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Contents

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Guest Editor's Foreword

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Jaap Dronkers, who has significantly reviewed new sociological inquiry on the continuing social relevance of the European nobility, associated the vitality of this community with its unique capabilities of accumulating social and cultural capital. To be sure, in some studies, Dronkers with his collaborators also mentioned the importance of material capital which has contributed to the prevalence of the comprehensive network of noble origin families in Western Europe (Korom–Dronkers 2009). Dronkers' attention was focused mainly on the Dutch civil nobility, which, unlike military or landed nobility, was better adapted to the dominant bourgeoise-oriented modernity, what additionally explains the continuing social relevance of this group. Importantly, Dronkers (2003: 83) admitted that the prevalence of nobility in contemporary Europe has its limits, namely: "the importance of noble origins declines only if social relationships change so rapidly (e.g. due to a revolution, defeat in a war, or a serious economic recession) that the old social and cultural family capital is no longer usable or ceases to apply under the new circumstances".

Albeit Dronkers did not make mention of Eastern Europe, it could be inferred from his statement that nobility in countries re-arranged by communist revolutions during the crucial period of 1944–1956 ceased to exist, by the very definition, as a comprehensive social class. The slowly emerging studies on contemporary Eastern European nobility, particularly on the Hungarian and Polish noble milieu (e.g. Jakubowska 2005, Sztáray-Kézdy 2009, Smoczynski–Zarycki 2012), partially confirmed Dronkers' muses. We cannot identify a noble social stratum in Eastern Europe which would comply with the Weberian or Marxian class criteria. Probably, the confiscation of land properties, a structural constrain imposed on the capital accumulation within the relics of noble networks, and eventually the gradual process of the relocation of noble origin individuals into other class positions, most notably into the intelligentsia stratum, were the most important reasons of this class extinction. Having noted this obvious fact, we should also note that the above-mentioned novel studies have shaken the assumption about the historical necessity of the disappearance of noble networks in Eastern Europe

which draw on feudal legacy in various forms. Even though we cannot delimit a proper post-feudal social class ranging from East Germany to Caucasian Georgia (Seelig 2015, Sulaberidze et al. 2015) which would have survived communism, there is a considerable empirical evidence suggesting that communism has not succeeded in eliminating networks based on traditional noble cultural and social capital, although the degree of the social integrity of these groups as measured e.g. by noble homogamy decisively varies in this region. Overall, the crucial argument of the above-mentioned revisionist scholarship charges that the identity-building strategies of the Eastern European nobility should be analyzed e.g. within the Weberian status perspective, which allows grasping the strategic relationship of members of nobility with the intelligentsia stratum, that is to say, the élite of cultural capital. The latter stratum, which actually originates from the 19th-century waning petty nobility – as this argument evolves –, created specific symbiotic ties over the last century, particularly after the Second War World, with the remaining noble milieu what, on the one hand, has re-defined its class identity in modern merit-based terms but has preserved its crucial pre-modern features on the other (e.g. elitist ethos, a kinship network proximity, a limited noble homogamy).

The current contribution aims at expanding the crucial lines of this revisionist inquiry focusing on two Eastern European countries where the noble population had been historically the most numerous and only recently had ceased to impact the public sphere, namely, Hungary and Poland. Bringing several papers together, this volume aims specifically at mapping noble homogamy in Poland, drawing on a unique empirical data called *The Genealogy of Descendants of the Great Sejm*. Minakowski and Smoczynski analyze quantitatively longer trends of several (e.g. five, eight, or even more) generations of nobles (or nobles' descendants) in Poland over the last two centuries. Urszula Idziak and Bartosz Bednarczyk seek to find a universalizing potential of nobility in contemporary Poland while applying Alain Badiou's truth procedure analysis to empirical data. Éva Sztáray-Kézdy, in turn, using both ethnographic and survey approaches, depicts the lifestyle of young descendants of aristocratic families living in Hungary at the turn of the 21st century. Gábor Kovács carefully studies the peculiarity of the late-19th- and early-20th-century Hungarian hybrid dual society with lingering pre-modern and emerging modern segments: aristocracy, nobility, and peasantry on the one hand and bourgeoisie and the working class on the other hand. Kovács in his essay demonstrates how Hungarian collective mentality has been determined by the archaic, military-aggressive attitudes of the feudal élite while nation building has been hindered by imperial political structures and war defeats. In the concluding paper, Béla Mester analyzes the transition of the intellectual models of the activity in the Hungarian public sphere from the behavioral patterns of the representatives of the nobility to the modernized norms of a new intelligentsia of mixed, noble, and common origin.

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The Descendants of Former Aristocratic Families in Hungary at the Turn of the 21st Century

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Abstract. Historical and social historical researches have extensively explored the social role and history of the Hungarian nobility and aristocracy, but the present situation of the descendants of the former traditional élite has been overlooked by contemporary sociological studies. The aim of this paper is to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive picture concerning the young descendants of the Hungarian aristocratic families living in Hungary at the turn of the 21st century. The results confirm that the examined group has a very good chance of reaching a higher status within the society despite all the disadvantages their parents and grandparents suffered during the communist era. In other words, they possess all socio-demographic factors which make a higher position likely. This advantageous socio-demographic position is interacting with the values and goals transmitted in family upbringing, namely acquiring a diploma and the knowledge of foreign languages. The religious, Christian, and family-centric values also played a considerable role in their education. Among the young descendants of the former aristocratic families, we can distinguish a group which creates a strong informal network and has preserved its special aristocratic identity and filled it with a renewed content.

Keywords: aristocracy, nobility, élite reproduction, values, Hungary

Introduction

There are various perspectives and opinions about the nobility's existence and its social role in the Hungarian society. The palette is wide: from romantic ideas of sustaining the nation through their assessment as the only representatives of moral superiority within society to attributing them the main responsibility for the wars and policies devastating the nation (Losonczi 1977). During the communist era, the nobility was considered as one of the main enemies of the "new" system. They were mocked and made ridiculous in political statements as well as in various branches of art (especially in cinematography). Although social sciences have studied their history up to the end of the Second World War from a

socio-historical perspective, the aristocracy's individual persistence in Hungary from the 1950s has been ignored and treated as a taboo.

Following the fall of the communist regime, the past and recent fate of the Hungarian nobility and aristocracy have become the subject of several books as well as media coverage, but the topic has received very little academic attention. The former nobility or aristocracy was sporadically mentioned in a few studies, for example, in the study about the possibilities and strategies of status reproduction under a dictatorship (Utasi et al. 1996) or studies about the deportations in the 1950s (e.g. Dessewffy–Szántó 1989).

Research on the elite descent, including the aristocracy, was initiated by the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, featuring the works of János Gudenus and László Szentirmay in the 1980s. The results of their work, based on a large-scale research, which included among other elements interviews with a great number of members of aristocratic families living in Hungary and abroad, were published in the book *Összetört címerek* [Broken Coats of Arms] (Gudenus–Szentirmay 1989).

Besides the above-mentioned study, there is no other all-embracing sociological work of scientific claim, wherefore the goal of this research is to fill this gap by delivering a comprehensive empirical work on the descendants of Hungary's aristocratic families.

At this point, the reader may wonder whether the lack of academic interest may be merely due to the fact that this operational group, often superficially characterized only by their descent, has no social relevance whatsoever in a post-communist society. As a response, the sociological relevance of the current research can be summarized as follows:

Some social scientists have misunderstandings and preconceptions about the descendants of the formal elites, which calls for an empirical research exploring their current social position.

The study can bring some insights into the status reproduction of the former élite as well as into the topic of elite continuity by exploring how this group could cope with and survive the persecution during the communist era.

The network analysis method can be efficiently used in the research concerning the aristocracy since the aristocracy in Europe tends to form network systems.

To summarize, the aim of this study is to locate this operational group in the structure of today's Hungarian society and to explore how this group was able to attain its present social status in spite of all what their families went through during the communist era. I am going to describe the strategies of status reproduction, their political attitudes and activity, their networks and the matrimonial strategies as well as their possible collective identity and their identity-building practices. I would also like to highlight the observed differences between the Hungarian and Polish aristocracy.

A Short Historical Introduction

First of all, we need to point out an important remark regarding conceptualization: in Hungary, throughout the Middle Ages, we can speak about a nobility of equal rights (about 1% of the population) (Fügedi 1984), but already in this era we can differentiate among them a couple of dozens of families which possessed higher political influence and wealth (Péter 1994). The beginning of the formation of the hereditary peerage can be put in the 16th century: the top members of the society won from the king – as a royal grace – the title of baron, count, prince, and duke or archduke for life. This title is related to the family name, hereditary in the patrimonial lineage but also extends to the female members of the family (Vajay 1987). So, we can clearly distinguish aristocracy from nobility.

The aristocracy in Hungary – as almost everywhere in Europe – played the leading role in the society throughout centuries in a political, economic, and cultural or symbolic sense. Its power was based on its decisive political influence resulting from its large real estate assets, all these combined with absolute authority and exceptional prestige (Gyáni–Kövér 1998: 193).

As it is well known, this socio-political situation radically changed in Western Europe as a result of the dual revolution (social and industrial) of the 19th century. This revolutionary wave reached Hungary as well, but due to the delayed development and belated *embourgeoisement* the nobility, and especially the aristocracy, partially kept its leading role in the society until the end of the Second World War.

At the same time, we can observe some loss of power from the 19th century for the benefit of the emerging *bourgeoisie* and the intelligentsia. The purchase of estates by the *haute bourgeoisie*, the agrarian reforms, and the torn regions as a result of the Trianon Treaty (1920) reduced the area and the percentage of the aristocracy's large estates (Erdei 1976, Scott–Hutterer–Székely 1990, Folkmayer–Török 1987). The loss of political power can also be detected. Between the two world wars, aristocrats were gradually retreating from the executive and legislative power, which can be explained also by the special legal, constitutional situation; a kingdom without a king led by a governor kept away some royalist aristocrats (Gyáni–Kövér 1998: 199). We can also distinguish conservative aristocrats loyal to the Habsburg Dynasty from the less wealthy national aristocracy. The former had lost ground due to the dethronement of the Habsburgs in 1918. The imperial and the national aristocracy merged even less with the so-called new barons, among them Jewish and non-Jewish *haute bourgeoisie* (barons of industry) and so-called military barons who received their merit based on their acts in the First World War. Although their rank was identical in all respects with that of the historical aristocracy, they did not fit in the traditional social élite (Gudenus–Szentirmay 1989, McCagg 1972). The social hierarchy within the élite is best

exemplified by the tradition and practices in social life and marriage (B. Nagy 1986, 1987; Gyáni–Kövér 1989: 199–200).

Anyhow, the shock at the end of the Second World War affected each member of the aristocracy. Hungary was occupied by the Soviets, and the communists took over power in 1948. Every aspect of social life was transformed according to the Soviet model, also with the use of violence.

What was the impact of all these transformations on aristocratic families? In accordance with Gudenus and Szentirmay (1989), we can summarize as follows:

– They were considered as one of the main enemies of the "new system". According to the Stalinist terminology, they were called "citizens outside of class", i.e. all members of the former leading groups: nobility, *haute bourgeoisie*, ex-officers, independents, intellectuals, and small holders as well.

– Through the agrarian reform in 1945, they lost the main base of their economic power – the land. Large estates, bigger than 1,000 acres, were fully, the smaller ones were partially nationalized, and only 100 acres were allowed to be kept. These lands were also lost later by selling or because of debt.

– Those aristocrats who had not lost all their assets due to the agrarian reform in the 1948–49 nationalization process, which covered all other properties, were also deprived from their remaining economic strength (factory, company, real estate, etc.).

– With the introduction of the new political system, the aristocracy evidently disappeared, voluntarily or forced from local and national politics.

– A law in 1947 abolished all ranks and forbade their use. *Act IV of 1947 on the Elimination of Certain Ranks and Titles* is still in force but without any sanction.

– Between 1951 and 1953, about 12,000 people – among them hundreds of noble families – were deported to rural locations designated by the authorities. The deported persons had to leave all their properties behind, which they were left with after the nationalization. They could not recover their lost goods and were not allowed to return to their original residency even after the end of the deportation (Dessewffy–Szántó 1989, Szántó 1998, Széchenyi 2008).

– For the "citizens outside of class", it was not allowed to get a job corresponding with their qualification, and even for their children it was impossible up until 1962 to be admitted to university (Takács 2008).

In conclusion: during the communist regime, the nobility, including the aristocracy, lost all of its political and economic power and simply the right to a life of dignity.

How did the aristocracy react? We can observe two main strategies:

1. *Emigration.* We do not have exact figures, but estimates show that 80% of the members of aristocratic families left the country in different waves (Gudenus–Szentirmay 1989). We have to admit that among emigrants the great majority of the Hungarian nobility was in a more favorable position because due to international

networks many families had very close ties with the aristocracy and nobility from other European countries, and in many cases the integration was assisted by foreign relatives and friends.

2. The minority *stayed in Hungary and tried to integrate*. We know some examples (rather tragic and failed ones) of conformism or full adaptation to the communist system, but these were exceptional cases. The majority who stayed in Hungary tried to integrate, more precisely, to be hidden from the authorities, and simply tried to survive. But it was quite difficult – they had to restart their life and their existence from scratch, and they had to deal with the different appearances of everyday discrimination.

Political pressure had diminished in the 1970s, which allowed many people of noble origin to get a job corresponding to their qualification. Also, their children could follow the studies of their choice. However, leader or decision-making positions were exclusively reserved for the members of the Party. The members of nobility found themselves rather in the liberal professions or took intellectual careers, which were quite free from the ideology of the time (e.g. engineer, interpreter, artisan, or mechanic).

At the time of the collapse of communism, social scientists and analysts thought that the former traditional élite was coming out from their hideaway or back from abroad and would take economic or political positions and participate actively in the changes (e.g. Szalai 1994). But this was not the case. There are only a few descendants of former aristocratic families who have taken a significant political or economic role after the regime change.[1]

We know that the Compensation Act in 1990 made possible to compensate only 1% of the values confiscated during the communism since the amount of the compensation was limited to a maximum of 5 million HUF (approx. EUR 16,000). One representative of the aristocracy made the point that this law definitely legalized the expropriation of the former élite.

So, the reproduction of the former élite's political or economic power did not take place. And what has remained or has been reproduced? To answer this question, I am going to present the main results of my empirical research.

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[1]   For example: Count István Bethlen, Member of Parliament (MDF 1990–94); Baron Gábor Szalay, Member of Parliament (SzDSz 1990–2006); Count György Szapáry – Vice-President of the Hungarian National Bank (1993–1997, 1999–2007), ambassador in Washington (2010–2014); Baron László Vécsey, Member of Parliament (FIDESZ 2010 – mayor 1998–2014); Baron Miklós Bánffy (mayor 1990–2006); Count Farkas Bethlen (mayor 1998–2014); Baron Tamás Tunkel (mayor 2014–); Baron Szalay-Berzeviczy Attila, President of the Stock Exchange in Budapest (2004–2008); Archduke György Habsburg – ambassador; Count György Károlyi, ambassador in Paris (2014–); Archduke Eduard Habsburg, ambassador at the Holy See (2015–); Baron János Perényi, ambassador in Vienna (2014–).

Methodology

During the empirical research, I had to face the difficulties of the sampling because preparing a genuine list of the aristocratic families living in Hungary required cautious historical and genealogical research. The job was made harder not only because no compilation of any kind has been made in this domain since 1945 but that even in the periods preceding the Second World War there did not exist any consistent records of the nobility, unlike in some other European countries. I took as a basis the research results of the above mentioned best contemporary specialist of the Hungarian aristocratic families, genealogist János Gudenus, according to whom there were 131 families of aristocratic descent, with about 600 members altogether living in Hungary at the turn of the 21st century. (This number also includes the recently repatriated and habitually resident aristocrats in Hungary.) (Gudenus 1990; 1993; 1998a,b; 1999).

Table 1. *Distribution of members of aristocratic families living in Hungary by rank and gender*

	Number of aristocratic families	Male members	Female members	All members
Prince	1		1	1
Marquis	2	4	4	8
Count	48	119	116	235
Baron	80	189	162	351
Total	131	312	283	595

In the course of my research, I restricted this group of aristocratic descendants according to the age criteria. I carried out my research among the young descendants of aristocratic families[2] who lived in or returned to Hungary and were born between 1960 and 1980. With this restriction, my sample covers the second and especially the third generation after the Second World War. This means that even the parents of my respondents had lived their grown-up lives after the institutional cessation of the aristocracy, while they themselves experienced adult life only after the 1990 political change.

The group under examination consisted of 143 persons representing 51 former aristocratic families. Due to the small number of the population and in order to avoid the sampling error concerning the representativity, I intended to reach each member of the above specified target group. Finally, 92 of them (63.4%) volunteered to take part in the survey, among them 45 men and 47 women. We

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2   Descending on paternal line from a family considered as aristocrat on the basis of the respective rules as well as the customary law of the period preceding the end of the Second World War (archduke, duke, marquis, count, or baron).

must add that the female members of the group showed greater response rates. The main reason for the failure of a more encompassing data collection was mostly the unavailability of the requested persons.

Table 2. *Distribution of members of aristocratic families living in Hungary, born between 1960 and 1980, by rank and gender and willingness of participation in the research*

Rank	Men		Women		All	
	All	Participating in the research	All	Participating in the research	All	Participating in the research
Marquis			2	2	2	2
Count	22	10	20	14	42	24
Baron	59	35	40	31	99	66
Total	81	45	62	47	143	92

Table 3 below shows that two-thirds of the Hungarian young aristocrats live in Budapest, and the failure of the data collection was more likely among those who do not reside in the capital.

Table 3. *Residential distribution of young members of aristocracy*

	Sample	Permanent residence of those currently residing abroad	Not available	Refusing the participation for other reasons	All
Budapest	63	2	6	11	82
Not Budapest	29	2	15	6	52
No data		1	7	1	9
Total	92	5	28	18	143

Due to the sampling criterion, the age of the members of the examined group at the time of the survey was between 18 and 38 years, and the average age was 26 years with a standard deviation of 5.06.

My research is based on a full-scale survey with nearly 200 items, which polls took one and a half to two hours each. The questions of the survey touched upon the general sociological data (gender, age, birth date and place, domicile, the parents' qualification, working place, descent, their own qualification, profession, housing, material dimensions of their circumstances of life, etc.) mainly with closed-ended questions. To map general as well as political and religious attitudes and the attitudes towards the workplace and job – beyond closed-ended questions –, I applied five-point Likert-type scales, where respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with several statements. In order to

disclose deeper connections and to better understand certain phenomena (e.g. educational principles, identity, social connections, marriage strategies, and belief), I included some open-ended questions as well, where respondents had the opportunity to express their opinions in a few sentences.

A part of the survey contained the questions needed for the network analysis of the group. I used closed- and open-ended questions related to the respondent's social and family relationship, marriage strategies and questions about the associations of people of noble descent. In addition, the members of the examined group were provided a list with all the members of the group, where they had to mark who they knew.

I carried out eight semi-structured interviews focusing on the network and identity of young aristocrats, with a duration of 60–90 minutes each. The interviewees were chosen with purposive sampling method, taken into consideration the respondents' sociodemographic characteristics.

As background material, I used articles, memoires, interviews, and publications of nobility associations and my experiences gained at informal and formal events held in the noble milieu.

The statistical software SPSS was used to analyze survey data. Due to the small number of the cases, mostly descriptive statistics were applied as frequencies and crosstabs. The open-ended questions in the survey and the transcribed interview texts were analyzed by quantitative and qualitative content analysis.

Analysis

At first glance, the descendants of aristocratic families do not show any relevance in the Hungarian society at the turn of the 21st century neither from social nor from economic, political point of view. The sole criteria of their classing into one group is their descent. One of the main questions of my research was to disclose further possible sociological aspects, others than descent, according to which most of the young aristocrats show similar characteristics.

Socio-Demographics

One of my main conclusions is that despite all earlier mentioned disadvantages suffered by their parents and grandparents, the examined group has a very good chance to reach a higher status within the society. In other words, they possess all socio-demographic factors which make a higher position likely. Two-thirds of them live in Budapest, mostly in the most prestigious districts, 86% has a university degree, 90% speaks at least one foreign language, and they are in a favorable position on the labor market (and they are conscious of

that),[3] which means that unemployment is unknown in this circle. Their prosperity is visible also once considering the material dimensions of their living conditions (car, dimension of domicile, weekend house, jewelry, family valuables representing the past).

Those results are especially remarkable because the analyzed group's parents and grandparents were not allowed to study at university and to get a corresponding job or position until the 1960s. And we know that the parents' and children's education is highly correlated in general: "a young person whose parents did not go to university is much less likely to pursue this option than one whose parents did" (*Education at a Glance* 1998: 28). In our case, while only 60% of the fathers and 44% of the mothers completed tertiary education, 86% of the young aristocrats have a university degree.

I have to stress another important factor: the advantages of socio-demographic position is interacting with the values transmitted in family. The questioned persons mentioned how important the following values and goals in their education were: acquiring a diploma and knowing foreign languages (73 of 92 agreed with the statement "My parents thought it was important to get a diploma."), and the parents (72 of 92) tried to assure the conditions for them too.

Life Strategies

The status reproduction and life strategies are quite different from the ones of their ancestors. Young aristocrats characteristically do not follow the tradition according to which they would try to influence the fate of the country acting as e.g. public administration officers. Young aristocrats try to succeed in first line in the private sector (three-quarters of the employed respondents work in the private sector). I also asked them about their attitudes and motivation towards work through a multi-select multiple choice question, where they could mark five items which motivated them in job selection. In this respect, they are not at all motivated by the family tradition (2 marks of 182) or the purpose of serving the country (6 marks of 182).

