the social and settlement geographic context also local circumstances played a great role in determining the areas where unambiguously suburban settlements developed.

The hypothesis would be in order here that agglomeration villages might be a potential reservoir for suburbanization in the countryside. The decade of suburbanization was really the 1990s in Hungary. During the first years of the new decade, the forces of suburbanization, especially in the countryside, became exhausted. By 2008 the migration gain of the countryside suburbia was halved after a period of steady decline: according to yearly migration statistics, first county seats turned their migration balance into positive, than the capital too experienced the same shift, which are clear signs of reurbanization, making on the whole, quite unlikely that new settlements would enter the group of suburban areas.

Holiday resort villages

The status index of resort village residents was 51, almost the same as the Hungarian average, exceeding that of small villages, villages, urbanizing settlements and small cities. This category of settlements raises above villages from the point of view employment, income and available services and the same is true of the stratification features of its residents and its migrants. Beside resort cities, resort villages too are the targets of well-off retired people moving out of Budapest. The rest of the people moving in from other types of settlements seem to be motivated, on the basis of data on age and economic activity, by the business opportunities of these settlements with lively tourism.

At least three functions can be identified in terms of their role in urbanization. First of all, inward mobility shows the marks of suburbanization in high status regions. Secondly, they attract retired population moving out the capital but a more detailed analysis could also find traces of this process vis-à-vis big and middle size cities of the countryside. Thirdly, in low prestige regions, they are targets of the poor who are moving out of high status areas.

Villages

Life conditions and life chances of village residents and the services available for them significantly fall behind what is given in the majority of other settlement categories. This is the real testimonial of Hungarian urbanization: as a social process that embraces society writ large, urbanization could be expected to minimize the differences between city and village.

The status index of the residents living in this type of settlement was 40.6 which exceeded by 2.4 that of urbanizing settlements. An average of 11% of the people who moved into villages after 1989, moved into the village which was their place of birth. It can be shown from migration data that the target areas of low status population moving out Budapest and resettling into the villages were counties far away from the capital. The positive effects of urbanization were present only in the areas with a favourable settlement environment: mainly in counties north of Balaton, near the capital and to some extent on Heves County. As the vast

majority of villages can not be conceived of as urbanized areas, the more than 300,000 people who moved into villages during the 1990s, moved against the hypothetical mainstream of urbanization and experienced reruralization.

Small villages

The status index of residents of small villages, a mere 33.8, was the lowest among the various categories of settlements. About half of the 42,000 people who moved into this type of settlements moved within the rural areas, whereas the other half underwent reruralization by leaving urban areas. The motivation of resettling into the place of birth was a marked phenomena among those moved into small villages. This category of settlement has the most problematic social structure, which is partly due to the demographic characteristics of their population, primarily in their ageing age structure. This is accompanied by low education (a trait that is expressed in the status index as well), and catastrophically bad employment conditions.

One of the main conclusion from the point of view of urbanization is that small villages were unaffected by urbanization before and after 1990 and remained on the whole rural areas, which something we can gather from the nature of services available in these settlements as well as from their stratification characteristics. One of the evidences for the fragmented nature of Hungary's urbanization is that this part of the settlement network remained largely untouched by its processes. One element of this unfavourable certificate is that about half of those moving into small villages come from settlements that are urbanized: those who move are either excluded from the job market or retire. This group testifies to the fact that cities could not assimilate a part of those who had moved there earlier because of jobs: the attraction of city life style lasted only while these people were employed. Functionally, small villages occupy an unfavourable position in the settlement network: with the exception of a few counties in the Transdanubian regions, they are home and reception zones to low status, poor and distressed social groups. Néhány dunántúli megye kivételével az alacsony státuszú, szegény, elesett társadalmi csoportok lakó- és gyűjtőhelyei.

Table 2.

Main migration features by settlement categories⁴

Categories of settlements	Popula- tion	Post 1989		Migration balance, numbers of persons	The popula- tion's	The inward migrants'	The outward migrants'
		inward migration	outward migration				
	total number of persons			SSI value			
Budapest	1777921	97705	185810	-88105	75,1	72,4	84,7
Budapest and its suburbs	631725	134566	51380	83186	77,0	105,3	72,8
County seats	2033919	131760	186641	-54881	53,8	62,3	65,9
Countryside suburbia	122695	36658	21821	14837	57,5	69,7	59,5
Middle size cities	935748	77258	86888	-9630	54,2	62,3	62,7
Small cities	891756	70931	76485	-5554	46,5	47,7	53,9
Holiday resort cities	74492	9934	10210	-276	57,6	69,4	65,2
Urbanizing settlements	663449	61535	69715	-8180	38,2	41,5	45,7
Agglomeration villages	317644	57752	55514	2238	60,8	96,6	56,9
Holiday resort villages	270152	40496	37374	3122	51,0	67,7	56,1
Villages	2227261	219702	152710	66992	40,6	51,0	49,2
Small villages	251553	34218	37967	-3749	33,8	46,3	39,9
Hungary	10198315	972515	972515	0	50,4		59,6

Source: author's calculation from the Hungarian Census 2001.