Political Attitudes

We can observe that the political attitudes of the young aristocrats also differ from their grandparents': breaking with the age-long aristocratic tradition, they do not take part directly or actively in public life, although nearly half of them (44%) rather agreed with the statement formulated in the survey that "My family name obliges me to actively take responsibility for the fate of the country's governance."

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3   Three-quarters of the full-time employees are satisfied with their jobs and the students are confident that they would find an appropriate job.

At the same time, about 90% considers as important the participation in the elections (be it parliamentary or local or referendum), and they indeed participate. This percentage is significantly higher than the average willingness in Hungary. (Since 1990, the participation rate in parliamentary elections in Hungary ranged between 56% and 70% – NVI http://www.valasztas.hu/, Fábián et al. 2010: 495).

The majority of the analyzed group agreed with the affirmative statements of parliamentary democracy and with those referring to political awareness.[4] Furthermore, political disillusionment is not typical of them, although they expressed some critical opinions about politicians. This can partially explain that despite being aware of the duty derived from the family tradition, they do not assume a political role.

Nevertheless, it must be added that the influence of the family tradition on their political preferences is obvious from the text analysis[5] in the survey. I could distinguish three types of respondents: the first one's preferred party was characterized on the basis of the party's political line (52 respondents). The second one characterized the preferred party rather by the exercise of power and the style of party leaders (20 respondents). 8 further respondents indicated a specific party. To summarize the results, they sympathize in the first line with Christian-conservative political parties and political directions of the right (42 respondents of 52) and are attached to patriotic (most mentioned – 20), democratic ideologies (15 mentions), free from any extremism (most mentioned negative statement – 13).

From the responses to questions about the political attitudes, it was clear that the descendants of former aristocratic families do not support the constitutional or parliamentary monarchy against the existing parliamentary republic; they are not royalists – apart from one or two exceptions.

Religion and Beliefs

The examined young people grew up in those two-three decades which are characterized in the sociological research of religion as the strongest period of religious decay in Hungary (Tomka 1990, 1991, 1996). In several cases, respondents also said that their ancestors were discriminated not only due to their descent but also due to their religious beliefs and their studies and graduation in faith-based high schools. Besides, another research has shown that for some declassed strata – beyond studying and language skills – even religion assisted surviving and a limited level of status reproduction in these decades (Utasi et al. 1996: 38–40).

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4   For example, 64.2% agreed with the statement that "Democracy is the best form of all political systems that exist.", and 79.1% agreed with the statement that "A responsible Hungarian citizen should participate in the parliamentary elections."
5   The analyzed questions were: "Which party would you like to vote for?" and "Which party would you not vote for?"

Thus, religion and belief in transcendence as a survival strategy helps to interpret personal fate in a wider context and gives strength to endure the crisis (Kapitány 2007: 16–17).

I assumed that the so-called "citizens outside of class" preserved their faith with greater chance because they had nothing more left to lose, and for them practicing religion was not the main discriminating factor. For this reason, they courageously raised their children in a spirit of faith, transmitted their religious beliefs and practices. This assumption is supported by my research results, namely, the religious, Christian, and family-centric basic values played a considerable role in the upbringing of the examined group (83.7% mentioned that they received religious education at home).

Religiosity is a very complex, multi-dimensional concept, which is measured by several methods (Tomka 1996: 593, Hegedűs 2000: 40–46). In my survey, I operationalized religiosity by self-classification, frequency of religious service attendance, personal ritual activities (baptism, confirmation, wedding), and family upbringing practices. I can say that 99% of the young descendants of former aristocratic families in Hungary are Christians, mainly Catholic, 86% declared themselves believers, and further 55% go to church regularly (at least once a month). These proportions are significantly above the Hungarian average, where in the examined era less than 50% declared themselves believers (Tomka 1996: 604, Hegedűs 2000: 48), and only 16–26% went to church regularly (Hegedűs 2000: 66).

Based on the content analysis of the answers to the open question "If you are a believer, please briefly summarize the role of faith in your life", it can be stated that they owe their belief to individual orientations, directed by religious education and upbringing. Religion plays a basic role and occupies a central place in the life of 39 respondents – typically those who attend religious services –, while for 19 others it helps to form their moral value system. Nobody mentioned any advantage or disadvantage in everyday life because of religious beliefs, so religion represents in their life neither a discriminative nor a status reproductive factor as was the case in the parents' and grandparents' generation and can be observed in other discriminated groups during the communist era (Utasi et al. 1996).

Network

In the period preceding the Second World War, aristocracy was separated from the gentry class, mostly based on wealth, social and political influence, social conventions, and prestige. At the same time, the passage between the traditional aristocrats and, for example, a person originating from an ancient noble but not aristocratic family was easier in some cases than for a so-called new aristocrat (Gyáni–Kövér 1998: 194) (who received his title recently for recognition of some economic, military, or scientific merits).

These social differences between aristocracy and the wider nobility disappeared following the Second World War and did not reappear after the 1989 changes. This is due to the unifying force of shared destiny, the friendships made during the deportation, the studies completed at the same schools, etc. The members of aristocratic and gentry families socialized more intensively – at first, in secret, later, in an increasingly open way, at tea and bridge parties, etc. Some of them tried to secure for their children the so-called good company – they organized parties, dance schools, etc. (Gudenus–Szentirmay 1989: 163–164).

After the political changes in 1990, some associations were formed in order to collect and represent members with noble descent, but according to my research these are not popular among the young aristocrats.[6] According to interviewees, they cannot identify themselves with the aims of these associations out of which many lacks the charitable activities.

Nevertheless, we can observe existing networks in the first line within informal frameworks. Young aristocrats know about and keep track of each other and gather not only during family events. However, the research clearly showed that only a part of young aristocrats belongs to these informal companies. The connection is stronger and more vivid among that small part of the young people descending from aristocratic families who have been living in the capital and had socialized with families of similar descent already in their childhood. The parents' intention to secure the so-called good company for their children can be detected here. This attitude was more significant in families where both parents were of noble descent. This informal network of friends is not exclusive; everyone could enter this network by way of marriage or close friendship.

In this respect, there are some similarities and differences with the contemporary Polish aristocratic milieu. In Poland, the members of informal aristocratic networks, described by sociologists as "extended families", call themselves simply a "family" and employ "a social distance strategy towards different categories of social groups" (Smoczyński 2015: 1–2, 2016). In Hungary, the usage of the expressions "a person of descent" or "*unser einer*" or "good family" has become commonplace among these families to describe the informal "group membership", thereby distinguishing themselves from others.

An important disparity is the matrimonial homogamy observed among nobles in Poland (Smoczyński 2015, 2016) in contrast to the Hungarian case. In Hungary, following the Second Word War, the advantages of matrimonial homogamy disappeared, and as a consequence of emigration marital choices narrowed as well. According to genealogical research, until the seventies, there were still some marriages between aristocrats. Before 1989, the last one was contracted in 1974 (Gudenus–Szentirmay 1989, 158).

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6   "Do you know any association of people of noble descent?" "If yes, which one?" "Do you attend the events of these associations?" "How often?" "Why?"

Analyzing the parents' marriages of the examined group, one can state that marital homogamy is quite rare: about 10% of the fathers have a spouse of aristocratic descent and further 20% of noble descent. In the case of the examined group, the similar social background nowadays does not lead, however, to marriages between aristocrats and people of lower nobility. Only three of the married respondents (27 cases) have a spouse of noble descent and not one of aristocratic. The examined people choose their spouse not by descent any more but rather by a similar way of thinking or system of values. They have not felt any pressure on the parents' side to marry someone "unser einer".

Staying with the topic of the network, I have to underline another significant feature: almost every interviewed person has relatives abroad, they keep in touch, and some of them also reported about packages, money, etc. received from them or visited them with the intention of learning languages. At the same time – according to the respondents' opinion –, these grants have only slightly improved their living conditions, and so their role regarding status reproduction is negligible. Only 16% of the respondents mentioned that they had any advantage due to a wide network of relatives. Similarly, the majority considers the impact of the domestic extended family on job search or other existential aspects as a normal solidarity typical of any other family.

Furthermore, only a few reported on advantages (30%) or disadvantages (25%) resulting from their descent. Among advantages, they underlined the importance of friendships arising from this specific social circle and the values transmitted in the family. The experienced disadvantages were related to education and were typically reported in the countryside.

On the other hand, it is sure that a mutual influencing relation can be proven between the intensity of connections with people of the same descent and the existence of an aristocratic identity. And this statement leads us to the next topic to be covered: the common identity of today's aristocracy.

Common Identity

First of all, it should be made clear that wearing the name of an aristocratic ancestor is not enough in itself to have an aristocratic identity. In the development of this identity, several individual and social factors play a role. However, at the beginning of the data collection at the first contact, no one of the examined population was surprised by being selected into this research sample, i.e. every person concerned was aware of his or her aristocratic descent.

Secondly, the aristocratic identity has in no way a negative content. Nobody answered "Sometimes I feel ashamed because of my aristocratic descent." to the multiple choice question "Is your aristocratic descent important to you?".

Additionally, nobody has changed his or her "revealing" family name.[7] This could refer to the fact that they openly stand up for their ancestry.

Based on the above-mentioned question and the question concerning the awareness of otherness,[8] I could distinguish two groups of roughly the same size among the people under survey:

The first one (N = 43) I consider as not having an aristocratic identity; in other words, they do not feel different from others, or they just take note of it as a fact. (Interestingly, one of the main causes of refusing to take part in the survey was the perceived lack of noble identity).

The second group (N = 49) includes those among whom an aristocratic identity can be observed.

Two questions arise:

– Which are the main factors of reconstructing or keeping one's identity?
– Which are the main elements of this aristocratic identity?

Analyzing the possible explanatory variables for identity-building practices, I compared the group of those with perceived aristocratic identity and those without perceived aristocratic identity. Eventually, I arrived at the following conclusions:

In the collective identity-building strategies, the main role is played by socialization (more important than the demographic determinants, e.g. gender, education). The aristocratic identity is more likely possessed by those whose parents both come from a noble family (43% of those with and 13% of those without aristocratic identity originate from both noble parents' marriage). Furthermore, it can be also observed that the perception of aristocratic identity slightly develops with the ageing of the given respondent. I found significant differences between the two groups with regard to upbringing principles and practices. Those young aristocrats keep or reactivate the aristocratic identity more likely whose families fostered more the knowledge about family history and tradition (by being exposed to stories about the family or visits to family places) or had a stronger relationship with the extended family or insisted on ensuring "good company" for their children.

It can be stated that those respondents with the greater perceived aristocratic identity had not only regular contacts with peers of the same descent in their childhood but also at present their participation is more likely at events where they can meet people from noble families. We do not know whether the time spent together, the conversations, and the shared experiences strengthen the identity, or young aristocrats with identity are more likely to look for opportunities to come together with similar people.

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7   In the older generation, there have been examples of name changes.
8   "Do you feel yourself different from other members of society because of your aristocratic origin?" "If yes, how?"

Interestingly, there is a correlation between the realized advantages and disadvantages attributed to descent and the existing aristocratic identity, but it is uncertain if the experiences strengthen the identity or is the other way around. While 77.5% of the group having an aristocratic identity mentioned any advantages or disadvantages attributed to their origin, only 30% of the group without an aristocratic identity did so. In order to explore which are the main elements of this aristocratic identity, I interviewed the respondents with the perceived aristocratic identity about their self-identification. The answers gave a very colorful result. Some of them reflected quite a confusing identity: "It's difficult to preserve values while having nothing", said one of the interviewed persons. Another one keeps his identity only by complaining about lost goods. For others, specifically the difficulties suffered by their ancestors give a good and respectable example to follow in their own lives.

Now, I am going to highlight the most frequently mentioned items of the aristocratic identity. I assumed that aristocratic identity is rooted in the past; it was therefore not surprising that respondents with self-reported aristocratic identity characterized themselves by a deep knowledge of the family – and wider – past and history.[9]

They possess different, extended interpretations of the concept of family: it includes not only contemporaries but also all previous members conserved in the historical memory of the family and not only the nuclear family but multiple-degree cousins, aunts, and uncles as well. While pride over the ancestors is an important element of their identity, it is not accompanied by arrogance. "I don't think I am better than other people", formulated one interviewee. This pride generates rather a sense of duty. One interviewee put it this way: "I cannot bring shame on my family!" Or "I can't behave in any way", said another one.

An important component of an aristocratic identity is the affiliation of the group members. The respondents with the self-reported aristocratic identity feel simply at home among people of the same origin. The often-used German expression "unser einer" refers to this phenomenon. Beyond similar historical experiences, shared values, a special mode of behavior or courtesy was reflected with special emphasis as the criterion of belonging to this group (e.g. elegance in dressing, communication).

Christianity also plays a very important role in the self-identification of the young aristocrats, which also strengthens group integration. "If we travel with this company for a few days, it is natural that we attend a mass together."

Summarizing, the basic components of the aristocratic identity are a kind of a special education,[10] behavior, and a system of values determined by Christianity,

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9   According to a representative study on the historical culture of Hungarian youth, only 30% of respondents are interested in history (Vásárhelyi 2013: 4).

10   The principles of education in the aristocratic families were studied with the help of semi-

the past of the family, a conservative way of thinking, patriotism, and the duties derived from all that. There is a conviction behind all this: one owes responsibility through all of his or her acts to the ancestors and the history of the family and the country. With all this, I do not wish to say that there could not be any other groups or people in the Hungarian society with a similar self-identification attitude. These are simply the values, principles, and characteristics which are shared by young Hungarian aristocrats with the self-reported aristocratic identity and with which they differentiate themselves from others.

Conclusions

As described above, the descendants of the former Hungarian aristocratic families have not returned into economic or political elite positions of the Hungarian society; so, in this sense, the elite reproduction has not taken place, but they possess a good chance to reach a higher status within the social hierarchy. This advantageous socio-demographic position is also due to the traditional values transmitted in the family. The importance of these values is reflected in the self-identification declarations of the young Hungarian aristocrats, especially among those who belong to the informal network of the people of noble descent.

Ergo, I think we can find the aristocracy's role and impact on the formation of the post-communist contemporary Hungarian society at the same place as C.I.L.A.N.E.[11] formulated in one of its basic documents, namely, the Code of Ethics of the European Nobility. This Code adopted by the representatives of the European nobility proposes for its members to promote widely the enforcement of family and religious values, the spirit of service with a sense of duty and human dignity as well as honesty. In the Code, the importance of the education for leaders' vocations and developing the quality of social relationships are also emphasized (Code éthique de la noblesse en Europe 1999: 111–116).

Finally, I would like to quote Baron Bernard Snoy, who gave a very concise summary of the mission of today's nobility in a changing world: "I do not want to create the impression that these values would constitute some kind of monopoly of nobility; these are such universal values which are supported and promoted by a lot of noble families in the consciousness that these families represent a numerically small and declining but influential part of the European élite" (Snoy 1994: 30 – translated by the author).

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structured interviewing as well as open questions in the survey and a Likert-type scale containing 19 items. (E.g. "I spend a lot of time with my family." "I know my family history well." "Religious belief played an important role in my education.", etc.)

11 Commission d'Information et de Liaison des Associations Nobles d'Europe – The European Commission of the Nobility (http://www.cilane.eu).

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– further acts from the 1940s related to the abolition of feudal rights;
– documents, decrees, and protocols of the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party;
– interviews and discussions with aristocrats and articles on the subject recently published in various dailies and weeklies and memoires as well as publications of associations of people of noble descent.

Mapping Homogamy of Noble Descendants in Poland. A Case Study of the Genealogy of Descendants of the Great Sejm[1]

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Abstract. Since 2005, a unique project has been under way, which aims to collect all possible descendants of the parliamentary élite of the 18th-century Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (Rzeczpospolita). The project resulted in creating an online database called *The Genealogy of Descendants of the Great Sejm*, which provides a unique source of information about the genealogical structure of people descending from the 18th-century noble élite of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Drawing on these data, this paper aims to open up new lines of inquiry on the dynamics of homogamy of the Polish nobility by analyzing longer trends of several (e.g. five, eight, or even more) generations of nobles (or nobles' descendants) in Poland over the last two centuries.

Keywords: Polish nobility, homogamy, descendants of Sejm Wielki, reproduction of historical élites

Defining the Problem

The contemporary European nobility has recently attracted some attention in the sociology of élites, with arguably the best-analyzed case of nobility in the Netherlands. Jaap Dronkers, Huibert Schijf (Dronkers 2008, 2003; Dronkers–

Schijf 2004), and their collaborators carefully examined the social reproduction processes of the Dutch nobility, and one of their major findings suggests that the very possibility of keeping the continued social relevance of this group contradicts selected intuitive assumptions of the modernization theory. For instance, the Dutch nobility, instead of gradually experiencing the decomposition of its kin networks and adjusting to the structural position of modern nuclear family units, upholds its post-feudal networks functioning as an indispensable social environment not only for the primordial socialization of their offspring but also for practicing homogamy. Although homogamy has been declining over the last decades in the Netherlands, it still has been significantly more frequently identified among nobility than among members of another analyzed control group (high bourgeoisie). Also, members of the Dutch nobility successfully use their specific cultural capital resources that are being accumulated within kin networks to facilitate their competitiveness for highly esteemed jobs. Consequently, this milieu has managed to maintain an overrepresentation in prestigious professional and public services in the Netherlands (again as compared with bourgeoisie members). The literature brings also qualitative studies on the contemporary Swedish, Finnish, French, and Austrian nobility (Åström 2007, de Saint Martin 2007, Korom–Dronkers 2015, Norrby 2015), and recently there has been a growing line of inquiries on Eastern European nobility carried out especially in Poland and Hungary (Jakubowska 2012, 2009, 2005; Smoczyński–Zarycki 2012; Sztárayné Kézdy 2009).

Even though the Eastern European nobility's land properties were confiscated after 1944 and a noble milieu suffered prosecutions what apparently led to its disappearance in the communist bloc – as some recent work demonstrated –, post-feudal elites mainly of aristocratic descent managed to sustain comprehensive family bonds and expressive social rituals (Jakubowska 2012). In explaining reasons for their continued relevance, Smoczyński and Zarycki (2012) argued that the vitality of the former feudal elites in Poland should be attributed to the rich cultural and social capital resources that have been accumulated within this milieu. Following earlier discoveries in the Netherlands, where the possibility of maintaining the coherent noble milieu was significantly underpinned by the ongoing homogamy, it would be also interesting to examine if this practice also applies to the Eastern European nobility.

Historically, in pre-20th-century Poland, homogamy functioned as one of the major factors perpetuating a stable noble identity over generations but also contributed to the accumulation of material and symbolic resources within kin networks. Unfortunately, the current research exploring a Polish noble milieu has been constrained in its exploratory capability aiming at establishing precise figures on the rate of this milieu's homogamy. One of the reasons for this difficulty is related to the Polish republican political system, which does not officially

recognize noble titles; thus, the very definition of collective identity of analyzed individuals who either self-report that are of noble origin or are perceived as nobility is inchoate. Also the rules of belonging to a contemporary noble community are not precise. For instance, a comprehensive study of Smoczyński and Zarycki on the 21st-century Polish nobility (Smoczyński–Zarycki 2017) has not brought decisive findings, which would corroborate their qualitative indications about the ongoing relevance of homogamy practiced by this community. Moreover, to our best knowledge, there are no other studies examining a current noble homogamy either in Poland or in other Eastern European countries.

Besides limitations set by the republican system, which does not allow to use reliable formal criteria to operationalize a noble identity, there are other factors which may hinder opening new avenues on the possible perpetuation of their homogamy or the lack thereof. For instance, concerning the coherent but an informal post-feudal network that includes several dozens of Polish aristocratic descendants – even though it has been consistently named as a noble milieu by the mass media –, its rules of belonging are not actually governed by the historical criterion of noble origin. In Poland, the latter has traditionally been informed with the logic of a patrilineal noble generation renewal, whereas the current milieu that is commonly perceived as nobility includes not only matrilineal-criterion-based descendants but even people of entirely non-noble origin. The latter individuals are accepted as participants of this informal group's social activities insofar as they remain in a certain familial affinity (even distant) with its major actors. Since there are no officially recognized criteria of nobility, the only available membership criterion is based on the perceived fact of "living" and on persistent socialization with the informal noble milieu. Eventually, there is no basis for computing the statistical regularities of noble homogamy in contemporary Poland. Given these difficulties constraining the possibility of designing a representative survey sampling, we are confronted with different types of proxies which may map the possible terrain of noble homogamy in Poland. Smoczyński and Zarycki (2012, 2017) employed a qualitative inquiry which brought an interview-data-based support to assume (modestly) the ongoing relevance of noble homogamy, particularly practiced among post-aristocratic family members.

The possible innovativeness of this research lies, on the one hand, in strengthening the scholarship on the reproduction practices of the noble descendants in Eastern Europe, while, on the other, these findings may also provide an important point of reference in the ongoing discussion on the limits and applicability modes of the modernization theory.

The Genealogy of Descendants of the Great Sejm

New possible lines of inquiry on the dynamic of noble homogamy could be opened up by analyzing longer trends of several (e.g. five, eight, or even more) generations of nobles (or nobles' descendants). Fortunately, since 2005, a unique project has been under way, which aims to collect all possible descendants of the parliamentary élite of the 18th-century Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (Rzeczpospolita). The project resulted in creating an online database, called *The Genealogy of Descendants of the Great Sejm* (Minakowski 2018a), and in forming a non-government organization, Stowarzyszenie Potomków Sejmu Wielkiego (Stowarzyszenie Potomków Sejmu Wielkiego, n.d.), which received formal patronage from the Speaker of Parliament of Poland and was officially accepted by the President of Lithuania.