The main features of migration among the categories of settlements during the 1990s are summarized in Table 2.

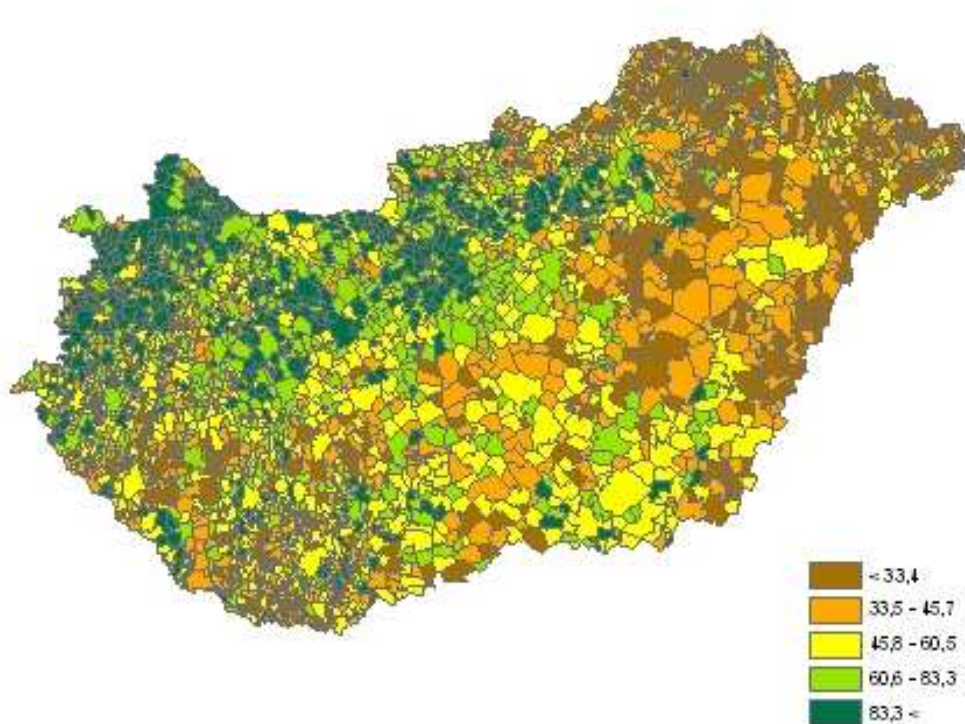
Regional determination

Our study relied on a category of settlements lined up along an urban-rural axis, as this was the analytical solution that best fit our research context. With the exception of the Budapest suburbia, we noted the great differences in social status (measured with SSI) and migration within each category of settlements in the countryside. Hungarian research on settlement geography is familiar with the weight of this phenomenon which it calls regional embeddedness or regional determination. The majority of research arrived at these conclusions by using data on economic performance, contribution to GDP, GDP per capita and its changes, industrial productivity, value of investments, and presence of foreign investments. (cf. e.g. KSH 2010). Regional differences were detected in terms of regions, counties and micro regions (FALUVÉGI, 2000, CSATÁRI 2010) whose pattern fundamentally parallels evidence found in our study as well.

In order to present regional determination, we listed all Hungarian settlements into five categories on the basis of their population's SSI value: the result is presented in the map below.

⁴ Only data on those who moved among the categories of settlements were taken into account, data on those who moved from abroad or from elsewhere was not taken into account. As a result, the migration balance of Hungary is zero.

Five settlement categories according to SSI value



On the basis of these five categories, a great terrain can be delimited in Transdanubia north of the Balaton, with certain outstanding areas within this context such as the northern parts of Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas counties, the parts of Veszprém and Fejér counties around the county seats, the Budapest agglomeration and two of its extensions, one being the northern part of Komárom-Esztergom county, the other extension being the zone along Highway Number 5. Predominantly low status settlements dominate the counties Borsod, Szabolcs, the inner areas of Trans-Tisza region as well as the zone along the Romanian border. In South Transdanubia, Baranya and the southern part of Tolna features all five categories, while Somogy, with the exception of its settlements at the Balaton, like the north of Tolna and the south of Fejér, are characterized by middle or lower status settlements.

Our conclusion is that regional determination is present by all means, its influence can be grasped however not at the level of regions or counties, but at in much narrower territorial contexts. Territorial differences are usually grasped by way of economic indexes. As social indicators, most commonly education and employment are drawn on. The question is whether differences in economic performance or social stratification features sustain territorial differences. On the one hand, these two aspects are obviously strongly related. We presented

in detail above how higher status groups move towards economically more advanced regions, ones that well fit their social status. Emphasis has to be put on the fact however that the forces of territorial determination exercise an influence that reach over decades and political systems and can be characterized more by stability than by changes. I am convinced that the present conditions cannot be altered by the development policy means applied thus far: a wholly new approach is needed, one that aims at decreasing differences in social structure. Only by “filling up” dramatically wide gulfs can one realistically expect that territorial differences in social structure decrease. One has to be aware of the fact at the same time that the forces of globalization by no means provide a favourable context to such endeavours.

Identifiability of urbanization cycles during the 1990s in Hungary

Suburbanization

The decade of urbanization was the 1990s in Hungary, well corroborated by migration statistics. In the matrix of all migrations among the various categories of settlements, the highest proportion, 10.7% is made up by those moving from the capital to its suburbia which is 13.8% of all migrations that targeted this category of settlements. When we add to this the extra 3.8% of migration that targeted the countryside suburbia, we can consider about a sixth of all migration among the various types of settlements to be of a suburban character: this is so even if obviously not all migrants into these two categories of settlements moved with such a motivation in mind. The social character of migration into the suburbia around the capital and into the countryside suburbia features divergent traits. Az éves vándorlástatisztikai adatok azt mutatják, hogy az új évezred első évtizedének végére a gyors felfutás után ez az időszak véget ért. Yearly migration statistics show that this period has ended by the end of the first decade of the new millennium. After a period of progressively decreasing loss, population surplus has been experienced in the county seats since 2006, and since 2007 in the capital as well.

Deurbanization

From among the urbanization cycles, the period of rezurbanization cannot be identified in Hungary: reurbanization began to spread without traits of this phase. This way, new impetus is given to arguments which deny the universal character of urbanization, or more precisely urbanization cycles through which all societies have to pass sooner or later.

Reurbanization

In the course of analysing the migration features of Budapest districts, we pointed out that among the high status population we already see groups that had moved in from the suburbs. The weight of the phenomena is well illustrated by the data that among groups moving into Budapest, this group was the most numerous with 24,000 migrants, making up

2.5% of all migrants among the various categories of settlements. Their status was the highest vis-à-vis migrants from other categories of settlements, thus they unambiguously qualified as actors of reurbanization. If we add the more than 6.000 people who moved from the countryside suburbia to the county seats and whose status index was higher than that of the countryside suburbia and that of county seats, actors of reurbanization already count more than 30.000 people which is quite enough to identify this phase of the urbanization cycle. Migration statistics from the period after the timeframe that we examine here seem to corroborate the strengthening of reurbanization, even though we do not have information on social stratification traits.

The spatial concentration of high status groups

Migration balance tells us little about which social strata grew and which became less numerous as a result of migration. As we have seen above, in spite of the fact that the strongholds of the urban network, the capital, the county seats, middle sized cities and small cities, ended up with migration losses by the end of the period we study here, in terms of the elite and the higher middle strata, they managed to have their way against settlements that stand below them in the hierarchy. Middle size cities, for instance, paid their “elite tax” to the capital and the county seats, (plus to the suburbs as well as the agglomeration and resort areas), and at the same time tried to collect that same tax from the small cities, urbanizing settlements and villages. This example and the mechanism behind it shows that migration has a much greater effect on spatial social structure than what can be surmised from mere migration balance data. The lesson is that even during the changed and changing circumstances of the 1990s, the concentration of the highest status groups continued, primarily in the capital and its suburban area: in other words, these groups moved along a multistage mobility path of the settlement hierarchy, pointed towards the social center. The end result of this process has been that the social deficit accumulated in urbanizing settlements, villages and small villages, ruining the social structure of these micro societies.

Reruralization

From among all migrations among the various categories of settlements, 23% targeted villages, 6% urbanizing settlements, and 3% small villages: this made up 315.000 people, a third of all migrants. That is to say, only two thirds of all migration during the 1990s took place among urbanized areas, pointed from rural towards urban areas, a third moved in the opposite direction. A significant proportion of those moving into villages moved back to their place of birth. Another force that played into this process was globalization whose strict rules concentrated the human and physical resources vital for globalization and at the same time

repelling those without a role in its processes. In most cases, reruralization is forced migration, the choice of the least worst, which in fact is quite rational, since one can fare better with meager resources under cheaper and more predictable rural circumstances.

The pattern of urbanization

The main conclusion of our dissertation on Hungarian urbanization is that here there has not been an urbanization process that would fit into an urbanization cycle or that would have embraced Hungarian society as a whole. On the contrary, the various social groups behaved according to different urbanization patterns.