The Genealogy of Descendants of the Great Sejm (the database) has precisely defined borders: it is aiming to collect all (almost 500) Members of Parliament of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth in the term 1788–1792. The Great Sejm (also called: Sejm Czteroletni, Four-Year Sejm) was the parliament that passed the first European constitution on May 3rd, 1791, and its members were as famous in Poland as the Founding Fathers in the United States (Żychliński 1879). Apart from members of all three houses of the Parliament, data on their parents, siblings (from a patrilineal and matrilineal approach), and all of their descendants (descendants of members and their siblings) are also collected up to present times (2018 so far). If any of those people were/are married, then data on their marriages, spouses, and the spouses' parents are collected, too.

Over the years, the number of people in the database has slowly grown, and recently only single families have been added, which obviously do not represent any great, forgotten branches. Also, new collections of archival data, available online since recent years, add less new people. Therefore – although it will probably never be possible to determine the exact number of the descendants of the 18th-century upper-class that are still living –, the database can be used as a proxy for quite good approximation.

As for mid-2018, there are over 128,000 people listed there: 494 members of Sejm Wielki (representatives elected in 1788 and 1790, senators, and the king) and over 40,000 direct descendants (great-great-grandsons, great-great-granddaughters, etc.), accompanied by the next over 27,000 descendants of siblings of the Sejm members. The data were also collected on their spouses, who do not represent preceding categories (over 30,000 people), and their parents (almost 30,000 people).

The Genealogy is part of another, larger project, called *Minakowski's Great Genealogy*, published online at Wielcy.pl (Minakowski 2018b). The methodological issues (sources and methods of gathering data) have been published in several

articles (Minakowski 2016, 2007). The main sources for the *Genealogy of the Descendants of Great Sejm* for the 18th century are printed biographies of 18th-century politicians and printed genealogies of their families (PSB 1935). Some genealogical data were inferred directly from 18th-century documents, usually concerning the land ownership (Świca et al. 1997). At the beginning of the 19th century, the modern system of civil registration was introduced, especially in the lands conquered by the Napoleonic army, where the French Civil Code was introduced (in the Duchy of Warsaw). E.g., for the period of 1806–1914, we have found and analyzed about 6,000 acts of marriage related to the *descendants*, each describing at least six people (spouses and their parents). In the Powązkowski Cemetery in Warsaw, the author found graves of 5,664 people from the database; as for 2005, the author found an obituary in *Kurier warszawski* between 1821 and 1861. And 15,375 people are mentioned in *Polski słownik biograficzny* ("Polish Biographical Dictionary") as people having their own entries or as members of their close families (*Polski słownik biograficzny*, 1935).

During over 15 years of developing the *Genealogy of Descendants of Great Sejm*, the author received tens of thousands of letters or e-mails from people who wanted to share their archives to preserve it for future generations. Most of the data originate from people born before or about the middle of the 20th century – who personally remembered people born in the 19th century (their parents or grandparents), when the social distance between nobility and the rest of the society was still significant. Some parts of the data are obtained from such private archives. There is a good reason for this strategy: if one intends to find *all* descendants of the Great Sejm, one should assume that some of them are not well documented by public documents. In such cases, the author relies on the trustworthiness of private archives (especially when the social status of their owners speaks for their credibility). The reliability of these documents is reinforced by the fact that the only editor of the database can include any documents into the genealogy, while users can only obtain a reader status, being unable to change the data. If the editor does not consider the information credible, he just ignores it. Further, the reliability is ensured by the fact that the whole database is an open access system and free of charge: if any piece of information is disputable, people report it. For instance, the 19th-century ancestors have usually many descendants who often did not know each other. The author can therefore cross-check the information with different branches of the same family. We should also remember that there is some number of people who are nitpickers and enjoy criticism in showing holes in somebody else's genealogy. Of about 60,000 people visiting *Genealogy* each month, several of them are such nitpickers.

If we further discuss the credibility of the data, different measures should be applied to people born in early 19th century (for them, the archival records or printed books are widely available) and for people born in the 20th century who

are subject to the laws enforcing privacy. On the other hand, an error in recent genealogy does not bear serious consequences, while an error in attributing a branch of family in early 19th century can be disastrous. Fortunately, the more we go back in time, the less information is taken from private sources and more from printed documents.

Minakowski's Great Genealogy started with the detailed analysis of the 16-volume Adam Boniecki's *Herbarz Polski* (18 million characters) (Narojczyk 2003), which became the foundation of the database. Boniecki's *Herbarz* (Boniecki 2002) is considered to be the most important source for Polish noble genealogy (Dworzaczek 1959). Boniecki employed the following methodology: he obtained the data drawing on official documents published or kept in archives (he usually did not visit archives himself but used excerpts prepared for him by professional archivists); he provided references each time (usually volume and page number). But official documents did not constitute his major data source. Boniecki's genealogy was completed by adding information from personal documents and private genealogies when they appeared reliable. This was a very important methodological qualification: focusing only on facts obtained from official documents would have made the whole genealogy too fragmented; and what is even worse – official documents were often forged (e.g. notarized by a notary public on the basis of previously forged documents). Boniecki assessed informants' trustworthiness on the basis of his personal relations with them and on the basis of the perceived relation between informants and the people they gave an account of. For instance, Boniecki knew that somebody who wrote about his/her great-grandparents was usually reliable, but when the same person wrote about his ancestors from the 16th century, it was not so reliable.

Boniecki's methodology in gathering data was adopted ever since in Minakowski's genealogy: Minakowski builds on original documents (keeping track of the sources), but he also uses private genealogies when their owners seem credible (four or five generations back, to the great-grandparents of their grandparents). There should be also noted that he keeps record of the source of every single piece of information entered into the database. If it was taken from a private letter and not from a printed book, he can always find the letter in our archive and check it once again.

The remainder of this paper includes the following: we briefly describe the peculiarity of the Polish nobility and its late 18th-century parliamentary system, whose representatives made up the analyzed *Sejm Wielki* members' descendants, and then we calculate the data and conclude the paper.

The Political System of the Noble Republic and Limitations of the Research

Since the late Middle Ages until the end of the 18th century, the vast territory of Eastern Europe, which now constitutes five independent countries, formed a union. Namely, in 1569, the delegates of the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania signed the Union of Lublin, turning them into a single state whose area covered approximately present-day Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus, and Ukraine. The Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, called Rzeczpospolita, emerged through aggregation rather than conquests, which meant that their political elites were of local origin, and they did not represent conquerors or governors sent from metropolises. The monarch was actually the President of the Union, freely elected by nobles, who made up about 10% of the society. The noblemen had the right to own a piece of land, participate in a local assembly ("sejmik"), and elect representatives to the general assembly ("sejm walny", which had to be called every second year); finally, they were obliged to defend a country (personally as mounted knights). All these rights and obligations were patrilinearily passed to new generations.

The political system of Rzeczpospolita was subject to only minor changes over the centuries. In turn, until the 19th century, the social system of Rzeczpospolita (when Poland had already been partitioned by Prussia, Russia, and Austria) was divided into a number of separated hereditary estates of noblemen, peasants, burghers, and Jews. All estates had their own judiciary systems regulating economic, religious, and political life. This, of course, cemented a practice of homogamy within separate estates, which remained almost intact over several centuries until the beginning of the 19th century, when the class barriers between the nobility and the bourgeoisie were weakened, and members of these classes gradually started to intermarry. To some extent, this novel practice also applied to Jews on the condition that they converted to Christianity (there were virtually no interreligious marriages at that time). The only exceptions were peasants. They constituted the vast majority of Polish society, but, even when in the middle of the 19th century serfdom was terminated, the rate of intermarriages between peasants and other class members was very low. The situation changed significantly in the 20th century, particularly after the Second World War. Therefore, while discussing the genealogy of Polish elites before the early 20th century, we can ignore peasants in our calculations and also burghers and Jews before the early 19th century (Minakowski 2018b).

When the last free parliamentary elections of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth were called in 1788 and 1790 (after which the partition was completed), 180 delegates were sent to Warsaw from their 63 constituencies, covering the whole territory of Rzeczpospolita. In the remainder of this paper,

we will examine the evolution of the practice of homogamy of the descendants of these 180 Sejm Wielki members over the next two and a half centuries, on whom information was collected in Minakowski (2018b).

The authors do not claim that the Sejm Wielki descendants immutably represented the Polish political and cultural elite of Rzeczpospolita over the entire analyzed period of time. Neither it is stated that the data are representative and complete in terms of giving an account of the evolution of Polish noble élites over past centuries. Besides the fact that individuals recorded in the data were not selected from the statistical subset which would represent features of the whole population, there was also a decisive change in the 19th- and 20th-century Polish élite reproduction practices, which must affect the estimation of the analyzed individuals' identity. The intelligentsia, the new collective social actor, gradually started to replace the feudal nobility in defining Polish national interests from the 19th century onwards. Therefore, except for 18th-century born individuals who are recorded in *Minakowski's Great Genealogy*, individuals representing 19th- and 20th-century cohorts had been successively affected by modernization processes, which redefined, hybridized, and eventually changed their feudal identities.

Even though most of the intelligentsia members in the 19th and early 20th centuries were of gentry origin (however, we cannot deny the fact that the growing numbers of bourgeois and ethnic minorities were also entering the ranks of this new class), they represented an entirely new social and political collective identity; to mention just the most relevant features: the intelligentsia commonly held that power (either political, economic, or cultural) should be vested in citizens on the basis of their meritocratic skills instead of relying on hereditary resources – thus, most of the intelligentsia members were inclined towards new democratic politics. Also, the intelligentsia's offsprings socialized within the nuclear family units rather than in feudal kin networks (Jedlicki 2008).

This long process of the redefinition of the Polish elite identity, of course, also affected the identity of the Great Sejm descendants, many of whom – due to different reasons – must have gradually assumed new class positions in the 19th and, particularly, in the 20th century. Therefore, the calculations presented below cannot be understood as an analysis of noble homogamy *per se*, given the growing intertwining of nobility with the intelligentsia and also, to a lesser extent, with members of other classes. The possibility of carrying out the class analysis based on *the Genealogy of Descendants of the Great Sejm* exceeds, however, the scope of this research, which is concerned merely with the familial relations of the individuals recorded in the dataset.

Calculations

In this chapter, we will present the results of the statistical analysis of homogamy of descendants of the 18th-century political élite of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, or *The Rzeczpospolita*. At first, we will present the size and structure of the parliamentary members' group (deputies, senators) of the 1788–1792 parliament (The Great Sejm). Next, we will present our calculations of their descendants' homogamy practices: the parliamentary members' (and their siblings') children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, etc. living in subsequent centuries (until the 21st century). This, in turn, will allow us to see how the descendent groups of representatives of various regions of *The Rzeczpospolita* interacted between themselves: whether they married within the groups defined by their geographical origins or rather formed one, coherent, "cosmopolitan" élite. We will be able to see the dynamic of the process in time.

The calculations will be complicated by the fact that the analyzed groups had never been homogenous and even; the political system of Rzeczpospolita had a long history and the number of representatives at the end of the 18th century was not proportional either to the numbers of inhabitants or to the area of provinces. We will need to take this into account and adjust the numbers to see the real social process. Hence, we will divide the area of Rzeczpospolita into seven regions and proportionally adjust the size of their elites *as if* they were equal in number. The details of these calculations, their conditions and results, are discussed in turn.

Currently (spring 2018), the *Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great* Sejm consists of:
- 494 members of the Sejm (the King, elected members, and senators who swore to the act of "confederation of the parliamentary estates");
- 40,725 direct descendants;
- 27,161 siblings and direct descendants;
- 30,081 spouses of the above;
- 29,658 parents of all the above (including parents of spouses of the above).

All that makes 128,119 individuals. Out of them, 18,000 were born in the 18th century, 50,000 in the 19th century, and 56,000 in the 20th century. 3,500 were born already in the 21st century.

Table 1. *The members of the Great Sejm*

Constituency	Total	Lower house only
King	1	0
Central senators	8	0
Polish Crown		
Duchy of Livonia – on behalf of the Crown	4	4
Masovia, now in Poland:		
Duchy of Masovia	48	39
Voivodeship of Rawa Mazowiecka	16	13
Voivodeship of Płock	14	8
Greater Poland, now in Poland		
Voivodeship of Brześć Kujawski	10	4
Voivodeship of Chełmno	2	0
Voivodeship of Gniezno	10	8
Voivodeship of Inowrocław	11	8
Voivodeship of Kalisz	20	16
Voivodeship of Łęczyca	12	8
Voivodeship of Malbork (Marienburg)	1	0
Voivodeship of Pomorze (Pomerania)	3	0
Voivodeship of Poznań	22	16
Voivodeship of Sieradz	16	12
Lesser Poland, now in Poland		
Voivodeship of Cracow	22	16
Voivodeship of Lublin	14	12
Voivodeship of Podlasie	13	12
Voivodeship of Sandomierz	19	13
Now in Ukraine		
Voivodeship of Bełz	7	0
Voivodeship of Bracław	13	12
Voivodeship of Czernihov	11	8
Voivodeship of Kiev	20	13
Voivodeship of Podole	15	14
Voivodeship of Ruthenia (Lviv)	9	4
Voivodeship of Volhynia (Wołyń)	15	12
Grand Duchy of Lithuania		
Central	8	0
Duchy of Livonia (Inflanty) – on behalf of Lithuania	4	4
Now in Lithuania:		
Duchy of Samogitia (Żmudź, Žemaitija)	15	12

Constituency	Total	Lower house only
Voivodeship of Trakai (Troki)	18	17
Voivodeship of Vilna (Vilnius)	24	20
Now in Belarus:		
Voivodeship of Brest (Brześć Litewski)	10	8
Voivodeship of Minsk (Mińsk Litewski)	14	12
Voivodeship of Mścisław	2	0
Voivodeship of Nowogródek	13	12
Voivodeship of Połock	6	4
Voivodeship of Smoleńsk	11	8
Voivodeship of Vitebsk	7	4
Now in Latvia:		
Duchy of Livonia – on behalf of itself	6	4

Source: authors' work based on the list of members of parliament who swore to the Act of Confederation, published in Volumina Legum (Jakubowski et al. 1889: 46–51, 205–209), and several acts of senators who swore to it later, separately.

Please note that their relative numbers vary, which reflects the history of the region. E.g., the Duchy of Masovia, which was an independent state until 1529, had its own political structure, retained after its incorporation into the Crown. That is why the rule of *liberum veto* was so vital: every constituency had the same right to breach the Sejm, and everybody's interest should be considered equally (despite the number of seats in the Parliament).

Intermarriage between Regional Elites

The "Great Sejm" counted 494 members altogether. To analyze the intermarriage rate between regional elites, we should ignore its members representing the central authorities: the King (Stanislas August) and 16 senators ("ministers" – 8 from the Crown and 8 from Lithuania: great and minor marshals, treasurers, chancellors, and hetmans). The Duchy of Livonia (in Polish: Księstwo Inflanckie), now in Latvia, had a special status: there were 6 representatives of Livonia itself, and Lithuania and the Crown delegated 8 additional ones (4 from the Crown and 4 from Lithuania) – we will disregard those additional ones.

We are left with 369 members, who represented the area of 21st-century Belarus: 63, Lithuania: 57, Latvia: 6, Ukraine: 90, and Poland: 253. The current area of Poland dominates; so, let us split it into three major provinces: Greater Poland, Lesser Poland, and Mazovia. Following this classification, we receive a more even distinction:

Table 2. *Members of the Great Sejm divided into large regions, based on current political borders*

Belarus (BY)	63
Lithuania (LT)	57
Latvia (LV)	6
Mazovia (PL-maz)	78
Greater Poland (PL-wp)	107
Lesser Poland (PL-mp)	68
Ukraine (UA)	90

Source: *Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great Sejm*

Of course, one person can be (and often is) a descendant of many members of the Great Sejm. If we count all their known direct descendants (from the 18th century until 2018), we receive the numbers from 255 (Latvia) to 17,205 (Greater Poland). Adding descendants of the Great Sejm members' siblings, these numbers will grow from 2,635 (Latvia) to 36,513 (Greater Poland).

Table 3. *The numbers of known descendants of members of the Great Sejm and of descendants of their siblings*

Region	Members of the Great Sejm	Direct descendants	With descendants of siblings
Belarus	63	6,670	13,115
Lithuania	57	5,744	11,800
Latvia	6	255	2,635
Mazovia (now in Poland)	78	12,719	22,252
Greater Poland (now in Poland)	107	17,205	23,446
Lesser Poland (now in Poland)	68	14,312	36,513
Ukraine	90	13,546	23,544

Source: *Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great Sejm*

How many generations do we know since the 18th century? Let us count the distinct pairs of a Sejm member and his descendants (direct or sibling descendants). People who descend from *n* Sejm members are counted *n* times:

Table 4. *Number of unique pairs: the members of Great Sejm and their descendants or descendants of their siblings*

Generation	Number of pairs: member–descendant
0	2,555
1	5,200
2	10,130
3	19,059
4	31,044
5	45,098
6	62,539
7	89,383
8	92,539
9	41,302
10	7,541
11	507
12	25

Source: Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great Sejm

Instead of counting generations (which are linked to a specific ancestor and thus multiplied), we can count the birth dates. This is the statistics for distinct people who were members of the Great Sejm or their siblings or who are descendants of any of them.

Table 5. *Number of descendants of the Great Sejm members or their siblings split by the birth date (in decades)*

Birth decade	No.	Birth decade	No.	Birth decade	No.	Birth decade	No.	Birth decade	No.
		170.	25	180.	1,544	190.	3,379	200.	2,882
		171.	73	181.	1,837	191.	2,540	201.	838
		172.	247	182.	2,062	192.	3,094		
		173.	430	183.	2,279	193.	2,634		
		174.	621	184.	2,664	194.	2,760		
		175.	708	185.	2,919	195.	3,693		
		176.	728	186.	3,127	196.	2,923		
		177.	953	187.	3,184	197.	3,726		
168.	4	178.	1,281	188.	2,919	198.	4,532		
169.	5	179.	1,220	189.	3,359	199.	3,175		

"." stands for any digit, i.e. 182. means from 1820 to 1829.

Source: Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great Sejm

The same results are summed up in centuries in the following table.

Table 6. *Number of descendants of the Great Sejm members or their siblings split by the birth date (in centuries)*

Century	No.
16..	9
17..	6,286
18..	25,894
19..	32,456
20..	3,720

Source: Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great Sejm

Having defined the analyzed group, we will test whether the Great Sejm members' descendants from various regions:

a) intermarried mostly within their regional groups (i.e. married usually people descending from the élite of the same region) or

b) quickly established familial relations and merged into one group, where their geographical origins are hard to notice or

c) initially intermarried within regional groups (e.g. in Ukraine, Lithuania, Lesser Poland) and in some time gradually changed their matrimonial practice to form one great family without geographical differences.

We will define "intermarriage case" as a single moment when two distinct persons get married or a child is born to an unmarried couple and both spouses (parents) are descendants of the members of the Great Sejm or their siblings. Thus, the "intermarriage case" is a distinct quadruplet consisting of two "descendants" (spouses or unmarried parents) and two "ancestors" (members of the Great Sejm or their siblings). We do not check whether "descendant" is different from "ancestor", and so we also count descendants in "generation 0", i.e. the intermarriage cases of the Great Sejm members themselves and their siblings when, e.g., member A of the Great Sejm married sister B. of a senator C. (in such a case, A. is counted as "a descendant" of A. himself and B. is "a descendant" of C.).

Table 7 shows the total number of marriages of the descendants of the Great Sejm (including descendants of the Great Sejm members' siblings), split by half a century. As we said above, a descendant is anyone whose any ancestor is a father or a mother of a member of the Great Sejm. All other people can be called non-descendants. So, a non-descendant is someone who does not have any known ancestor who was a member of the Great Sejm or even who was a father or a mother of a member of the Great Sejm.

Table 7. *Cases of intermarriage between descendants of the Great Sejm and non-descendants*

Half a century	Both spouses are descendants	Husband is a descendant	Wife is a descendant	Any spouse is a descendant
1700–49	4	51	105	156
1750–99	283	1,130	1,116	2,246
1800–49	839	2,446	2,768	5,214
1850–99	1,418	3,844	4,288	8,132
1900–49	1,438	5,165	5,043	10,208
1950–99	497	5,845	5,327	11,172
2000–18	89	1,241	1,093	2,334

Source: Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great Sejm

The differences between genders and between descendants of senators and ordinary members of parliament will be discussed further on. Now, let us focus on the intermarriage cases of the analyzed group's members, taking place between different regions of the former Rzeczpospolita.