High and above average status groups

- One type of suburbanization was embodied by groups with outstanding status that moved from the capital to the neighbouring settlements.
- The other type of suburbanization was the moving out of the middle classes from countryside big cities to the suburban areas.
- In the countryside, groups with higher status than in the previous category moved to agglomeration villages.
- A mild dezurbanization tone can be attributed to the change in the urbanization character and higher than average status migrants of resort cities and villages. The process on the whole however did not reach size and weight on the basis of which we could have undoubtedly identified this urbanization cycle.
- Parallel to a strong process of suburbanization, reurbanization too began to take hold as high status groups began to move back to central cities from the suburbs.
- High status groups in “retreat”: those who move from the capital and county seats into villages and small villages. This phenomenon does not appear in large numbers, we mention it for the sake of completeness and curiosity.
- There is a process of concentration of high status groups, namely among those belonging to the elite and the higher middle classes.

Low status groups

- Groups that withdraw from the urbanized sections of the settlement network into urbanizing settlements, villages and small villages: they make reruralization a marked phenomenon. The problem with this is that they contribute to the stabilization of low status population in deprived settlements that shape into larger areas of exclusion – this effectively excludes the possibility of higher status migrants moving in.

- Poor people who move from rural areas and smaller cities to the capital and countryside large cities. Their numbers are much smaller than that of the previous group, but their moving into cities increases urban poverty.
- Poor who migrate among urbanizing settlements, villages and small villages. They make up the lowest status block among migrants and supposedly have neither the motivation nor the possibility to break out of this cycle.

Groups of around average status

- Their migration cannot be linked with an obvious urbanization pattern, as they are both inward and outward migrants in all settlement categories. The motif of settling back into the place of birth is marked among them, although it can be found also among low status groups in the process of reruralization.

Our findings can be summarized thus by saying that various social (status) groups behave and migrate according to different patterns of urbanization in the settlement network and among categories of settlements. The reason and explanation for this is that the process of urbanization continued to be weak during the 1990s, no significant new rural territory was fastened onto urbanization, what is more, the difference and inequality between rural and urban increased. Highly urbanized contiguous territories developed around the capital and its suburbia, the urbanized character of northern Transdanubia deepened, while similar areas emerged only as enclaves in the rest of the country – at the same time, life quality offered by rural areas deteriorated in comparison to previous circumstances. The change in spatial social structure seems to be motivated by the process that areas with a stabilized status attract (and keep) residents with a very similar status, and distract those in a greater social distance.

Let us recall that the title of Berg's book on urbanization cycles (BERG 1987) was "Urban Systems in a Dynamic Society". Hungarian society during the decade after the change of regime could not recover its previous dynamism. The areas of the country which showed signs of social and economic dynamism can in fact be well positioned in the dominant urbanization cycle phase of spatial deconcentration of the population, and in the phase of reurbanization which is slowly gaining currency. In areas of stagnation or deterioration there is no defining tendency of urbanization as there is no dynamism: low status groups aimlessly wander in the social and physical space.

The pattern of spatial social structure

In order to be able to formulate our final conclusions on spatial social structure, we merged the country's settlements into three categories on the basis of their level of

urbanization: we differentiated among Budapest and its suburbia, countryside urbanized areas and rural areas.

Table 3.

The status index of migrants among the three main areas during the 1990s

Area		Where		
		Bp and its suburbs	countryside urbanized area	rural area
from where	Bp and its suburbia	99,7	73,6	56,3
	countryside urbanized area	80,3	69,6	54,4
	rural area	53,7	52,5	39,4

Source: Census 2001, author’s calculations

There are no equal chances in the social sense when it comes to migration from one area to another. Groups with the highest status moved within Budapest and its agglomeration, while the status of those who moved out of Budapest decreased according to the level of urbanization in the target area. The highest status groups from the urbanized countryside moved to Budapest and its vicinity, to the rural areas, it served as a source of migration for groups with a status somewhat lower than that of Budapest and its suburbs. In the population exchange between urban and rural areas, groups of similar size, proportions as well as status level participated, even if ruralizing groups to some extent exceeded the size of those moving into urbanized areas. Most notable is the very low SSI, only 39.4, of the 190,000 people who moved within rural areas. What we see here is a not only an urbanization but also a social gap between urbanized and rural areas.

This partial, low efficiency urbanization which extended only to a quarter of the country, conserved an outdated spatial social structure with strong elements of discrimination. Regional development practices and policies aimed at the reduction of regional inequalities have failed thus far as they have conserved the status quo, and the situation on our reading worsened since 2001. Only those policies have a real chance of reducing regional differences which have a high priority on the rehabilitation of the eroded social structure of degraded regions and settlements. The precondition of this is the dynamization of society and economy, the speeding up of urbanization – all of which requires input from the human and other resources vested in rural areas.

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