Table 8. *Intermarriage cases between descendants of the Great Sejm members representing specific regions*

1700–49	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
LT	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
LV	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PL-maz	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PL-mp	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PL-wp	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
UA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1750–99	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	16	20	4	7	13	6	14
LT	20	10	1	4	5	2	14
LV	4	1	0	0	1	1	2
PL-maz	7	4	0	34	16	31	19
PL-mp	13	5	1	16	25	27	31
PL-wp	6	2	1	31	27	47	14
UA	14	14	2	19	31	14	36

1800–49	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	56	71	14	31	39	32	69
LT	71	48	11	29	28	21	59
LV	14	11	4	5	9	7	15

1800–49	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
PL-maz	31	29	5	78	107	109	98
PL-mp	39	28	9	107	96	111	141
PL-wp	32	21	7	109	111	234	94
UA	69	59	15	98	141	94	154

1850–99	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	93	113	24	86	118	126	174
LT	113	90	28	85	112	112	170
LV	24	28	11	16	32	23	37
PL-maz	86	85	16	158	228	295	222
PL-mp	118	112	32	228	223	277	304
PL-wp	126	112	23	295	277	455	302
UA	174	170	37	222	304	302	318

1900–49	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	151	235	54	272	303	324	359
LT	235	170	58	272	303	331	357
LV	54	58	11	57	73	60	83
PL-maz	272	272	57	218	379	492	439
PL-mp	303	303	73	379	344	541	489
PL-wp	324	331	60	492	541	562	592
UA	359	357	83	439	489	592	436

1950–99	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	96	114	42	176	188	214	190
LT	114	77	35	161	175	197	173
LV	42	35	5	50	52	61	59
PL-maz	176	161	50	161	229	285	233
PL-mp	188	175	52	229	185	298	247
PL-wp	214	197	61	285	298	254	294
UA	190	173	59	233	247	294	179

2000–18	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	26	34	14	43	45	48	42
LT	34	26	11	47	48	51	48
LV	14	11	3	16	16	19	16
PL-maz	43	47	16	36	55	61	56
PL-mp	45	48	16	55	52	67	56
PL-wp	48	51	19	61	67	53	64
UA	42	48	16	56	56	64	47

Source: Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great Sejm

There are considerable differences in the number of descendants from various regions. Thus, it is difficult to compare the results. For instance, the total number of descendants of the Great Sejm members representing the present area of Lithuania is 11,800, and the respective value for present area of Ukraine is 23,544. The differences must have a great impact on the count of intermarriage cases.

We can adopt a countermeasure: we can count the number of intermarriage cases *as if* the absolute number of descendants of each region were equal. Let us take the number of descendants from Greater Poland, where the number is the highest (36,513), and calculate a factor: how many times the number of descendants for a specific region is less than for Greater Poland. We will use the factor to adjust the values for counting intermarriage cases.

If Lesser Poland has the factor 1.56 and Lithuania the factor 3.09 (because there were 3.09 times less descendants of Lithuanian members of the Great Sejm than its members from Greater Poland), we will multiply the number of intermarriage cases between Lithuania and Lesser Poland by 1.56×3.09, that is, by 4.82. *Table 9* presents the factors calculated for each region.

Table 9. *Factors for comparison between regions as if their representatives had similar numbers of known descendants*

Region	Descendants	Factor
Belarus (BY)	13,115	2.78
Lithuania (LT)	11,800	3.09
Latvia (LV)	2,635	13.9
Mazovia (PL-maz)	22,252	1.64
Greater Poland (PL-wp)	36,513	1
Lesser Poland (PL-mp)	23,446	1.56
Ukraine (UA)	23,544	1.55

In the next step, we present the results (*Table 8*) multiplied by the factors presented in *Table 9. Table 10* shows how many intermarriage cases we have found between descendants originating from any of the seven regions as if the regions had similar numbers of "descendants". In other words, we can read *Table 10* in the following way: there are seven regions of Rzeczpospolita which had representatives in the Great Sejm; we adjusted the numbers of their élites to be roughly equal; now, we will check whether (and to what extent) members of these regional élites intermarried.

Table 10. *Cases of intermarriage between descendants of members of the Great Sejm representing specific regions, multiplied by the factors assumed in Table 9*

1700–49	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	48	0	0	0	0	0	0
LT	0	46	0	0	0	0	0
LV	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PL-maz	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PL-mp	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PL-wp	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
UA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

1750–99	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	768	944	2456	145	267	66	294
LT	944	464	603	82	101	22	289
LV	2,456	603	0	0	262	141	537
PL-maz	145	82	0	305	142	148	172
PL-mp	267	101	262	142	219	127	278
PL-wp	66	22	141	148	127	119	68
UA	294	289	537	172	278	68	331

1800–49	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	2,688	3,35	8,596	643	800	353	1,449
LT	3,35	2,226	6,638	592	565	228	1,217
LV	8,596	6,638	31,417	1,328	2,362	989	4,028
PL-maz	643	592	1328	700	949	521	890
PL-mp	800	565	2,362	949	842	524	1,265
PL-wp	353	228	989	521	524	595	454
UA	1,449	1,217	4,028	890	1,265	454	1,414

1850–99	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	4,464	5,331	14,737	1,785	2,421	1,392	3,653
LT	5,331	4,173	16,898	1,734	2,258	1,216	3,508
LV	14,737	16,898	86,396	4,248	8,397	3,25	9,936
PL-maz	1,785	1,734	4,248	1,418	2,023	1,409	2,015
PL-mp	2,421	2,258	8,397	2,023	1,955	1,308	2,728
PL-wp	1,392	1,216	3,25	1,409	1,308	1,156	1,459
UA	3,653	3,508	9,936	2,015	2,728	1,459	2,920

1900–49	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	7,249	11,087	33,157	5,646	6,216	3,579	7,537
LT	11,087	7,883	35,002	5,549	6,11	3,593	7,366
LV	33,157	35,002	86,396	15,134	19,157	8,477	22,289
PL-maz	5,646	5,549	15,134	1,957	3,362	2,35	3,985
PL-mp	6,216	6,11	19,157	3,362	3,016	2,554	4,388
PL-wp	3,579	3,593	8,477	2,35	2,554	1,428	2,86
UA	7,537	7,366	22,289	3,985	4,388	2,86	4,003

1950–99	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	4,608	5,379	25,789	3,653	3,857	2,364	3,989
LT	5,379	3,571	21,122	3,284	3,529	2,139	3,57
LV	25,789	21,122	39,271	13,275	13,646	8,619	15,844
PL-maz	3,653	3,284	13,275	1,445	2,031	1,361	2,115
PL-mp	3,857	3,529	13,646	2,031	1,622	1,407	2,216
PL-wp	2,364	2,139	8,619	1,361	1,407	646	1,42
UA	3,989	3,57	15,844	2,115	2,216	1,42	1,644

2000–18	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	1,248	1,604	8,596	893	923	530	882
LT	1,604	1,206	6,638	959	968	554	990
LV	8,596	6,638	23,563	4,248	4,199	2,684	4,297
PL-maz	893	959	4248	323	488	291	508
PL-mp	923	968	4199	488	456	316	502
PL-wp	530	554	2684	291	316	135	309
UA	882	990	4297	508	502	309	432

Source: Genealogy of the Descendants of the Great Sejm

What can we read from *Table 10*? Definitely, the case of the Latvian élite is outstanding. However, this may be just an effect of applying a very high factor due to the low number of descendants of Latvian élite. It may also mean that the small Latvian élite *had to* marry descendants of other regional élites to a greater extent than it was implied by their raw number.

If we do not look at the numbers for Latvia, we can analyze the numbers of intermarriage cases (adjusted by factor, as explained above) and count their relative standard deviation computed as a proportion of standard deviation and average (*Table 11*).

Table 11. *Relative standard deviation of intermarriage cases between regional élites except Latvian*

Period	Average	St. dev.	Relative st. dev.	Sum (adjusted)
1750–99	236	221	94%	8,496
1800–49	1,002	766	76%	36,065
1850–99	2,349	1,137	48%	84,566
1900–49	4,942	2,337	47%	177,900
1950–99	2,727	1,194	44%	98,164
2000–18	701	363	52%	25,234

As we can see, in the middle of the 19th century, the relative standard deviation was levelled, and its value (about 50%) has not changed since then. We believe that the observed differences in the number of intermarriage cases after about 1850 are results of different initial conditions in these regions or are products of the accepted method of adjusting the results.

Before jumping to the next section, one more issue should be addressed. It may have happened that the highest élite (families of senators) was more mobile (or even cosmopolitan) than the lower (families of members of the lower house – *posłowie*). Maybe we can receive other results if we do not take the families of senators into account. Possibly the families of the members of the lower house of the Great Sejm were more prone to marry only within their regional groups.

Let us then consider marriages where both parties descended from members of the lower house of the parliament. These are the (unadjusted) tables for two most characteristic periods: the beginning of the 19th century (1800–1849) and the end of the 20th century (1950–1999):

Table 12. *Absolute numbers of intermarriage cases between people descending from members of the lower house (posłowie)*

1800–49	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	26	29	5	13	16	13	30
LT	29	31	9	6	14	7	22
LV	5	9	3	0	3	2	8
PL-maz	13	6	0	45	42	48	37
PL-mp	16	14	3	42	59	53	79
PL-wp	13	7	2	48	53	155	39
UA	30	22	8	37	79	39	98
1950–99	BY	LT	LV	PL-maz	PL-mp	PL-wp	UA
BY	21	46	15	80	102	106	112
LT	46	37	17	107	116	127	126

LV	15	17	3	39	42	42	49
PL-maz	80	107	39	109	186	210	199
PL-mp	102	116	42	186	157	237	213
PL-wp	106	127	42	210	237	182	244
UA	112	126	49	199	213	244	158

We do not see any sign that the "lower élite" would have behaved differently. The absolute numbers are quite low, so we abstain from calculating standard deviations (the differences may be statistically not significant), but our reading of the numbers does not suggest that we should rethink what was said previously and that we should try to calculate our tables separately for the descendants of the upper and the lower house of the Great Sejm.

Conclusions

While carrying out our analysis, we aimed, on the one hand, to contribute to the scholarship on the reproduction of the noble descendants in Eastern Europe, while, on the other, by demonstrating the ongoing relevance of the post-feudal collective identity-building practices, we were seeking to provide a point of reference for the ongoing sociological discussion on the limits and applicability modes of the modernization theory. Thus, we turned our attention to Minakowski's database (Minakowski 2018a), which provides unique information on the genealogical structure of people descending from the 18th-century noble élite of the Polish–Lithuanian Union. In our calculation, we tried to capture the key aspect of this structure, focusing on noble homogamy. The first issue addressed in our analysis was concerned with marriages between descendants of the old élite and other people who had not belonged to this group. What we could see is that the rate of homogamy (where both spouses are "descendants of the Great Sejm") was similar in the half centuries 1850–99 and 1900–49 but dropped by two-thirds in the period of 1950–99 (the ratio of both spouses' descendants to any spouse descendant – 17.4%, 14.1%, and 4.4% respectively). For the initial 18 years of the 21st century, the rate was even lower (3.8%). Obviously, further research – in line with an earlier studied Dutch case (e.g. Dronkers 2003) – will require to contextualize these findings while using a non-noble control group.

Then, we measured homogamy as defined by geographic (regional) origins: we tried to test whether (and to what extent) descendants of regional élites married between or within their regional groups. We defined the regional groups by dividing the whole Union into seven regions. We called the "regional élite" as individuals who represented a given region in the Parliament of 1788–1792. It appeared that about 60 years after the regional élites were defined (i.e. around

1850) the structure reached a stable form. The regional differences were levelled out, and currently if one descends from a former representative of Greater Poland the likelihood that one's wife descends from a representative of Lithuania, Latvia, or Ukraine is roughly the same as in the second half of the 19th century.

Next, we tried to examine whether "higher" and "lower" élites kept homogamy practices in the same way. It appeared that there is no trace of differences between descendants of senators (upper house of parliament, appointed by a king) and representatives (elected from the local nobles in general elections held in regional assemblies).

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The Noble Family as "Singular Multiplicity"? Redefining the Smoczynski–Zarycki's Totemic Definition of Nobility through the Lenses of Alain Badiou's Mathematical Ontology

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Abstract. In our paper, we redefine the category of "family" denoting the relationship of selected members of a post-noble/post-aristocratic milieu in Poland using Alain Badiou's terminology. Badiou's ontology based on a mathematical set theory and a generic theory is the most developed, complex, and revolutionary ontology of the 20th and 21st centuries. However, it is rarely adapted to new empirical studies probably because of its novelty and complexity. We do not intend to use the empirical case study made by Smoczynski–Zarycki to inform our argument but instead perform a translation of the Durkheim–Lacanian theoretical standpoint from "Totem…" into the category of "singularity" [*singularité*] in its relation to "the state of situation" [*état de la situation*] from "Being and Event" (Badiou 2005). This approach seeks to find a universalizing potential of nobility that will allow it to become a relevant subject for truth procedure analysis.

Keywords: badiousian ontology, singular multiplicity, noble family, honor, totemic society

Introduction

The aim of our research is to conceptualize Smoczyński–Zarycki's thesis about the role of a post-noble community in the contemporary democratic Polish society, using some concepts borrowed from the French philosopher Alain Badiou. This attempt could be considered as a challenge for the theoretical standpoint (or standpoints in plural) of the authors of "Totem", but being aware of its provocative aspect we will

elaborate this issue only as an *experimentum mentis* open for further discussions. The provocative aspect of this proposal refers, of course, to the ideological identity of Alain Badiou, who is well known to be the last French philosopher faithful to the ideals of May '68. His Marxist provenience, and the concept of the militant truth of the subject, perceived under the figure of a revolutionist seems at first glance hardly consistent with the feudal identity of nobility, which is the main subject-matter of Smoczyński–Zarycki's book. But we should not stick to these first appearances and ideological issues but rather approach Badiou's metaphysics as a genuine philosophical apparatus engaged in truth procedures.

The clue theoretical concept of Smoczynski–Zarycki's (henceforth S/Z) thesis is the totem, which agency mirrors Lacan's *objet petit a*. The totem at the core of the post-noble milieu, inscribed with heraldic symbols, coats of arms, and family alliances constitutes an invisible pole of attraction according to the authors – invisible for the empirical sociological analysis, invisible in terms of numbers, and transgressing social hierarchies based on economic status, etc. Like the Lacanian *object a*, being invisible and impossible to describe, it nonetheless contributes to uphold the consistency of the symbolic order. This analogy is not unexpected because Jacques Lacan and his tripartite distinction of the real, symbolic, and imaginary are obviously the linking elements of this experimental translation to Badiou's terminology. Firstly because Lacan was Badiou's teacher, and, even more than a teacher, he arguably acted as a master for Badiou, as it has been explicitly expressed in his conversation with Elisabeth Roudinesco: "Lacan always remained for me a thinker of the first order rather than a psychoanalytic master. Always the primacy of the written! For this reason, he occupied a considerable place in my philosophical work, and this from my very first synthetic work 'Theory of the Subject' (1982)".

Further in this dialogue, Badiou admitted that "[Lacan] has been, and still is, constantly present on [his] intellectual horizon" (Badiou–Roudinesco 2014: 6). Secondly, Badiou makes use of the Lacanian category of antiphilosophy and his conception of the Borromean knot between the registers of the real, the symbolic, and the imaginary as crucial for a non-philosophical (i.e. non-Kantian) approach of the Real (Lacan 2005: 101). Lacan's influence on Badiou's thought is significant up to the point of calling his theory of being a "Lacanian ontology".[1] Although Badiou does not share the psychotherapeutic framework that is crucial for his master, he borrows Lacan's central ideas and creatively develops them in his ontological concepts. While the imaginary order is not so important for Badiou because of his subtractive method, the most important insight is brought by the opposition between the real and the symbolic, which are mirrored in the

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1   Here, we borrow the term used by Fabio Vighi in his paper: Dall'evento al sintomo: Badiou e l'ontologia lacaniana. In: M. J. Kelly, A. J. Rose (eds.), *Badiou Studies* 3(1): 23–42. New York: Punctum Books.

Badiousian theory of being by inconsistent multiplicity and the language of the situation. We will develop these concepts in the following sections of our article.

Meanwhile, we need to tackle the already mentioned dissonance between Badiou and nobility treated as a political subject. Indeed, we have to take under consideration that Badiou still approves the validity of the communist idea and has been a member of communist parties (Unified Socialist Party, Union des communistes de France marxiste-léniniste, L'Organisation Politique). This active participation in emancipatory movements is considered by Badiou as politics *par excellence* – one of the domains of the truth, a subject of philosophy. Therefore, to treat nobility as a singular multiplicity within the political discourse of Badiou seems at first glance paradoxical, if not contradictory. In order to defend this position, we have to interrogate the Polish historical background and take under consideration the position of noble classes in communist and post-communist countries.

According to the modernization thesis, ascribed characteristics such as nobility play no longer a determinative role in shaping one's career. Instead of ascribed features, society begins to cherish achieved ones such as work, talent, or education. However, it is obvious that Eastern European modernization has evolved differently, and its pathway has been molded by a forced change in class hierarchies. Since 1944 (we will symbolically refer to the date of the imposition of the Agricultural Reform that legitimized confiscations of land above 50 ha), inherited or ascribed characteristics, such as noble origin, have not stopped to have an influence over one's place/position in society, but they definitely ceased to be an advantage. Inversely, it has become a burden. In communist Poland (henceforth PRL – Polish People's Republic), to be born of noble origin meant that one was not only deprived of his/her natural/inherited life facilities (land, palaces, domestic workers) but presumably was not allowed to study at higher education institutions, attend elitist courses (like equestrian sports, sailing activities, etc.) because these amenities were reserved for children of the proletarian origin. In the context of political change, we will define S/Z's concept of "family" as "singular multiplicity". In this article, we intend to ask what possible outcomes will result from such a translation, that is to say: how can we benefit from Badiou's ontology applied firstly to sociology and secondly to noble studies?

Badiou's Set Theory

Badiou is first of all a mathematician who is aware of the revolutionary aspect of his main oeuvre entitled *Being and Event* (Fr. ed. 1988, 2005). Its revolutionary character is not located in the realm of politics but in ontology. What Badiou challenges is the singularity of the ontos – i.e. the singularity of being that

constitutes the Parmenidisian ground of philosophy. The radical thesis consists in approaching being not as an existing singularity ("there is being") but as multiplicity. "The one is not" (Badiou 2005: 23), states Badiou, breaking with the monarchy of the monad that has been dominating the western onto-theological metaphysics since Parmenides. Badiou starts with an impasse of ontology based on a double aspect sentence that can be read as follows: "What *presents* itself is essentially multiple, *what* presents itself is essentially one" (Badiou 2005: 23).

The two versions of this statement are possible depending on which word we will emphasize. If we put an emphasis on "presents", we will end with multiple; if, on the other hand, we put an emphasis on "what", we will end with "one". "There is no One" – instead, there is the fact of "counting-as-one" (fr. *compter pour un*) (Badiou 2005: 24). The one, which "is not", exists only as an operation of "counting as one", wherefore it is never a presentation because it is the "multiple that is the regime of presentation" (ibid.). But we cannot say that as a result "being is multiple" "because the multiple is solely the regime of presentation" (ibid.). Therefore, the one is not an entity but an operation. It operates.

"Insofar as being, qua being, is nothing other than pure multiplicity, it is legitimate to say that ontology, the science of being qua being, is nothing other than mathematics itself" (Badiou 2005: xiii).

Hence, Alain Badiou borrows language from Georg Cantor's "set theory" and establishes his ontology on classes and sets. Multiplicities are the only real, and set theory is the only theory that provides the law of being (Badiou 2005: 66).

"1. The multiple from which ontology makes up its situation is composed solely of multiplicities. There is no one. In other words, every multiple is a multiple of multiples.

2. The count-as-one is no more than the system of conditions through which the multiple can be recognized as multiple" (Badiou 2005: 29).

Secondly, the category of multiple is double-faced: there is inconsistent multiplicity of inertia [*multiplicité inconsistante*], the multiplicity without any ones, which serves as primordial material to create consistent, structured sets through the procedure of "counting as one", and there is the one of composition, which is the consistent effect of the structure (Badiou 2005: 25). Nevertheless, reality is composed solely of multiplicities – a thesis that corresponds in mathematics to the Zermelo–Fraenkel axiom according to which all objects are sets. This statement (all objects are sets) equals Badiou's thesis: "the multiple is composed solely of multiplicities". A set that has two elements x and y is written {x, y}, but even if it consists of a single element x, it must be recognized as a set, namely, singleton {x}. This bracketing refers in logic to what Badiou calls count-as-one, which means creating consistent, structured sets. We deal with a multiplicity even if we have a simple singleton {x}. Every multiplicity contains elements that are themselves multiplicities.

After introducing this preliminary logic that is more or less based on the Zermelo–Fraenkel axioms, Badiou comes up with the most important question for ontology: "Is there something rather than nothing?",[2] and he answers: "The solution to the problem is quite striking: maintain the position that nothing is delivered by the law of the Ideas, but *make* this nothing *be* through the assumption of a proper name" (Badiou 2005: 66–67). To name means to postulate the existence of something. Subsequently, Badiou names the empty set "the set ø". The rest will have to be created out of this nothing.[3] Usually, set theories start with the sentence "there is a set". Hence, "a set", any set is axiomatic, and after establishing its existence we usually proceed to define the empty set. Inversely, Badiou chooses a more difficult path, starting with an empty set. The point zero, the *creatio ex nihilo* he postulates, is enough to make a short-cut and approach more sophisticated object sets of his theory such as the state, which appears only in meditation 8: "The State, or Metastructure, and the Typology of Being (normality, singularity, excrescence)". After we introduce the category of the "state of situation", it will be possible to present the crucial term of "singular multiplicity". Subsequently, the term will be applied to the more detailed analysis of the (post-)noble family.

The State and the Typology of Being

One of the crucial axioms of the Zermelo–Fraenkel set theory (henceforth: ZF) is undoubtedly the axiom of power set, according to which for every set exists a set whose elements are subsets (…) of a given set (Badiou 2005: 501). If we have a set p containing two elements x and y, there is a set of its subsets (possible combinations of its elements), which is denoted by $p(x)$. In our case, it will be: {{x}, {y}. {x, y}, {ø}}. In the Badiousian ontology, the power set is called "the state of the situation" (fr. *l'état de la situation*), which brings his reflection to a higher level. So far, we have only talked about the basic level of our given set, called "situation". An element belonging to a situation is "presented", while on the level of the "state of the situation" we are dealing with "representation". In this case, for example, the element {x}, which was presented in the original situation, is represented in the state of this situation.

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2   This question follows the presentation of the logical axioms in Chapter 5: "In sum, these five axioms or axiom-schemas fix the system of Ideas under whose law any presentation, as form of being, lets itself be presented: belonging (unique primitive idea, ultimate signifier or presented-being), difference, inclusion, dissemination, the language-existence couple, and substitution. We definitely have the entire material for an ontology here. Save that none of these inaugural statements in which the law of Ideas is given has yet decided the question: 'Is there something rather than nothing?'" (Badiou 2005: 66)

3   Mathematicians such as Nirenberg/Nirenberg are highly critical about that point asking where the logical necessity of this empty set is (in: *Badiou's Number: A Critic of Mathematics as Ontology*).

Generally, every element of the situation should be at the same time presented and represented. However, the original Badiousian thesis is that there are always some abnormal elements that are missing either presentation or representation. When there is an element which is represented in the state of the situation but absent in the original set, we are dealing with something called "excrescence" ("I will call excrescence a term which is represented but not presented" – Badiou 2005: 99). In our example, it will be {x, y} seen as an element of the power set. The original situation consisted only of two autonomous elements: *x* and *y*. They have their representations {x} and {y} in the state of the situation, but the element {x, y} as such is already an excrescence.

According to the ZF axiomatic set theory, the power set is always numerically bigger than the situation, so we always have some excrescences. The Badiousian "theorem of the point of excess" means that there are always more representations than presentations ("the one multiple composed from its subsets, whose existence is guaranteed by the power-set axiom, is essentially 'larger' than the initial multiple" – Badiou 2005: 84).

It should be noted that this terminology has a visible political motivation. If we consider as the "situation" a group of people, the function of the "state of the situation" will be fulfilled by the administrative metastructure, which seeks to organize this entire group. At the level of the whole society, such a function will be fulfilled by the state, in French: *État*, which corresponds to the term *état de la situation*. The fact of the existence of excrescences symbolically expresses the irremovable excess of administration in relation to what it attempts to order.

We can ultimately pass to the concept of singular multiplicity, which is crucial for our analysis. It is a multiplicity that has no representation (is absent on the level of the power set) but which is present in the situation (our original set). Obviously for Badiou, it applies e.g. to a discriminated social group deprived of support from the state. Such a group is present in the situation, but the official discourse does not seem to notice it. In the next chapter, we will apply the category of singularity to (post-)noble families.

The Concept of "Singularité" and the Problem of (Post-) Noble Family

As has been said at the beginning, it may be surprising that we refer to a figure corresponding to discriminated minorities while speaking about nobility. Therefore, we must emphasize again the specificity of the post-noble milieu in Eastern Europe since the installation of the communist regime. In the classical, pre-modern structure of society, noble families would probably cherish the

status of normal multiples[4] as they would have significant support from the state and the greatest influence on the narration produced by its official discourse. Consequently, it would be the peasantry which would have the position of the singularity, i.e. of those who cannot actively participate in the official discourse operating in the situation and whose rights are not respected. The situation radically differs in the context of communist and post-communist societies. As we have said at the beginning, nobility in the communist era became a nuisance and used to be an unavoidable obstacle to fulfill one's career (higher education, professional success). "Unavoidable" because while one cannot deny his/her pedigree and one's surname displays the class origin of your ancestors (fathers, grandfathers as landowners) one could have become an "enemy of the people's republic", especially during the Stalinist era.

Nevertheless, Badiou, being faithful to the idea of communism and its aims of total equality, fulfilled emancipation, and fulfilled "generic humanity" (exceeding all hierarchies of subsets), considered East European communism as a "procedure of truth". However, he admits that its first ideals have deteriorated throughout history (Badiou 2007: 103). We nonetheless hope that our audacious attempt can be considered within his theory if one knows the emancipatory struggle of the Polish nobility in the communist era.

After the Second World War, together with the establishment of the communist PRL, instead of eliminating inequality and abolishing the state, a substitution of power and an introduction of new hierarchies took place. It is justified to say that after that substitution it was the Communist Party which had the position of normal multiple. So, once the state of the social situation became a communist state, the condition of nobility underwent a radical transformation, which enables us to consider it as a singularity. We refer to this historical condition asserting that it has a continuation in the contemporary social position of post-noble families, whose world vanished at the beginning of PRL together with the loss of material assets. In the following chapters, we will attempt to show how the historically shaped specificity of Polish *noblesse* (not only during communist PRL but also during the period of the partition of Poland, i.e. 1772–1918) assumed the position of the dispossessed, what allows to redefine Polish nobility into a flexible singular multiplicity in compliance with Badiou's understanding of this figure.

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4   In reference to this issue, B. P. Bednarczyk is currently preparing an M.A. thesis (in the Institute of Romance Studies of the Jagiellonian University) entitled *Les épiphanies de l'inconsistance. Alain Badiou et les images littéraires de la révolution*, where he analyzes the classical Polish drama *Non-Divine Comedy* by Zygmut Krasiński (1835). Inside this drama, the aristocracy as a group under the command of Lord Henry are dramatic personae. They represent the resistance of the old world, which could be read as an attempt to defend itself from being pushed into the position of an abnormal multiple. On the other hand, the Revolutionists under the command of a peasant named Pancracy, who themselves start their action as a radically singular multiple, do not want simply to abolish the power of state but rather to substitute the relation of power. The substitution of the position of normal multiple is undoubtedly a universal problem of revolution.

Badiou's structure evolves: once a singular multiple is presented, but not represented, the lack of representation means that this multiplicity was not counted in a normal way by the state. This is because certain components of the singular set are also not-presented. If all of them were presented as such, the state would normally count the multiple. Hence, we can recapitulate the following characteristics of singularity: a) it is non-represented by the state; b) it is presented in a situation; c) some of its elements are also not-presented. To give a clear view of this concept, Badiou gives the following example:

> ... A family of people is a presented multiple of the social situation (in the sense that they live together in the same apartment, or go on holiday together, etc.), and it is also a represented multiple, a part, in the sense that each of its members is registered by the registry office, possesses French nationality, and so on. If, however, one of the members of the family, physically tied to it, is not registered and remains clandestine, and due to this fact never goes out alone, or only in disguise, and so on, it can be said that this family, despite being presented, is not represented. It is thus singular. In fact, one of the members of the presented multiple that this family is, remains, himself, un-presented within the situation. (Badiou 2005: 174)

Reflecting on the last aspect of singularity, we can envisage a multiple of which not only some elements are not-presented but all of them share this status. In this case, the singularity of the multiple attains the highest level and is called technically "evental site": "I will term evental site an entirely abnormal multiple; that is, a multiple such that none of its elements are presented in the situation. The site, itself, is presented, but 'beneath' it nothing from which it is composed is presented. As such, the site is not a part of the situation" (Badiou 2005: 175).

We can now consider a noble family as such a multiple, applying to it the three features of the singular set:

a) The lack of representation of nobility, when the state of the situation became a communist state, is obvious. Nobility has lost its assets and its privileged position. It has disappeared from the discourse administered by the Communist Party except from having been labeled as the enemy of the proletarian state and therefore having been persecuted. That loss of a privileged position is a loss of representation.

b) The non-existence of the nobility on the level of representation and its disappearance from the official discourse and official narration of the state does not entail a complete physical elimination. Thus, noble families exist, but they exist only at the level of presentation.

c) At the level of the situation, exists a "noble family" set. Other multiplicities (other families) can be aware of its existence, but at the same time their knowledge

cannot be precise, they are not able to indicate accurately who is from this family and who is not. Only from the inside of a given family (being a component of a singular multiple) can one determine the belonging of concrete elements to this set. Such a multiple is like a net whose exact construction may only be known from within. We can notice here the specificity of the familial structure in the post-noble milieu. We are dealing here with something that is exemplified in *Totem* by the term "extended family". This expression – sometimes abridged to "family" by its members – denotes a number of families of a noble origin that keeps the memory of their lineages. Their members call themselves respectively cousins, aunts, and uncles, meet regularly on familial gatherings and charity parties, and, most of all, have the inner knowledge about who is "ours" and who is not (but only aspires to be one of "ours"). Therefore, we deal with this sort of paradoxical situation underpinned by the fact that this noble "Family" is a set that is completely ignored in the order of representation. It is only vaguely presented in the situation, and its internal structure can be clear from the inside but is illegible from the outside.

The Structure of Noble Family and "Point d'Excès"

Badiou's analysis leads to the conclusion that in a situation with an unlimited number of elements it is not possible to determine the number of subsets. Thus, the state falls into an impasse, it cannot fulfill its task of introducing the total order and classification. Therefore, the situation becomes – in spite of the efforts of the state – unstable and unclosed, and the state cannot fully control its own content. Badiou describes this ontological fact as "the errancy of excess" (Badiou 2005: 420).

Every multiple can be considered simultaneously in the context of its subsets, so each one creates its own subsets. In the case of nobility, we deal with families, each of them consisting of successive subgroups like cousins, aunts, uncles, ours, those-who-become-ours, etc. We, therefore, notice that nobility, non-represented by the state, has an extremely complicated structure. It generates its own subsets, its own order, which is invisible from the outside. The rule of the excess works also in respect of singular multiple as this set generates its own internal order of subsets (of representations).

In Badiou's theory the "language of the situation" (*langue de la situation*) can be regarded as the equivalent of the Lacanian symbolic order (*le symbolique*). The language of the situation is composed by the linguistic resources. The order of subsets is reinforced when each of them is denoted symbolically by a name (that creates "knowledge" accessible in a given situation – Badiou 2005: 328).

Nobility from the point of view of the state's official discourse remains absent. However, as nobility develops its own micro-order, which is completely

unnoticed on the macro-level of the state, it uses its own symbolic resources (such as expressions denoting family affinities, history of one's ancestors, etc.). Nobility undoubtedly creates its own order, and its own symbolic dimension is appropriated to its specific net-like structure. This mechanism is informed by the particular status of the singular multiple called here "Noble Family". First of all, it is a singularity in the vertical aspect (described in point A of the previous chapter), i.e. non-representability by the state, being invisible to its classifications, statistics, and hierarchy. However, it is also a matter of singularity in the horizontal aspect (described in point c) above): even for other multiplicities of the situation, concrete elements of this set are not presented – it is only present as a whole. The specific status of the post-noble family with its complex net-like structure and its internal symbolic order is based on its ontological condition, i.e. being founded on the void, being absent for the state, and being unintelligible for other multiples. And the fact of being founded on the absence stimulates it to generate its own internal symbolic order. It is possible to see here the Lacanian scheme mentioned at the beginning: an empty object that is invisible and impossible to describe; nonetheless, it is a necessary factor contributing to trigger a symbolic order. Because such a singular multiplicity is "on the edge of the void" and remains unintelligible for other multiples, it must construct its own symbolic order to preserve the identity of the family from within. The production of its own internal micro-symbolic order and its own network of subsets, therefore, make possible the care of the familial identity and memory in spite of the abnormal status of this set in the social situation. The production of the symbolic order and the construction of internal subsets have no end because, as for every multiplicity, the principle of *point d'excès* works also there.

This appliance of Badiou's structure to the concept of a noble family has two weak points. Firstly, it is too strictly embedded in the communist period when a noble man was perceived by the state as the enemy of the working class, whereas the *Totem* touches upon the contemporary condition of a post-noble milieu. Secondly, the lack of discriminative practices against nobility in the contemporary Poland gives a false impression of a highly visible social group that has a representation (using Badiou's expression) and is present in the institutionalized realm (nobility associations, intense social life, presence in the media). For that reason, Badiou's theory should be preferably applied to these groups of gentry origin that have no connection with the "extended family", that is to say, petty gentry, located outside of the two most important Heimats of the "family", Cracow and Warsaw. Although aware of their noble past, the post-petty gentry families have less intimate kinship relations, do not socialize children within the greater kin network, have also stopped practicing matrimonial homogamy, and rarely participate in family rituals that exceed their closest, usually limited circle of relatives. Hence, our theoretical scheme

should be applied to something that refers to the title of S/Z's book, that is, the totemic entanglement of the intelligentsia and aristocracy and going further in that direction – to something that historian Janusz Tazbir has called the noble–peasant osmosis (Tazbir 2011: 68).

Nobility as a Universal Idea

Referring to Oskar Kolberg and Franciszek Bujak, Tazbir explained the specific similitude ("osmosis") between the cultures of peasantry and petty gentry based on their similar economic potential. The petty gentry led a very similar rural life to that of the more affluent peasant families, and their respective forms of life inspired one another (Maciejewski cited in Tazbir 2011) in terms of outfit (Turnau, Maciejewski), literary practices (Borowy qtd. in Tazbir 2011: 75), and social practice (religious celebrations). This dual influence is explained on the one hand by a social and economic downward of the petty gentry (mostly deprived of its assets by the actual occupants of Poland during the partition, mainly by the tsarist Russia for participating in insurrection movements). On the other hand, the peasantry imitated the noble way of life. This imitation and the possibility of maintaining those practices without economic and social privileges show that the noble way of life can be considered as a universal practice.

Therefore, we need to ask what the foundations of this paradoxical universalism of nobility are. Or how is it possible that the figure of a nobleman could be a universal ideal for every Pole? The hidden mechanism of this peculiar universality has been elaborated by S/Z within the Durkheimian perspective of the totemic figure. However, this apparently crucial thesis of *Totem* seems overshadowed in the reception of the book driven predominantly by the social analysis of the post-noble habitus of the contemporary Polish society. More specifically, the totemic hypothesis of S/Z's book consists in showing how Polish culture has been shaped by the noble legacy.

Historically, the Polish noble totem – currently shaping the habitus of every class, not only of the intelligentsia but also of peasantry and other classes – was embodied by the coats of arms, and its most important (and typically Polish) element is the "proclamation" (translated into English as battle cry, motto, or slogan, etymologically derived from the Gaelic *sluagh* 'people' and *gairm* 'call'). This *proclamatio* in the Polish heraldry is most often an identification calling for the members of one clan, i.e. a name motto (Pol. *zawołanie osobowe odimienne*) or place motto (Pol. *zawołanie topograficzne*) identifying the Heimat (Neighborhood) of the clan. Very rarely in the Polish heraldic, the *proclamatio* is a battle calling. But in order to illustrate the totemic character of the Polish kinship, we might put a hypothesis according to which this universal motto could read "God, honor,

fatherland", that is to say, the Polish nation's military motto used first probably by the independence movements during the partition of Poland. This motto officially appeared on standards in 1943 and has been restored in this form after the fall of communism in 1993. Obviously, the main attention was paid to the term "God" as the axis of the conflict with the communist government. But within our perspective the most important would be the word "honor". Under this "call", Poles express their "noble spirit" that unites them and makes them different from other nations. Whilst "fatherland" is an undisputable expression of patriotism, and the term "God" adds to this patriotism a hint of messianic identity (studied and elaborated in numerous sociological and political science analysis), the term "honor" – underpinned by the heraldic genesis – seemed to obtain the least concern (Górski 2013 – qtd. in Smoczyński–Zarycki 2017: 121, Ossowska 1973 – qtd in Smoczyński–Zarycki 2017: 120). Meanwhile, honor accompanied by pride and chivalry (Smoczyński–Zarycki 2017: 247) is historically a distinctive feature of nobility. It is the noble class that is able to act out of pure honor, independently of instrumental rationality. But that is exactly what S/Z raise as the constituting moment of the noble-originated ethos of the Polish intelligentsia.

"Whereas based today on democratic ideals, a number of noble-chivalry ideals have been inscribed in its ethos which differentiates [the intelligentsia] from a typical bourgeois class" (Smoczyński–Zarycki 2017: 239).[5]

The totem symbolizes the migration of symbolic content from class (nobility) to class (the intelligentsia). Among the Polish intelligentsia, it is a noble totem used as a figure of their imagined *noble* ancestor. But in terms of "honor" this totemism is shared by a wider range of Polish society, as it is vividly shown in another publication by both authors of *Totem*, entitled *The Intelligentsia Informed Habitus in Social Distance Strategies of Polish Migrants in the UK* (Smoczyński et al. 2017). This article shows a specific universalization of social distance strategies among Poles coming from very different social milieux. The distancing is underpinned by the binary opposition "lord–boor" (Pol. *pan–cham*), playing a key role in differentiating status positions, symbolic hierarchies in the Polish culture and society (Tazbir 2011). From our perspective, we might say that a lord is a man of honor, while a boor is someone who lacks honor at all.

This dialectic is not only a social game, but it has a definitely wider role in Polish culture, firstly because the first term "Pan" corresponds rather to the term "Sir" and is a regular way of addressing a stranger (Fr. Vouvoyer), while the second term "Cham" originally meant a peasant and was a vulgar way of denoting peasantry. Etymologically, the term "cham" refers directly to the Biblical name of one of Noe's sons, an etymology that every Pole knows, at least from their most famous epic poem by Adam Mickiewicz, *Sir Thaddeus, or the Last Lithuanian Foray* (1834):

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5   Translation of the study's authors (from Polish).

…we are all derived from Adam,
but I have heard that the peasants proceed from Ham
the Jews from Japhet, and we gentry from Shem;
hence we are lords over both, as the elder brothers.

Prawda że się wszyscy wywodzim of Adama
(Alem słyszał że chłopi pochodzą od Chama,
Żydowie of Jafeta, my szlachta od Sema
A więc panujem jako starsi nad obiema) (Mickiewicz 1916: 540)

But the "pan–cham" dualism has also been subject of a number of important literature oeuvres important for shaping the Polish identity (E. Orzeszkowa, Z. Kraszewski, A. Dygasiński, S. Wyspiański, T. Dołęga-Mostowicz, S. Mrożek, and L. Kruczkowski). In the symbolic year 1944 when the Second Republic of Poland collapsed and the small reminder of the former Polish feudal properties were confiscated by communists, the term "boor" has also lost its original meaning and class reference. It is now used to denote a cad, a brute who does not know how to behave: "Analogically, as we address everyone by 'sir' without taking under consideration his/her social position, everyone can be called a 'cham' (boor)" (Tazbir 2011: 174).[6]

The fact of employing this term to express contempt shows how Polish culture is shaped by the noble legacy (Świętochowski 1935) and how this form of expressing social distance has "journeyed from their clannish regions and reached the wider spectrum of Polish strata to the degree that the intelligentsia legacy with its social rituals informed by elitism, social distance, and appeal for higher culture constitutes a significant part of contemporary Polish habitus (Gella 1976; Zarycki 2009)" (Smoczyński et al. 2017: 4).

And this "journey" has a follow-up: "Old intelligentsia members may condemn the arrogance of the new intelligentsia as 'boorish', […] former anti-communist opposition members may condemn former communist party members as boors" (Smoczyński et al. 2017: 5).

Moreover, this "lord–boor" opposition seems to create a ladder of contempt and social distancing among the most unexpected social groups. For example, as Smoczyński et al. (2017) show among Polish migrants in the UK, we clearly distinguish the 2nd World War Polish diaspora as a group strongly affirming its superiority in terms of culture, lifestyle, and ideals (mainly patriotic), which distances itself from the post-2004 EU accession economic migrants (Garapich 2008). Nevertheless, these groups can be described by similar patterns; superiority informed by the lord/boor opposition towards the English working class, termed as boorish with no culture at all (Smoczyński et al. 2017: 6).

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6   Translation of the study's authors (from Polish).

This dialectic might have a universalizing potential, which would be of course paradoxical because we deal here with the essence of elitism. But the fact that even representatives of the working class may employ an elitist social distance strategy informed by the intelligentsia-based cultural capital shows that lordship can characterize anyone who refers to the class difference in order to speak about his personal culture.

This aspect adds to our analysis another interesting point of reference linked to Badiou's ethics. The central concept of the Badiousian ethics is the truth procedure. His ethical reflection, as well as his theory of event, begins beyond the limits of ontology understood as the theory of static being. However, there is a contact point between these orders, which is also a potential source of change in the situation and the beginning of the procedure (Badiou 2005: 179). This point is a radically special multiplicity named evental site (described earlier in our article). Our experimental analysis of the noble family as this type of singular multiplicity leads us directly to the problem of the procedure of truth. Such a procedure is also called a generic procedure, while it generates a generic set, i.e. a universal one, which exceeds the initial sets. Therefore, Badiou develops the concept of a singular universality,[7] which is a generic set that arises from a specific situation, in relation to a specific event and to a radically singular multiplicity.

It is well known that Badiou calls for a breakthrough in ethics because he neglects the negative aspect of emancipatory ethics reckoned as "smug nihilism" (Badiou 2002: 39). The anthropological difference that distinguishes the way a man lives from an animal's survival is based solely on "truth" understood as "fidelity to an event" (Badiou 2002: 42). The event is a break that triggers the truth processes or truth procedure because it is impossible either to notice or to understand within the actual and reputable knowledge. The event is discerned by "the apostle of truth" (Badiou 2013), who is the only one who recognizes in the established order the possibility of a new order and a new reality. This anamorphic perspective is not based on the recognition of a negative difference, according to the logic of minority or exception. On the contrary, it follows the perspective of an *Übermensch* who becomes immortal through his fidelity to an immortal truth. This ethical aspect of Badiou's subject has a Nietzschean feature that places our reflection on the perilous ground of the master and slave dialectic. For Nietzsche, this dialectic is performed in the domain of ethics and characterizes an attitude towards life. The noble spirit affirms life, while the decadent neglects life and loses the will to power, falling in a state of rottenness, which characterizes human morality. For Nietzsche, human morality is a slave morality that negates life-power values on behalf of the good–evil morality of weakness that refuses to the other what it cannot have itself. Hence, morality is

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7   "Tout universel est singulier, ou est une singularité" (Badiou 2004).

shaped by slave consciousness instead of the master and Dionysian enjoyment with the ultimate value of life.[8]

Conclusions

We have introduced a couple of genuine and highly innovative figures from Badiou's ontology in order to show the theoretical possibilities with which this system can contribute to the sociological analysis of clandestine phenomena. The noble family understood through the Durkheimian perspective as a totemic figure, instead of numbers and registers, seems corresponding to the figure of singular multiplicity. To be noble means to belong to a set that is not understood in terms of being (pedigree, genealogy) but rather as an operating force. The one is not, but the one operates. This multiplicity has no representation in the registry office but is present in the original set. Paraphrasing the example of family that we have borrowed from Badiou (Badiou 2005: 174), following the modernization thesis, the contemporary nobility is a multiple of which each member is clandestine, that is, un-presented within the situation. Such a case is called "evental site". The site is there, but none of its elements are presented and, consequently, cannot be counted by the state of situation and cannot be re-presented. In other words, it has no representation at the level of "état de la situation". This term "état", like the English term "state", is used in its double meaning: État means the state as a political entity. Not belonging to the situation means also not belonging to the state's administration registers. However, observing the contemporary nobility, it is difficult to agree on some clandestine or illegal condition – this obvious inconvenience gets in the way of our analogy.

Obviously, the familial affinities, genealogical lineages and even reclaimed – after the fall of communism – real estates are registered and represented data (in Badiou's sense), and so we are facing the question: what inside Polish nobility corresponds to the right evental site that may trigger a truth procedure according to Badiou? Facing this difficulty, we have looked for a universal potential of nobility that is characteristic for the Polish case. Three elements have contributed to our hypothesis. The first is the Lacanian link between Badiou and S/Z's book. In the totemic theory of S/Z, nobility works as a totemic *object* around which the symbolic order of the intelligentsia is being established. The positive content of totem itself, that is, the Thing itself is never achievable and describable – but observing the symbolic and its shape we can guess what invisible forces have

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8   Badiou clearly supports certain aspects of Nietzsche's critical thought, which condemns the will of nothingness or the lack of will typical of a slave morality (E 33–34). At the same time, however, Badiou remains critical to Nietzsche's claim that the *Übermensch* may return to the primordial innocence beyond good and evil. For Badiou, the heroism of life is a life in accordance with an event that opens the dimension of properly understood good and evil (Badiou 2002: 59).

been exercised upon it. Those forces are related to some universal ideas that attract other social classes to the totem of nobility. S/Z focus on this influence over the Polish intelligentsia. But in other publications they acknowledge that this attraction of the totemic noble legacy, even though not explicit, can be seen among very different social groups such as the working class (Smoczynski et al. 2017). This universalization is expressed basically, if not only, by social distance practices under the form of the lord–boor (Pan/Cham) dualism. Every Pole can imaginarily adopt the position of a Lord, which equals being well-mannered and cultivated against some other dubbed as boor (or exactly a peasant). This observation has inspired us to attach more attention to this figure characteristic of Polish social relationships and culture. We, therefore, followed one of the most famous Polish historians, Janusz Tazbir, who paid attention to this dualism and its role for the Polish culture and referred to something that he called the peasantry–lordship osmosis. What needs to be studied historically is the closeness of those classes and the lack of visible differences between rich peasantry and poor gentry.

The *proclamatio* that traditionally functions as an identitarian motto (name or place) hence it differentiates us from them (friend and enemy, we and they) and functions here as a universal calling. This universality of honor gathers not only those who have some chivalrous ancestors, but every Pole can feel called by this truth procedure.[9] Every Pole addressing another by the form "Pan" (Sir/Lord) plays this game of social distance. His culture, his ambitions are not entities, facts but operations according to the French aphorism *noblesse oblige.* The knight's honor is a universal calling and a truth to which the majority of Poles would claim its attachment since many different historical events (insurrections from the time of the partition of Poland, World War II, the Warsaw Uprising, etc.). It can be a characteristic sign of a belligerent nation but we must not overlook the noble spirit that is attached to it. We must also be aware of the historical and cultural specificity of this state, where each person addresses the other one by "Pan" (Sir/Lord), and the state itself is etymologically linked to lordship in plural: "państwo". Around this homonym, we could perform a play à rebours around the Badousian dualism "Etat/état de la situation", but we must take under consideration how difficult the universalization process of such a "state" would be. However, we hope that, inspired by the totemic reading of the legacy of Polish nobility, we have at least opened up further lines of meta-theoretical inquiries into truth procedures observed around eclipsed social phenomena.

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9   In the context of our analysis, the interpretation of the ideal of honor as the content of a potential procedure of truth is limited to the Polish society. We are aware, however, that this point is difficult to accept from the perspective of Badiou's ontology, in which the ideal is a generic set exceeding all subsets, including those related to belonging to a given society or nation. So, here we have a typically generic moment of transgression beyond social classes, but at the same time the question arises if this particular procedure could be extended beyond Polish society. The answer to the question would require a reflection that goes beyond the framework of our paper.

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Burghers, Intellectuals, and Gentries. The Utopia of Alternative Modernization in the Interwar Hungarian Populist Movement: László Németh, Ferenc Erdei, and István Bibó[1]

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Abstract. The paper's aim is a critical reconstruction concerning the ideas of the most renowned representatives of the Hungarian Popular Movement: László Németh, Ferenc Erdei, and István Bibó. It contextualizes the notion of "populism", which has semantically become overburdened up to now: it means everything and nothing. The Hungarian Populist Movement must be interpreted in the interwar Central-Eastern European and Hungarian contexts. The notion of dual society was a catchword for the abovementioned thinkers; according to its basic tenet, in Hungarian society, there is a symbiosis of modern and premodern segments. The demand for emancipation of the peasantry as a common denominator was frequently connected with the idea of alternative modernization; it was imagined as an autochthonous development different from the Western European models.

Keywords: populism, dual society, burgher, intellectual, gentry, alternative modernization

Introduction

After the Trianon Treaty (1920) resulting in the mutilation of historical Hungary, the aristocracy- and gentry-dominated Hungarian political elites found themselves

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in an uneasy situation (Lendvai 2003: 388). The country had lost two thirds of its territory and half of its population; the political mood of the élites and the masses made impossible other foreign policy than one aiming to reclaim, at least partly, the lost territories. The wounded national consciousness sought solace in irredentism elevated to quasi-religious position. The lessons at elementary schools in the interwar-period Hungary began every morning with the "Hungarian Credo": I believe in God/ I believe in a Fatherland/ I believe in eternal divine justice/ I believe in Hungary's resurrection!/Amen (Bíró–Balogh 2007).

Concerning the power relations and Hungary's geopolitical situation, the revision of the Trianon Treaty was not possible without the support of a major power being interested in the reconfiguration of state borders in Central and Eastern Europe. The ally with Nazi Germany seemed an appropriate means for achieving the fervently hoped aim of revision. The results, at the beginning, seemed to justify this policy: as the consequence of the First and Second Vienna Awards in 1938 and 1940, Hungary had reclaimed some of its former territories from Czechoslovakia and Romania, but in the summer of 1943, at the time of the Szárszó meeting, after the battle of Stalingrad, the German defeat and the potential withdrawal of border revisions with it foreshadowed themselves.

What concerns Hungary's inner situation in the fields of economy, society, and domestic policy after the trauma of Trianon, we can say – taking the risks of simplification – that the process of modernization that had been accelerated in the period of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy between 1867–1914 came to a stop. At the same time, economic consolidation, in spite of the loss of the major part of economic resources, was successful until the years of the Great Depression, but societal structure had got stymied: feudal and modern social structures coexisted. It was the situation of a "dual society", as described by the sociologist Ferenc Erdei, whose ideas will be treated in this paper. At the same time, there was a social fermentation during the whole interwar period, and the question of the reforms was on the agenda. Aristocracy- and gentry-bred political elites co-opted strata from the rich peasantry and the petit bourgeois, but the power relations did not change essentially. The political regime of Hungary can be described with the term of "elective or electoral authoritarianism" (Schedler 2006). There was a multi-party system without a real political competition: the challengers of the ruling party did not have a real chance to get political power. Different reform movements, from the right to the left, tried to enter into the political arena and change the petrified political constellation. It was a very symptomatic fact that there was not a secret suffrage in the Hungarian countryside until 1939 – the voters had to cast their votes publicly in the presence of the members of the election committees.

The Hungarian Populist Movement (Borbándi 1976): The Peasantry and the Idea of Hungarian "Sonderweg" to Modernity

The economic depression of 1929–1933 had struck the countryside peasantry stronger than the city dwellers. The Hungarian land reform after the First World War did not put end to the economic and social domination of the large estates, and the majority of the much segmented Hungarian peasantry consisted of small landowners with non-viable farms and landless agrarian workers. Dezső Szabó, one of the most renowned writers of the interwar period and the forefather of the Hungarian Populist Movement, proclaimed the idea of a peasant revolution connected to the idea of a new, second acquisition of the Hungarian Fatherland. (This was a historical allusion to the acquisition of the Carpathian Basin by the Hungarian tribes a thousand years earlier.) Szabó orchestrated his theory in a xenophobic, ethnicist style, fabricating a mythical Manichean history of philosophy in which Hungarian history was presented as a continuous struggle between the ethnically foreign ruling elites: the aristocracy, the high priests of the Catholic Church, in modern times, the bourgeoisie and the "true-born", ethnically "pure" Hungarian peasantry (Kovács 2007). There was a strange discrepancy between this conception and the post-war reality: the shrunk Hungary, as a consequence of the disaggregation of the former multi-ethnical political unit, the so-called Saint Stephen's Empire, became an almost ethnically homogeneous country. There were no sizable minorities, except the highly assimilated Hungarian Jewry. So, the theory of Dezső Szabó was an example of scapegoat mechanism; a response of a traumatized community by the shock of the diminution of historical Hungary. Dezső Szabó, similarly to other interwar-period Eastern European populist ideologues, did not reject modernization *in toto*; instead of it, he imagined an alternative modernity compatible with the Hungarian national character (Kovács 2015, Trencsényi 2012); his core idea was an autochthon, third-road modernization.

At the same time, Dezső Szabó and his ethnicist-xenophobic tone meant just one thread in the multi-colored fabric of the Hungarian Popular Movement. It is undeniable that the ethnocentric approach, to some extent, was present in the case of many of its protagonists, but it did not hold true for everybody; there were important exceptions: Zoltán Szabó and István Bibó must be mentioned in this respect. Speaking about populism nowadays, one should mention a methodological problem. This category has semantically been overburdened; instead of categorizing for a phenomenon in the field of history of ideas, it is frequently used for stigmatization: this label is stuck to the forehead of the actual bad guy expelling him/her from the company of decent people (Piccone 1995). Populism itself is undeniably responsible for this confusion:

it embraces different historical phenomena being far away from each other in space and time, from the democratic Jeffersonian-origin agrarian populism in America through the South American variant á la Juan Domingo Peron in Argentina to the Eastern European peasant populism in Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary (Canovan 1981: 8–16).

However, for a time, the Hungarian Popular Movement was a political factor emerging in the thirties. It embraced a wide political spectrum and cut across the ideological borders of the political right and left. A common denominator was the idea of the emancipation of peasantry. It is rooted in the so-called sociography movement of well-known Hungarian writers and sociologists who, in their books, called the public attention to the miserable condition of Hungarian peasantry which, for them, was a group of outcasts and the potential resource for an autochthon modernization at the same time (Némedi 1985). The protagonists of the movement represented a new young generation socialized in the post-war Hungary; their first imprints had been got in the troubled atmosphere of the late twenties and the early thirties when a temporary consolidation was replaced by the despairing years of the Great Depression with extremely high unemployment and pauperization. Such authors were under thirty when their books appeared. The specificity of the genre of this sociography was a mixture of empirical sociological approach and a subjective literal tone. The titles of their books were expressive, provoking the attention and conscience of their potential readers. The book of Imre Kovács entitled *Néma forradalom* (Silent Revolution) dealt with the phenomenon of only child concerning the peasants who, by this way, tried to prevent the parceling of the land among their successors. The author depicted the depressed, desperate mood, the fatalistic hopelessness preventing peasants from social activism to improve their conditions. Géza Féja, in his book entitled *Viharsarok* (Corner of Storm) described the peasant life of south-eastern Hungary, which had been a traditional land of peasant revolts in the past, and warned the ruling élites to the possibility of a peasant uprising. Zoltán Szabó's sociography entitled *Cifra nyomorúság* (Ornamented Poverty) dealt with the peasant life of north-eastern Hungary, the so-called "palóc" region, and pointed out that the over-decorated, magnificent folk costume of this region was a symptom of a crisis: a substitute activity in the lack of real chances for upward social mobility. In his work entitled *Parasztok* (Peasants), the talented young sociologist of peasant origin, Ferenc Erdei applied a more scientific sociological method than the above-mentioned sociographers, who were belletrists; he made a comparative analysis of the different historical trajectories of peasantry of European regions, albeit his approach was not without a lyrical, subjective tone, and its language proved the author's literal talents.

Hungarian populism was a multi-colored movement whose representatives, writers, ethnographers, sociographers, and sociologists had a leaning toward

third-road theories based on the idea of *alternative modernization* different from the models realized in the western parts of Europe (Rohkrämer 1999). In Germany, this kind of cultural criticism was connected to the movement of conservative revolution (Mohler 1989, Woods 1996). At the core of these theories was the motif of dual society; in Hungarian society, according to this conception, there is an uneasy and enforced symbiosis between pre-modern, feudal and modern, and capitalistic social structures both on the upper and lower levels of social hierarchy. This phenomenon involved some kind of co-tenancy on the level of social consciousness: modern, bourgeois ethos coexisted with noble-origin gentry mentality and gained domination in public life from state bureaucracy and administration to party politics.

Hungary at Cross-Roads: The Meeting of Szárszó for Hungarian Public Intellectuals in 1943

During the Second World War, Ferenc Erdei entered in a new phase of his intellectual carrier. In the thirties, he belonged to the abovementioned third-road thinkers visioning an autochthon, grassroots modernization based on the initiatives of peasant entrepreneurs. He assumed that such grassroots will provide the required models for a transformation different from the Western European historical development, which will result in a bourgeois society: the peasantry that has lost its historic identity and culture will be transformed into a group of agrarian producers in accordance with the ethos of the capitalist market economy. According to the evidence of his lecture presented at the 1943 Szárszó meeting, he gave up his former intellectual-ideological position (Pintér 1983: 188–209). Dual society, as a referential framework, remained essential in his conception, but, as his lecture proved it, he drew a radically different practical-political conclusion from the theory. Erdei gave a historical-sociological analysis of Hungary of the period between the Austro-Hungarian Compromise in 1867 and the Second World War. There was an uneasy co-tenancy of pre-modern and modern social structures; aristocracy, gentry, and peasantry on the one hand, bourgeoisie and working class on the other hand. There was a tacit agreement among the élites: aristocracy and gentry possessed political power, while bourgeoisie possessed the key positions of the modern, capitalist market economy. Erdei's train of thought did not lack a light version of ethnicist approach: he pointed out that capitalist élites in Hungarian capitalism had been recruited from ethnically foreign social groups, but – using typically Marxian categories – he emphasized the interest coalition between the gentry and the bourgeoisie in the maintaining of the feudal-capitalist system based on the exploitation of the peasantry and the working class. As Erdei pointed out, the dual system in the interwar period had

been modernized: the gentry occupied the key positions of state bureaucracy and public service; the capitalist economy had to accept some kind of state control, while the social basis of the system had been broadened by the co-optation of the upper strata of petit bourgeoisie and rich peasantry. In 1943, Erdei did not believe any more in the prospect of a third-road modernization based on peasantry. He became a fellow traveler, a "Mitfahrer" of communists: in the conclusion of his lecture of 1943, he emphasized that the only possible solution would be a political transformation by the agency of the working class. Bourgeois democracy would only be a temporary period on the road leading to socialist democracy.

László Németh, the best known third-road thinker of the interwar period, was the debate partner of Ferenc Erdei during the meeting of Szárszó. Németh was a writer and ideologist, an emblematic figure of the interwar Hungarian Populist Movement. In the '20s, he established a one-man journal named *Tanú* (Eyewitness) of which he was the author, editor, and publisher at the same time. This journal had a great influence on the contemporary Hungarian intellectuals. His cultural criticism had been inspired by Ortega y Gasset, the Spanish philosopher on the one hand and the German neoconservative Tat-circle on the other hand. The conception of Németh László was an amalgamation of an élite theory, a culture-centered program of national regeneration and cultural criticism (Kovács 2013, Trencsényi 2012: 93–94). Every century, he asserts, has a central idea on which the intellectual and material civilization of the age is based. The 19th century was the age of factory, whose main idea, "gigantomaniac" industrialism, was based on a shallow calculative rationalism on the whole life. One of the main vices of the 19th century was that it had desacralized nature; instead of treating and respecting it as a sacred organic wholeness, this century reckoned nature as an object of exploitation. Human being had been torn out of the nature and became a one-dimensional *homo oeconomicus* seeing nature exclusively as a repository of raw materials, an object waiting for exploitation.

The 20th century, in the historical philosophy of Németh, is the age of garden; this means a return of an earth-bound, human-sized existence aiming at replacing the gigantomania of the 19th century. Németh was a typical third-road thinker: both capitalism and bolshevism were for him the outmoded relics of the 19th century. His option is an interesting utopia mixing earth-bound human existence with a high-cultured elitist way of life; it can be realized in small communities devoted to horticulture and high culture at the same time; in his view, *homo oeconomicus* will be replaced by *homo aesthetico-culturalis*. His utopian essay entitled *Kapások* (Gardeners with Hoes) (1935) described a high-cultured commune, whose dwellers, while working in the garden, are reciting poems of Keats or reading Aeschylus, naturally in Greek language (Németh 1992b). Németh envisioned the "revolution of quality"; the 20th century, in contrast with the 19th century whose leading idea was quantity, is the age of quality including professional-intellectual work and

handicraft. This revolution will put an end to gigantomaniac industrialism; it will represent a human-sized economic and social order, which resacralizes human life and promotes reconciliation with nature.

In his lecture of 1943 in Szárszó, Németh reformulated his third-road modernization utopia (Pintér 1983: 214–226). The antagonism of the exploiting and exploited classes, he argues, will be dissolving in the process of middle-classicization in which the classical factory proletariat of the 19th century will disappear. Németh depicted a utopian vision of the emerging society of intellectuals and strongly refused both the Anglo-Saxon capitalism and the Russian bolshevism, both being considered inappropriate models for post-war Hungary.

Clericals, Intellectuals, and Gentries – Utopic and Real Ways to Modernity

"To be a master is a social role in a medieval feudal society based on estates, to be a member of the middle-class is a social role in modern capitalistic class society, while to be an intellectual is a perpetual human role transcending from concrete, restricted, contingent, historical situations" (Bibó 1986: 516).[2] This quotation is from an essay of István Bibó (1911–1979), who belonged, together with Erdei, to another generation: he was a decade younger than László Németh. Bibó was a political thinker and the bulk of his oeuvre was produced during the war years and mainly after the war, but the Hungarian Populist Movement was one of the first imprints in his intellectual career. His quoted essay, entitled *Értelmiség és szakszerűség* (Intelligentsia and Professionalism) was written in 1947, one of the crisis-laden periods of the Hungarian history in the 20th century. The direct context of the writing was the post-war situation of Hungary; the country was among the losers of the war, and the peace settlement of Paris practically reinforced the Peace Treatment of Trianon of 1919, sanctifying again and for good the decomposition of the historical Greater Hungary. The interwar Hungarian political élite, according to Bibó, was dominated by the gentry, which had traditionally possessed alone the political positions in the arena of the local, county politics, at the county meetings and after the Austrian Hungarian Compromise (1867) occupied the administrative-bureaucratic positions of the new state and became the co-tenant of the aristocracy as a political power holder in the field of national politics.

These developments were strongly criticized not only by the interwar Hungarian populist thinkers as Dezső Szabó and László Németh or Ferenc Erdei but by the conservative historian Gyula Szekfű as well. The latter, in his seminal

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2   Translation of the study's author (from Hungarian).

book entitled *Három nemzedék* (Three Generations), introduced the narrative of the history of decline, the *Verfallsgescichte*, and depicted a gloomy picture about the social-political-cultural consequences of the gentry-dominated public life with preponderant state apparatuses (on Szekfű, see: Dénes 2015). His panacea was a conservative reform reinstating a modernized, streamlined Saint Stephen's Empire. The abovementioned populist thinkers vehemently refused the conservative solution suggested by Szekfű and insisted on the idea of a social revolution which aimed at emancipating peasantry, the overwhelming majority of the population.

What we are interested in is the gentry critique of Hungarian populism and the problem of intelligentsia which is frequently associated with it. This association is at the core of the theory of László Németh, whose history of philosophy is based upon the utopian idea of intellectualization and spiritualization of both the political power and the whole society. In the opinion of Németh, the essence of modern European history is the growing importance of intelligentsia; modern society is dominated by the middle-class, whose number and influence are increasing. The author assumes that the middle-class is built on the features and mentality of the intelligentsia; high culture plays an ever-growing role in the public life of modern nations.

From this hypothesis, Németh deduces the necessity of an elite change. In the early thirties, when he criticizes the gentry-dominated Hungarian political life, he describes the Hungarian gentry – metaphorically speaking – as a rider having a great routine how to ride: he knows when the horse needs spurring and when it needs keeping a tight rein, but he does not know where to ride to (Németh 1992a: 553). According to this metaphor, the gentry own a hollow political routine without the intent and conception of modernization. For Németh, this modernization has to be realized by new élites recruited from the intelligentsia. This conception leads Németh to the elaboration of the utopian conceptualization of the society of intellectuals as presented at the meeting of Szárszó in 1943.

Let us return now to the essay of Bibó, from which I excerpted the above quotation about the difference between the gentry, the middle-class, and the intelligentsia. The title of the essay, *Értelmiség és szakszerűség* (Intelligentsia and Professionalism), reflects not only the impact of the intelligentsia-focused utopia of László Németh, but it adopts the theory of European and Hungarian social development given by his contemporary historian, István Hajnal (1892–1956) (Kovács 2016). Hajnal did not belong to the Hungarian Populist Movement, but his ideas deeply influenced Ferenc Erdei and István Bibó; László Németh respected him as well. Hajnal's original field of research was the history of literacy. For Hajnal, writing – on which literacy is based – is a special kind of communication technology which grows out from the primary – so to speak – nature-given communication technology: it is the skill of speaking based on

the human ability of thinking. Empirical research focusing on paleography was associated with an objectification theory borrowed by Hajnal from German philosophy. Hajnal elaborated a structuralist historiography which is similar to the theory of contemporary French historians of the *Annales Circle* as March Bloch or Fernand Braudel. Human being, from this point of view, possesses an ability which gives to mankind a unique position in the animal kingdom; he/she is able to objectify his/her thoughts in lasting external mental and physical structures, including customs, social institutions, and physical artifacts – tools, machines, towns, etc. This approach by Hajnal is associated with a conservative philosophical anthropology which defines human person as a structure-creating being; in this theory, rationality is a special albeit sophisticated kind of animal instinct of self-preservation.

In his theory, Hajnal amalgamates the Durkheiman sociological approach with the anti-Weberian history of philosophy. The individual is enmeshed in the net of social institutions being reproduced from generation to generation; these institutions set a border for the rational individual actions. There are two kinds of social organizing methods that are rooted in basic human abilities which play role in the genesis of human society: *rational social practices* based upon the individual rationality and *customary social practices* based upon the ability of human being for objectification, i.e. the creation of mental and physical structures from the raw materials of thoughts and physical surroundings.

For Hajnal, medieval Europe is an ideal type of social organization because it is based upon customary social practices that restrict the playground of rational practices which otherwise can disintegrate the fabric of social institutions. This kind of traditionalism is not rigid and does not represent a petrified society; on the contrary, it leaves room for innovations which do not endanger the existence of lower social strata, first of all that of peasantry, constituting the overwhelming majority of medieval society. Landlords and serves were, of course, in an uneven social situation comparing to each other, but there was some kind of mutuality between them warranted by customs; it prescribed obligations and rights for both of them. The landlord could be cruel and inhuman in his personal contacts with his peasants, but the law of custom prevented him to increase their burdens as he would have pleased to do. Medieval society, in the long run, became a mosaic of groups possessing privileges sanctified in written charters. Mutuality, after many centuries of evolutive development, interwove the whole society from the bottom to the top and defined the social existence of both lower and upper strata in their horizontal and vertical social relations. This development vested the clerics, i.e. the possessors of the skill of writing, with extraordinary social importance; they were the managers of social relations. Clerics, in the theory of Hajnal, were the keepers of the small circles of liberty appearing in the form of group privileges (Hajnal 1993: 45). The clerical fulfilled a special social function rooted in his

professional knowledge; he was the possessor of the ability of writing in a world which, in a growing degree, depended upon literacy. So, clerical, the historical prefiguration of modern lay intellectual, being supported by his special skills, became the representative of the society: protected it from the misuses of the political élites. This was not the consequence of personal qualities or that of theological subtleties and the moral elevation of Christian doctrine; Hajnal deduced it from the abovementioned social constellations, first of all from customary social practices.

The key position of the clerical rooted in the professional manner in which he conducted his business. In the theory of Hajnal, the regions of Europe differ from each other in such a degree that they were able to produce social structures based on customary social practices fortified by the virtue of literacy. Social structures gave birth to an intellectual stratum which, due to its professionalism-based independence, enjoyed general social respect and from which the crew of emerging state bureaucracy and public administration was recruited. This stratum became a counterbalance to the traditional political élites, the aristocracy and the gentry.

Following the logic of Hajnal's theory, Bibó considers that Hungary is in a middle position between Western-Europe-based customary social organization and Eastern-Europe-based rational, despotic social organization. (I treated the political philosophy of Bibó in my earlier essay: Kovács 2012). There are segments of an intellectual stratum which developed an ethos based on professionalism and intellectual consciousness but, on the whole, intellectual roles and feudal-origin gentry roles have been intermingled. The turning point in his analysis is the lost independence struggle fought against the Habsburg dynasty in 1848–1849. The failure caused a shock for the Hungarian cultural-political elites: their risk-taking venturesome spirit and initiative ability had evaporated, and they sank in a passive-defensive behavior. In the first half of the 19th century, in the Age of Reforms, there emerged a non-noble-origin intellectual stratum named *honorácior*, which began to merge with the noble-origin gentry intellectuals. This gave a chance to produce a new intellectual stratum apart from the gentry class background and acquired a professional ethos; this stratum would have been devoid of honor-centered privilege-guarding, belligerent pre-modern noble attitude and inclined to give up its distance-keeping social behavior from the lower strata of society.

The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 for Bibó – who, from this respect, shared the aversion of such populist thinkers as Dezső Szabó and László Németh – was a fatal moment of the Fall (on them, see: Dénes 1999). The non-noble origin honorácior-intellectuals and the noble-origin gentry intellectuals kept emerging – Bibó argues – but under different conditions; the emerging new intellectual stratum was dominated by gentry mentality. Its new denomination "úriember" symbolized this metamorphosis. The term can be translated as "gentleman", but

in Hungarian it has different connotations than in English. In the late-19th-century Hungary, this term denoted a social type in a cast-like society which jealously guarded its privileges and emphasized its distance from the lower social strata. Its group consciousness had been determined by gentry values and not by the sense of vocation originating in the acquisition of skills gained in higher education at university. Following the theory of his sociologist friend, Ferenc Erdei, who had elaborated the theory of dual society, Bibó emphasized the state dependence of this new intellectual stratum which occupied the positions of state bureaucracy and local administration. After the First World War, gentleman-intellectuals became one of the main components of the so-called *Christian-middle class*: their power became strengthened through positions in ministries, county and town administration, but the gentry mentality was preserved. Bibó, who was working for years in the Ministry of Justice before 1945, tells an anecdote-like story about one of his colleagues. He was an old court secretary, as Bibó remarks, an excellent gentleman and a wrong, incompetent clerk, who once, in his ill-humor, angrily said: "Damn the peasant who invented that a gentleman needs a university diploma for earning his livelihood!" (Bibó 1986: 512).[3]

Dual Society and Political Hysteria

In his theory, Bibó complemented the structuralist approach of the World War in the short post-bellum period; after the communist takeover of 1949, he lived in an inner emigration without the facilities of publication (on his oeuvre and life, see: Berki 1992, Dénes 2015). His main term for describing the special socio-psychological attitude of our region was *communal-political hysteria*, which is a pathological state of a society. Political hysterias in Central-Eastern Europe can be traced back to structural and socio-psychological causes. This region produced special hybrid dual societies with surviving pre-modern and emerging modern segments: aristocracy, nobility, peasantry on the one hand and bourgeoisie and the working class on the other hand. Collective mentality has been determined by the archaic, military-aggressive attitudes of feudal élites, while nation building has been hindered by imperial political structures and war defeats. In Bibó's theory, the lack of an autonomous intellectual stratum emancipated from gentry is a structural deformity, a *Sonderweg* comparing to Western-European developmental models.

Bibó focuses his attention on the problems of nation building in Central-Eastern Europe, which run a different historical trajectory than it did in the western parts of the continent. Empires, as multi-ethnical archaic political structures, had distorted this process: nationalism and liberalism turned against each other

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3   Translation of the study's author (from Hungarian).

and gave way to collectivistic, authoritarian political regimes in the 20th century (Dénes (ed.) 2006). State borders and linguistic borders did not coincide; national communities lived here in a paralyzing state of fear from annihilation. For Bibó, the exemplary case of this pathological development is Hungary, the country having lost two-thirds of its territory and half of its population after the First World War. His theory runs parallel in many ways with the idea of Wolfgang Schivelbusch, a German contemporary historian, whose basic notion is the *culture of defeat* (Schivelbusch 2003). The shock of war defeat, Schivelbusch argues, generates pathological symptoms in the collective psyche of modern nations in the age of mass society. Political hysteria as a key notion of the theory of Bibó is, from many respects, similar to the idea of collective neurosis explained by Schivelbusch. The suffered trauma disturbs the inner psychic balance of the community and prevents its perception of reality. Communities are supposed to be pathologically connected to the memory of the shock and unable to recognize and solve their actual problems posed by reality. Communities are thus escaping into a world of fantasy, into a world of false problems and pseudo-solutions.

For the community concerned, the suffered shock is a starting point of collective-political hysteria. This social illness produces different symptoms from scapegoating to sensitiveness towards conspiracy theories. In Bibó's theory, political hysteria is a self-generating process which leads to a vicious circle (Bibó 2015: 44–45). It produces a coherent self-affirmative world view. The starting point is the misperception of reality caused by a pathological fixation to the experience of the bygone shock having disturbed the adequate relation to reality. It is analogous to the idea of pathological object fixation known from the theory of psychoanalysis. Political hysteria creates a pseudo-world: it offers logical responses to the problems arising within the borders of this self-enclosed reality. But the price of this coherence is the loss of touch with the truly existing world and the inability of recognizing and solving the actual and urgent problems of the community.

Conclusions

The interwar Hungarian Populist Movement was rooted in the special intellectual-cultural-political climate of this period. It was a many-colored, loosely organized movement out of which we can outline the figures of Dezső Szabó, László Németh, and István Bibó. Albeit different from each other in many respects, these thinkers can be connected to several common ideas such as the concept of dual society, inclination to third-road theories, and receptiveness to cultural criticism. Their imagined alternative modernization, which was not only a Hungarian peculiarity, was a favorite idea among the third-road theorists in the interwar years of the central-eastern region.

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Authorial Self and Modernity as Reflected in Diaries and Memoirs. Three 19th-Century Hungarian Case Studies[1]

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Abstract. The role of the diaries and memoirs in the process of the conscious self-reflection and their contribution to the emergence of modern individual personalities are well-known facts of the intellectual history. The present paper intends to analyze a special form of the creation of modern individual character; it is the self-creation of the writer as a conscious personality, often with a clearly formulated opinion about her/his own social role. There will be offered several examples from the 19th-century history of the Hungarian intelligentsia. This period is more or less identical with the modernization of the "cultural industry" in Hungary, dominated by the periodicals with their deadlines, fixed lengths of the articles, and professional editing houses on the one hand and the cultural nation building on the other. Concerning the possible social and cultural role of the intelligentsia, it is the moment of the birth of a new type, so-called public intellectual. I will focus on three written sources, a diary of a Calvinist student of theology, Péter (Litkei) Tóth, the memoirs of an influential public intellectual, Gusztáv Szontagh, and a belletristic printed diary of a young intellectual, János Asbóth.

Keywords: authorial self, modern culture, nation building, public intellectual

Introduction

The first half of the 19th century is the epoch of the cultural nation building in East-Central Europe. Within this period, in the Hungarian case, the Reform Era (1825–1848) was crucial in the development in the fields of the politics, literature, humanities, and philosophy. A speciality of both the Polish and Hungarian cases is the transition of the models of the activity in the public sphere from

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the behavioral patterns of the representatives of the nobility to the modernized norms of a new intelligentsia of mixed, noble, and common origin. The increased significance of the intellectuals is connected with the changed structure of the public sphere. The most visible element of this communicational turn was the language shift from Latin (and partly from German) to Hungarian, but the new works of this renewed Hungarian culture appeared in a modernized media which was based on a network of new types of institutions such as literary, cultural, and scientific periodicals in Hungarian, saloons of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie, and the Hungarian Scholarly Society (today: Hungarian Academy of Sciences). In this new environment of cultural communication, a critical mass of public intellectuals has emerged and has transformed the public opinion. The symbols of this new world were the coffee shops of *Váci Street* in Pest and *Senatorska Street* in Warsaw, both with their cultural significance and revolutionary potential. (It is an accidental but also symbolic fact that the first owner of the most famous Hungarian café, called *Pilwax*, was a Polish immigrant.) From the point of view of his Hegelian triad of the narrative of the Hungarian philosophy, János Erdélyi formulated the significance of the establishment of the Academy as a symbolic milestone in the following words:

> I distinguish three periods of philosophy. The *first one* is *prehistory,* acculturation in the European thinking, from the beginning of the national history till János Apáczai Csere. (…) At the end of this period, philosophy has been explained in Hungarian. The *second period* is until the establishment of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which is the institute of the self-reflective thinking of the Hungarian intelligentsia; or, marked by a name, until the appearance of its generous founder, Count István Széchenyi. In the end, the *third one* must be the present, which has begun with the Academy, and it writes itself its own history (Erdélyi 1981: 200).[2]

The transition from the noble role models to the intellectual ones in this period is linked to the traditions of the historiography in the Hungarian case. Such transition has remained unnoticed because of the noble origin of the majority of these new-type intellectuals. Historiographers focused mainly on the language shift from Latin to Hungarian. They did it in the narrative framework of the development of the Hungarian literature, terminology, and education. From this perspective, the questions of the changed and modernized institutional background of the intellectual life and the "history of mentality" of the active participants of Hungarian culture were underestimated. Under the conditions of the above outlined circumstances of the researches in this field, I intend to analyze the birth of the Hungarian public intellectual. This endeavor is based

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2   Translation of the study's author (from Hungarian).

on the documents of the creation of the authorial self and builds on my earlier research and recent philological results about the œuvre of my heroes.

Firstly, I will outline the structure of the scholar public sphere (focusing on philosophy) in the period of my heroes' intellectual socialization. The emergence of the figure of the professional public intellectual as a new role model in their active life will be the topic of the second section. In the methodology of the international and Hungarian research of this field, several genres of self-reflective texts have been considered as having crucial significance. In my present study, I will offer an overview of diaries, memoirs, and portraits of three typical 19th-century Hungarian intellectuals together with an analysis of their theoretical reflections on their new role model. Within the length limits of my writing, I tried to choose representative texts – by the term of the Cambridge school of the history of ideas. They represent three different social strata, three generations, three different religious and cultural backgrounds, and three regions of the Hungarian Kingdom. In the final part of my paper, I will touch upon the mental conditions for the creation of the authorial self of the public intellectuals within the machinery of the modern cultural industry. I will also outline several consequences of the 19th-century history of intelligentsia for the 20th-century history of ideas.

Changes in the Structure of the Scholars' Public Sphere

The changes in the structure of the public sphere of the Hungarian intellectual life has begun at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. In the history of Hungarian philosophy, it is the time of the Kantian Controversy (1792–1822). It is symptomatic that this debate began with a polemic brochure published as a separate volume, written in Latin, for the European professional philosophers as a target audience and was completed with a normal study written in Hungarian and published in a new scholarly periodical. The author of these writings was the same person but in different periods, i.e. at the beginning and at the end of his career (Rozgonyi 1792/2017, 1822). The significance of this turn has remained unnoticed in terms of both the language shift of the discourse and the transformation of the institutional background of the scholar public sphere. The language shift from Latin to Hungarian meant a segregation from the international discourse and also contributed to the extension of the inland target audience of philosophy. This shift also enlarged the new type of institutional networks such as saloons and periodicals. In the field of literature, this is the period of the foundation of the first Hungarian periodicals of belles-lettres; the establishment of the first modern literary groups and networks which were engaged in a concrete movement, style, or trend of the literature of that age, showing a large literary correspondence within the members of these groups. (The most important writer groups in this

period were the classicists and romanticists.) Thus, there occurred a seemingly modernized and developed system of cultural institutional networks; however, the figure of *professional public intellectual*, especially its theoretical species, e.g. the *public philosopher*, was still absent. For the appearance of this type of intellectual, there would have been needed a much larger educated audience and a much larger production of "serious" books which could contribute to the genre of *theoretical criticism*. In the Hungarian case, this qualitative change took place by the support of the new type of institutions: e.g. the foundation of different awards and, first of all, the Hungarian Scholarly Society (today: Hungarian Academy of Sciences) with its publication policy.

Under the above outlined conditions, the significance of self-identification, self-creation, and self-education has increased on two levels at the same time. On the individual level, the central question was the creation of an *autonomous authorial self*, which was connected with the modern machinery of the cultural production but preserved its individual independence. On the public level, the new public sphere has been interpreted as a tool for producing a well-structured *nation* from an amorphous *ethnic group*. (Concerning this issue, for the term *ethnogogia*, see Hetényi 1841: 238–239, Mester 2018). Another issue of this period is the function of the autonomous individual author within the autonomous national culture. The figures discussed here produced in their memoirs conscious reflections on the important elements of the changing public sphere and connected them with the self-creation of their individual authorial selves. In the following sections, I will offer several examples for this.

First Example for the Authorial Self: Péter (Litkei) Tóth

My first hero is Péter (Litkei) Tóth (1814–1878). He was not the eldest one amongst the examples presented here, but his diary written during his youth is the earliest example of this genre. He was a first-generation intellectual, a son of a rural craftsman, who spent all his movable financial means for the education of his sons. Péter Tóth, who used the pen name Litkei after his native village (Fényes) Litke (near the town of Kisvárda in Szabolcs County), showed his affinity for theatre, literature, and philosophy during his student years in the Calvinist College of Sárospatak. His philosophical background resembled the ideas of the Hungarian circles of the Schellingian philosophy, first of all that of his professor, István Nyíri. Later, during the years of *peregrinatio academica*, Péter Tóth became a radical follower of the revolutionary ideas of the Young Hegelian movement. He did not run a great intellectual career. In fact, he remained a Calvinist pastor in his homeland and the author of several radical, scandalous publications, under protection of his elder brother József, who was the dean of the same diocese.

During the 1848–1849 revolution, Péter Tóth served in the revolutionary army as an army-chaplain.

Péter Tóth's significance in the Hungarian history of ideas is not based solely on his writings but also on his friendship and intellectual connection with an important figure of the 19th-century Hungarian literature and intellectual life, Mihály Tompa (1817–1868), who was his fellow student, his colleague as a Calvinist pastor, his comrade as an army-chaplain of the revolutionary army, and godfather of Péter's daughters, as well. In their correspondence, they have sketched an intellectual role-play with the ideal typical characters of a *poet* (incarnated by Tompa) and a *philosopher* (incarnated by Litkei Tóth). Litkei Tóth showed the vision of a revolutionary progress of world history, and his articles and brochures can be easily considered a Young Hegelian philosophy of history (Tóth 1847–1848, 1871). The only couple portrait which remained after him from his elderly years shows him with his brother and does not mirror any elements of his revolutionary youth; it is a twin image of two brothers with conspicuous signs of pride of the achieved prestige and social rank as pastors in their native land (Tóth 1984, frontispiece).

Another point of Litkei Tóth's importance is his diary itself. The manuscript remained for years on the desk of the major representative of the classic 20th-century Hungarian literature, Zsigmond Móricz, and has inspired several characters of his novels (mainly Calvinist pastors). Later, in the 1980s when the genre of the 19th-century diary became important for the Hungarian intellectual history, the modern edition of this manuscript was considered a model for the intellectual self-creation of an *average intellectual.* Litkei Tóth's diary was written in the crucial period of the author's career, i.e. after his student years and before his final decision about his vocation. It was written, in fact, for a fraternity of his college *alumni*, who read the diaries of each other and used them as a reference for personal, intellectual, ethical, and spiritual self-development. Physiological phenomena, including sexual aspects, have a significant importance in the diary, and they are interpreted in connection with the achieved self-control. The symptoms of illness are interpreted as indicators of a bad way of life, as a consequence of the misinterpretation of the outside world, and the construction of a pseudo-world under the circumstances of modern civilization. In this respect, his line of thought prefigures the modern cultural criticism. In Litkei Tóth's writings, especially his own Calvinist Church is considered an institution which is strongly inclined to create a virtual world and to be blind to see the trends and phenomena of the process of social modernization.

Second Example for the Authorial Self: Gusztáv Szontagh

In the following, I will offer an example for the analysis of a later phenomenon, using the narratives of the career of a typical public intellectual of the Hungarian Reform Era in the field of philosophy, namely Gusztáv Szontagh. I will interpret his work in the mirror of his memoirs, which have remained in the form of a manuscript and were published recently in my edition (Szontagh 2017). At first, I will outline the emergence of the figure of the *professional public intellectual as a new role model* in his active life, and then I will give an analysis of his theoretical reflections to the new role model. I will touch upon the questions of multilingualism of his social environment, the military service and the Napoleonic wars as social and cultural experiences, and the mental and somatic conditions of the public intellectuals during the emergence of the machinery of modern cultural industry.

The intellectual socialization of Szontagh had been completed before the Hungarian Reform Era (1825–1848), but the period of his own intellectual activity was almost identical with this era. By the evidence of his publications and memoirs, he was in contact with Ferenc Kazinczy, the father of the modern Hungarian literature. (This period corresponds to Kazinczy's last and Szontagh's first active literary years.) However, the old master could not offer a role model for Szontagh. In the chapter of his memoirs entitled *Hungarian Literature*, Szontagh formulates the different positions of their subsequent generations by the comparison of their financial connections to the literary life. Kazinczy had almost been bankrupted because of the costs of his extremely extended correspondence; Szontagh's generation was the first whose representatives could live on their pens. These financial circumstances of the Hungarian culture were new phenomena for Szontagh's generation *without role models* for creating, describing, and representing their intellectual identities or authorial selves. For the generation after Szontagh, a developed literary market was a taken-for-granted phenomena, and their authorial identity was often developed by their editors as a *trademark*, or they defined their identities *against* the oligarchy of the licensed editing houses. (The best example for both phenomena is Petőfi in his different periods.) For the generation before Szontagh, the creation of the same modern public sphere represented the first point of the agenda. For Szontagh's contemporaries, the main problem was the theoretical reflection to the structure and function of the new public sphere and to their position in it. Szontagh, in his memories, had conscious reflections to the main elements of the changing public sphere and connected them with the creation of his individual authorial self. In the followings, I will offer several examples for this.

One of the most characteristic elements of the public sphere was the *language*. Szontagh's father was a Lutheran, ethnically a German-Hungarian nobleman; his

mother's first language was Slovakian, but she identified herself as a Hungarian noble. The family lived in a Slovak settlement, Csetnek (Štítnik, near the town of Rozsnyó/Rožňava), but at home they spoke exclusively in German in order to support the German language command of Gusztáv and his younger brother. (A Slovakian and Hungarian bilingual memorial tablet was dedicated for him on the wall of the local parish hall on 28 November 2018.) He went to traditional Latin schools, but during his childhood his father provided him Hungarian language education. During his presence in the Austrian army as well as in the course of and following the Napoleonic wars, Szontagh learnt and used the French and Italian languages as well; later, he learnt English for his autodidactic studies of philosophy. This linguistic mixture functioned by the model of the *functional multilingualism*, i.e. when people with the same origins speak different languages according to different social situations. A symptomatic description of these conditions can be found in his records on the Austrian army in France, in his *Memoirs*. His German language regiment had purely Slovak troops and almost purely Hungarian officers. Amongst the latter, Szontagh, the youngest one, was the only one who could speak to the soldiers in their mother tongue. Consequently, his task was to deliver encouraging speeches before the battles. Having been educated under the conditions of functional multilingualism, Szontagh encountered an uncomfortable experience: he was able to use only the Latin language for the purpose of creating serious writings. Thus, the first point of his autodidactic project was to learn to explain his thoughts in a written form in other languages as well, i.e. in German and in Hungarian. Because of his multiple experiences, he developed a reflective theory both in connection with the individual use of the language and the role of language as a communication tool of the political community called *nation*. In this conception, the language is not a natural or divine gift but a *consciously chosen tool*, a product of the institutionally planned *linguistic reforms* managed by the Hungarian Scholarly Society (later: Hungarian Academy of Sciences).

A special experience of Szontagh's generation was the Napoleonic wars. A significant part of the Hungarian intelligentsia were soldiers in this time, and so this situation was a common reference for several generations; Szontagh was amongst these solders a representative of the youngest age-group. The main experience of his military service was that he could form a vision on the mass society and on the automatization of the functions of a society, which later became the topics of thought of the 20th century. Szontagh voluntarily joined the army in the last years of the Napoleonic wars after his student years at the faculty of arts and the academy of law. He remained in the army as a professional officer until 1836; consequently, he witnessed the modernization of the Austrian army based on the experiences of the Napoleonic wars but for a reactionary political end of the Holy Alliance. His theoretical reactions to the military service as a social experience

can be epitomized in three points. Firstly, military experience provided him a window for reality and made him give up the image of the war characterized by a sentimental heroism. The army represents a mechanic instrument, made up of men rather than a community of heroes; a war is much more a chain of long, boring, and tiring marches and logistical calculations than a series of opportunities for the demonstration of the personal courage and heroism. According to the words of his memoirs, he was lucky to have a great schoolmaster such as Napoleon, and the army was a great chance in order to change his previous sentimental ideas about the army and the war. These shifts in his worldview impacted his general ideas about the society and the nature of the reality in general. His ideas about the army and the war can be regarded as a philosophical consideration of the role of the modern, professional army in the European history. According to Szontagh, the establishment of the professional armies under the absolutist governments demilitarized the societies of these countries and offered a solid basis for the development of the civilization and the worldwide extension of the European culture. The next step form here is the *domestication* of the professional army; the demilitarization of the society remained a historical task, but the development of the civilization was accompanied with individual and national liberty both in Europe and in the colonies. His notes on the historical necessity of liberty of the non-European nations based on European ideas seem to be prophetic words in the middle of the 19th century.

Surprisingly, the method of the analysis of the social role of the army and the structure of the modern machinery of cultural production is analogous. On the surface, it is the epoch of the cult of geniuses and the rise of a developed, self-determined authorial identity in literature. Considering the institutional and financial background of the intellectual life, the contrast of the individual geniality and the mechanic machinery was so clear as it was in the case of the army. This ambiguity is well mirrored by the portrait of Szontagh, which is on the frontispiece of the modern edition of his memoirs as well (Szontagh 2017). By the first glance, we can see a realistically designed man with expressive face, curiosity in his eyes, and irony on his lips. It is a well-done graphic of a typical 19th-century public intellectual, a critic with an individualistic personality drawn by one of the best Hungarian graphic artists of his age, Miklós Barabás. In its context, it is a commercial gift for the (mainly female) subscribers of an influential periodical of this age. Thus, the autonomous person and author became an object for the commercial machinery, a consciously built modern media star.

This twofold nature of modern culture appears in the theoretical reflections of Szontagh as the *revealed pseudo-world made of mere words* in literature, the speculative systems of humanities, philosophy, and politics alike. He describes the intellectuals living in this pseudo-world by the metaphors of illness; their alienation from the reality is incarnated in somatic and psychical symptoms, mainly piles,

nervous problems, and hypochondria (see Mester 2012). By the evidence of his memoirs, this description is not a bias of a veteran of the Napoleonic wars towards the sybarite citizens of the downtown of Pest but the conclusion of his auto-introspection in the first years of his career as a professional public philosopher. The above listed symptoms were his personal illnesses as well. He cured himself by a popular method of his epoch: cold water bath; ironically, he recommends similar methods for his colleagues and, metaphorically, for the whole nation.

In his critique of the lifestyle and opinions of the urban intellectuals, Szontagh refers to concrete illnesses as metaphors of a worldview. He explained his theoretical social critique based on this background in different spheres of the intellectual life. At first, in his literary criticisms, the *psychological reality* of the *fictive female figures* was the crucial point. From this point of view, a non-realistic writer lives in a *male* paper world created by the machinery of the cultural industry and his own imagination, and he cannot formulate in his art the *female face* of the reality. (All the writers criticized by him were males. The rare female figures of intellectual life of his age were supported by him.) He considered that in the case of sciences and humanities empirical data are neglected and instead of them speculation is used, which leads to creating pseudo-worlds. The clearest example for this is his debate on the questions of the early Hungarian history in the early 1850s; this debate touched upon the general problems of the nature of the *historical facts*. In his opinion, Hungarian historians of his age live in a paper world, built from their speculations based on several well-formed narrative elements of the written sources. The *real* counterpart of this pseudo-world is represented by the geography and climate of the former settlements of the nomadic Hungarian tribes, by the ethnographic data of the contemporary Eurasian nomads, and by the archeological findings. In the field of philosophy, the German idealism and its Hungarian followers were the best examples of this pseudo-world (e.g. the Hegelians). The *autopoiesis* of the Hegelian terminology and Hegel's enthusiastic attacks against every form of the philosophies based on the concept of the *common sense* were clear evidence for Szontagh that Hegel's ideas, and especially the ideas of Hegel's Hungarian epigones, represent the same alienation from reality as the above mentioned cases. In the field of contemporary politics, a typical Hungarian political speaker is a figure that lives, usually, in the imagined world of his own spoken rather than in the real universe of real political possibilities including the economic conditions and the international relationship of Hungary.

These typical figures living in pseudo-worlds are not connected solely in my interpretation. In a satire written by Szontagh, his fellow-travelers take part in an imagined (dreamed) journey: a romantic poet, a political speaker, and an armchair scholar are representatives of false intellectual role models. In the end of the story, they remain in the world of dreams, i.e. in their "natural" contexts; but

Szontagh wakes up and reconnects to his activities from the real world (Szontagh 1845). The elements of Szontagh's critique of the culture of his age appear usually sporadically, in different contexts of his œuvre; the clearest evidence for the unity of his systems of ideas is represented by his retrospective overview of his career in his memoirs. This synthesis is a sketch of a praxis-oriented philosophy based on the long *common sense* tradition embedded in the society. From this point of view, we can interpret the 19th-century concept of the *national philosophy*, which is nothing else than a *public philosophy* in Hungarian with examples from the Hungarian politics (in the case of political philosophy) and with an aesthetics applied for the inland art.

In the end of this section, by marking several milestones, I must outline the context of Szontagh's memoirs in his œuvre and in the intellectual history of his age. The active part of Gusztáv Szontagh's career (1793–1858) as an author is almost identical with the Hungarian Reform Era (1825–1848), and it continues a decade after the revolution, i.e. in a crucial period for the formation of the modern Hungarian national identity. His memoirs were written from the autumn of 1849 (after the defeat of the revolutionary independence war) until the early spring of 1851; consequently, the memoirs contain a set of statements and references on the actual events of the age. This era was the darkest, first period of neo-absolutism, when Hungary as a political community was destroyed, and the already structured Hungarian public sphere (the *respublica literaria Hungarica*) seemed to be dead, as well. This dark situation after the lost struggle for independence was a suitable means for contemplation on the history of a crucial period of a nation and on the role of an individual career in it. It is an extraordinary moment for a soliloquy offered for a *common sense* philosopher. Szontagh finished the contemplation in solitude, when a possibility of a new national public sphere emerged with the establishment of a new periodical titled *Uj Magyar Muzeum* [New Hungarian Museum], with Szontagh in the editorial board.

Third Example for the Authorial Self: János Asbóth

My third figure is János Asbóth (1845–1911), who was born in Lugoskisfalu (today: Victor Vlad Delamarina; in the period of Asbóth's childhood, Szatumik in Temes/ Timiş County, now in Romania) into a Catholic noble family with significant lands and important positions in the public administration from the beginning of the 18th century. Asbóth was educated at the universities of technology in Pest and Zurich, but he showed inclination to the fields of literature, political philosophy, and politics. He mixed the roles of the novelist, public philosopher, civil servant, and politician during all his life. His zigzagging political career path started on the platform of the radical revolutionary resistance whether we refer to the student

movements of his youth or to the Hungarian political and military emigration in Western Europe. Later, he described himself as a liberal, after which he became a conservative political philosopher of his generation, and then he returned to the Hungarian Liberal Party. He was a Member of Parliament for long periods, sometimes in the liberal, sometimes in the conservative parliamentary groups, or as an independent Member of Parliament.

Asbóth's ambition was to offer a description of the mentalities of the generations of the 19th-century Hungarian liberal and conservative elites. In order to do this, he made an analysis of the creation and modification of *his own personality* in novels, works of political philosophy and political pamphlets, or parliamentary speeches. His widespread photograph mirrors an honored gentleman with the pride of both a political leader and an intellectual. His known caricature was drawn in the political moment of his hidden conservative turn. (The *Borsszem Jankó* periodical, 1874, frontispiece. Almost the entire content of this issue refers to Asbóth's political turn.) The caricature satirizes his work as well: one of his writings, titled *Hungarian Conservative Politics*, i.e. the ideological foundation for the Conservative Party (Asbóth 1875) – written just after his liberal writings on the cultural history of the idea of liberty (Asbóth 1872) –, is in his hands. An influential satirical-political periodical with this caricature on its frontispiece ironically refers to Asbóth's mixed roles as a novelist, public intellectual, and politician.

Asbóth's political opinions were always connected to his aesthetical views and were expressed by literary tools. Consequently, by the irony of this periodical, Asbóth's political turn is *equal* with the turn of his *moustache style and clothing*, i.e. his political career is interpreted as something superficial, non-serious.

My example from his œuvre is his notes in two volumes about his travels in Western Europe, titled *Egy bolyongó tárcájából* [Letters from the Wallet of a Traveler] (Asbóth 1866)*.* This work is a preparation both for his novel and his writings in political philosophy, but its most important element is the description of the creation of a modern authorial self under the conditions of modernity. In this work, the description of the bodily symptoms and the references made to virtual worlds described by the symbol of *dreams* are significant elements such as the case of Szontagh's memoirs and (in a more hidden form) in Litkei Tóth's diary. The description of the changing position of the self under the conditions of the modernized social time is more relevant here: Asbóth described it by the metaphor of the mechanized travel on the railway network, which can untie the travelers from the context of local existence.

Conclusions

In my review, I tried to offer an overview of the examples of the auto-creation of the authorial self in the 19th-century Hungarian culture based on the personal writings, diaries, and memoirs of three public figures. The authors were Calvinist, Lutheran, and Catholic figures; one of them was a commoner and two of them were nobles from three significant generations. The common elements of their self-understanding reveals a tension between the personality of the new-type individual author and the machineries of modernity as described in the metaphors of bodily symptoms or by the metaphor of the mechanized travel.

These tensions are rooted in the changing nature of the scholars' public sphere, which started to emerge in the first decades of the 19th century. The early steps in the directions of the development of the (machinery of the) cultural industry were fundamental experiences of these three generations of the Hungarian intelligentsia. Consequently, their self-identification and individualization were rooted in a modernized cultural environment. They showed both admiration for and a critique of modernity, and their writings are always based on personal experiences, including the illnesses caused by the lifestyle of modern intellectuals. The same elements, namely, the alienation from the real world, the creation of a *world made of mere words*, and the usage of the *metaphors of illness* are typical elements of the writings of the three analyzed authors. Such elements will appear later in the *cultural criticism* of the following century, but the *personal experiences* which were typical for each of the three authors will disappear in the writings of the new epoch (20th century). What was an autobiographical element in the description of the illnesses of the intellectuals in Litkei Tóth's and Szontagh's writings or the personal experiencing of the changed structure of the social time in the description of Asbóth's travels slowly lost their initial contexts. Thus, the changing cultural environment, described in the 19th-century self-reflecting writings, has transformed into a caricature (of a sinful city of foreigners and newcomers) in several forms of the 20th-century aggressive cultural criticism.

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The Discreet (and Long-Lasting) Charm of the Polish Nobility

*Rafał Smoczyński and Tomasz Zarycki: Totem nteligencki.
Arystokracja, szlachta i ziemiaństwo w polskiej przestrzeni
społecznej (The Intelligentsia's Totem. Aristocracy, Nobility, and
Landed Gentry in the Polish Social Space)*
Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2017. 303 pp.

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Elite studies, which would be both critical (in a sense that they do not reproduce self-images created by actors under study) and at the same time rely on substantial empirical material "from within", are perhaps the hardest job to do for a sociologist. It seems (at least to a Pole) that this is even more so in the case of Poland, where the relations within the intelligentsia élite milieu are even more informal (thus prone to being hidden from the wider public) than in many other European countries – as one can learn it from other works of one of the authors of the reviewed book, Tomasz Zarycki. Despite numerous obstacles, Smoczyński and Zarycki made a successful attempt at analyzing an important part of the Polish field of power (Bourdieu 1993: 161–175, 1996: 261–339) of the aristocracy, nobility, and landed gentry.

Although at the empirical core of the book there lies an analysis of social structure and mechanisms of reproduction of a small group ("several dozen post-aristocratic families"), the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu's field analysis, which the authors adopted among other theoretical inspirations, required them to broaden the scope of the study. Thus, the book includes both a historical and "spatial" (relations with other social groups) context. As a result, the volume presents a valuable insight not only into the functioning of a small but relatively influential aristocratic sub-élite but also – by analyzing its relationship with the intelligentsia – into this hegemonic social class in Poland.

As has been already mentioned, the main focus of the book is on the aristocratic/ post-gentry milieu in contemporary Poland. The first chapter though is dedicated

to discussing the historical developments concerning Polish nobility. The main thesis here concerns a rivalry for hegemony between aristocracy/gentry and intelligentsia – two social classes which, to a certain degree, are overlapping while relying on different types of capital (economic versus cultural capital) –, which ended up with the victory of the latter. The decisive moments in this process were the Bolshevik revolution, the Polish–Soviet war, and the Treaty of Riga, which established borders and acknowledged the loss of significant portion of the Polish gentry's demesnes. All these three events could be seen as final blows to the landed gentry – thus far from holding the dominant position. After establishing the Second Republic of Poland, which the authors dubbed as the "republic of the intelligentsia", the weakened aristocracy and gentry have started, gradually, to take on the role of an internal sub-élite of the intelligentsia.

The analysis of the contemporary field of nobility in Poland – based on 82 in-depth interviews conducted by the authors – is presented in the third chapter. According to the authors, this social space can be seen as located between two poles: on the one hand, there is an informal part, composed primarily of several dozen post-aristocratic and gentry families fostering dense family ties; on the other hand, there are the descendants of landed gentry, cultivating their noble heritage through the formal non-governmental organizations. It is this first group, informal and largely hidden to the public – the "extended family" –, to which the authors assign the role of the main collective actor, which refers to the legacy of nobility in contemporary Poland. In contrast to the second group, whose members' "noble identity" is rather a matter of reconstruction (and thus needs to be re-affirmed through the abovementioned formal organization), the "extended family" represents a residue of aristocratic clan family structures. The fact that this kind of family structure has survived seems indeed extraordinary, given the drastic changes the Polish society has gone through over the course of a turbulent 20th century.

Smoczyński and Zarycki's anthropological analysis includes a description of the informal structure of this hermetic social network based on social and cultural capital as well as of the mechanisms of its reproduction. Here, the main characteristic feature is the cultivation of family ties between distant relatives through numerous family rituals such as weddings, funerals, holiday meetings, or joint holiday trips. These dense relations enable the "extended family" to create space for effective matrimonial, social, and ideological games which, in turn, create a sufficiently strong social basis to uphold their noble identity.

Although the identification and analysis of the "extended family" and of the broader Polish field of nobility is in itself an impressive sociological achievement, even further-reaching is Smoczyński and Zarycki's attempt to use the history of nobility (in particular its last stages) to re-interpret much of the key moments of the Polish social history. Of crucial importance here is the abovementioned historical analysis of a rivalry between nobility/landed gentry and the intelligentsia, which

was won by the cultural capital-based part of the Polish élite. Inspired by Maria Ossowska's argument about the adaptation of part of the aristocratic ethos by the triumphant French bourgeoisie, in the aftermath of the 1789 French Revolution (Ossowska 1985), Smoczyński and Zarycki argue that a similar process took part in the case of Poland.

The chapters IV–VII. of their book are dedicated to the analysis of the hybrid model of Polish citizenship, which, according to authors, contains numerous elements of the gentry ethos. Through an analysis of the attitudes of a wider society (students in chapter four and mass media in chapter five) towards the legacy of Polish nobility, the authors show that this heritage still occupies a relatively significant position in contemporary Poland and that the post-feudal framework of interpretation permeates both public life and popular culture. It is thanks to this part of the book that one can better understand the mixture of amusement and respect that some people from Eastern Europe (Belarusians, Russians, or Ukrainians) express when it comes to a widespread and strongly naturalized habit of Poles to address each other *per* pan/pani (sir/madam).

Finally, in chapter six, Smoczyński and Zarycki lay out their core argument about the origins of the Polish (hybrid) model of citizenship and the influence that the feudal past has exerted on its development. In this context, they argue that in the Second Republic of Poland a symbolic nobilitation was carried out by the intelligentsia, which broadened the citizenship status from nobility/landed gentry to all previously excluded social classes (hence, the abovementioned "pan/pani" convention). Apart from an explanation of its origins and characterization, the authors provide a brief comparison with other countries, both in Western and Eastern Europe, allowing the reader to better grasp the distinctiveness of the Polish case.

In the last chapter, the narrative is put back on the contemporary Poland as well as on the empirical material. With a usage of the Durkheimian concept of totemism (Durkheim 1995), the authors reveal how the legacy of nobility and gentry (including the living members of the "extended family") is treated by the intelligentsia as "totems": the source of legitimization of the intelligentsia's continuous leadership as well as a reminder of Poland's past glory. Astonishingly, one of the key properties of this "intelligentsia totem" relates to their ability to redefine (improve) status position. This is visible on the example of actors engaged in personal relations with members of aristocracy ("totems"), including through participation in their family rituals.

Smoczyński and Zarycki's argument about the usage of totem for the reproduction of social structures, legitimization as well as day-to-day status games of the intelligentsia is not only highly informative but also provides a tool for the interpretation of the position occupied by some of the key authorities of the Polish élite (Turkowski 2018).

Overall, the reviewed book, with its numerous insights, fresh and surprising interpretations, and a clearly visible passion to deconstruct the self-images created by the members of the élite, represents a bright spot on the map of Polish élite studies.

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